Partner Manual

2025

Learn about the partnership expectations and opportunities available to partners of the Atlanta Community Food Bank.

Partner Manual

Introduction

This manual serves to guide our partners in their relationship with the Food Bank in order to ensure efficient and reliable distribution of food across our network. The following information and guidelines contain vital information relevant to different programs and their respective protocol. Please utilize the content within this manual prior to contacting a Food Bank team member.

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Welcome

Dear Partner,

Welcome to the Atlanta Community Food Bank hunger-fighting network! You are joining a movement of over 700 purpose-driven organizations working across 29 counties to transform what food access looks like for our neighbors in their moments of need. The word "community" sits purposefully in the middle of our name because this vital work requires a community response. No single organization can do this alone.

Our mission in supporting hunger-fighting organizations like yours is to connect you with the resources, information and relationships you need to care for your neighbors. Our hope is that this partner manual will serve as one crucial piece of information to help us work better together. In it you will find important information that guides our work together and can serve as an ongoing resource for your organization to serve with excellence.

Thank you for everything that you do for your community and for your neighbors in need. We are grateful for your partnership and your commitment to this work – we could not do it without you!
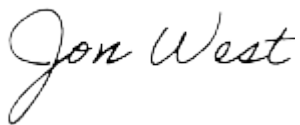
Sincerely,
Jon West
Vice President, Partner Relations
Atlanta Community Food Bank
jon.west@acfb.org

Our Mission

Mission

At the Atlanta Community Food Bank, our mission is to fight hunger by engaging, educating, and empowering our community.

Vision

Our vision is that all individuals experiencing hunger in our service area have access to the nutritious meals they need when they need them.

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General Topics

Transforming Access Together

Transforming Access Together is both an invitation and a model to work collectively to increase food access and enhance the service experience for our neighbors in need. This approach starts with making it easier for people to access the food and resources they need to live healthy and productive lives. The experience of accessing food should be convenient, consistent, frequent and equitable—freeing up the mental, emotional and financial space needed to thrive over time.

Our starting point on the journey to transform the neighbor experience includes four foundational service behaviors that we want to encourage to make this vision a reality:

- **Remove barriers to visitation:** to allow neighbors to come as frequently as they need to
- **Add distribution hours:** to add convenience for different neighbor lifestyles
- **Maximize SNAP participation:** to connect more neighbors to more healthy food and resources
- **Gather intake information in our shared Oasis platform:** to learn more about our neighbors since knowing more about who we serve helps us serve them better.

As we encourage each partner to explore these behaviors, we recognize the different paths to adoption. Because this work is so important, we are investing additional time, energy and resources in partners committed to transforming access for their neighbors. Based on a partner's participation in the four behaviors, their combined scoring of their efforts will place them under one of four partner segments: **Respected Partner, Transforming Partner, Foundational Partner, Network Leader.** Each of these segments provides partners with a specific set of resources that serve as incentives for participating in the adoption of these behaviors.

Partners agencies interested in adopting a behavior, please contact your County Relationship Manager (CRM).

Learn more about how you can join us in Transforming Access Together here.

Communication

At the Food Bank we understand the fluid nature of your work and that change is inevitable as your work transforms a community. In order to maintain a healthy, productive partnership, we require our partner agencies to communicate significant changes within their operations to the Food Bank in a timely manner. This ensures the right people receive important partnership information.

The following list contains examples of types of changes that should be communicated to the Food Bank as soon as the change is made.

- Changes to distribution model.
- Changes to operating location(s).
- Changes to distribution hours.
- Changes to key/primary staffing of your agency.
- Changes to staff roles and responsibilities.

While this list shows key changes that should be communicated to the Food Bank, it does not list all types of changes that should be communicated. Please contact your County Relationship Manager, the Customer Relations team (CRT), or your Compliance Specialist about any significant change in your operation.

Agencies can contact CRT for the following reasons (Please be prepared to provide your agency code):

- To cancel or reschedule orders
- To get order weight / number of pallets information
- eHarvest ordering issues
- General order issues (missing items, product quality issues, etc.)
- Estimated time of arrival (delivery orders)
- Item description, expiration dates
- Payment and billing issues

Contact Information

Accurate contact information is essential for effective communication between the Food Bank, our partners, and their related contacts. With accurate contact information, the Food Bank can communicate quickly and efficiently, reducing miscommunication and increasing the likelihood of a successful partnership. This can include emails, phone calls, or other forms of communication.

At the Food Bank, we have several categories of contacts for our partner agencies. By categorizing our partner agencies' contacts we can reach out to the correct person depending on the topic of communication. Each contact category and a brief description of how we communicate with category is listed below. **As a note, one person at an organization can be placed in multiple contact categories.**

- **Primary Contact:** This is the person at your organization that is responsible for the overall day-to-day operations of your organization.
- **Executive Director:** This is the person that is responsible for the organization overall.
- **Accounting/Finance:** This is the person that is in charge of invoices and payments.
- **eHarvest Administrator:** This is the person that is in charge of ordering products from the Food Bank.
- **Program Operations:** This is the person that is in charge of operations/distributions.
- **Compliance:** This is the person that is in charge of compliance related topics and responsible for signing secondary agreements (MOU's).
- **Grants Manager:** This person is responsible for managing grant applications and processes, ensuring compliance with grant requirements.

For each of these contact categories we will need the following information:
- Name
- Email
- Business/cell phone

Please be sure to contact CRT with updates for any of these contacts.

Partner Relations Team Structure

Jon West
Vice President,
Partner Relations

Alison Ash
Director,
Strategy & Innovation

Esteban Gonzalez
Director,
Benefits Outreach

Michele Chivore
Director,
Network Growth

Ron Burns
Director,
Network Services & Programs

Network Strategy & Innovation

- Partner communications
- Partner convenings
- Grant opportunities
- Hands On Atlanta
- Oasis Insight (Neighbor data collection)

Benefits Outreach

- Assist partners in providing SNAP to neighbors

Network Growth

- Providing partners with best practices
- Connecting partners to each other
- Addresses barriers faced by neighbors in accessing food
- Manages/facilitates our Partner Agency Learning Cohorts
- Manages/facilitates our Partner Agency Council
- County Relationship Managers

Network Services & Programs

- Compliance & Regulations
- Subject-matter experts on program requirements and expectations
- Customer Service
- School Pantry Program
- CSFP
- Nutrition Program

Partner Relations Contacts

To find the most up-to-date contact lists and county/regional maps for County Relationship Managers, Compliance Specialists, Oasis team, and the Retail team, please visit our Learning Library here.

Customer Relations Team
Direct Number: (678) 553-6000
Email: crt.partner@acfb.org

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Partner Agency Requirements

Partner Food Pantries are expected to:

- Be open at least one day per week totaling 20 hours a month OR serve at least 50 households per month

- Post signs that indicate both the presence of the food program and the days and hours of distribution

- Be willing and able to provide food to those in need without requiring the recipient to pay, pray, or work to receive resources

- Have at least two pantry staff with certificates in ServSafe for Food Banking

- Adhere to all Food Bank policies, as delineated in the Food Bank Partnership Contract and Partner Manual

On-Site Programs

This distribution model features meals that are prepared and consumed by neighbors on site at the partner agency facility.

On-site programs are expected to:

- Have mealtimes that occur at least once a week

- Be willing and able to provide food to those in need without requiring the recipient to pay, pray, or work to eat or gain admission to the food distribution setting

- Have at least two food handlers with certificates in safe food service

- Adhere to all Food Bank policies, as delineated in the Partnership Contract and Partner Manual

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Distribution Models & Programs

The Food Bank supports several different types of distribution models and programs that partner agencies can set up to maximize efforts to distribute more food to neighbors in need. We encourage our partners to choose a distribution model(s) that best utilizes their resources and makes the biggest impact to their community.

Food Pantry Distribution

Food Pantry distribution is the standard method used by most partners. Partners utilizing this distribution type have a set location with the ability to securely and safely store food items. Distribution to neighbors is typically accomplished through one of three methods.

Client Choice: This set up allows neighbors to select their own food instead of receiving a pre-packed or standard bag of groceries. With this method, neighbors do not have to take items they already have, do not like, or cannot eat for health or personal reasons.

Walk Up/Drive Through: This method is where a nutritious mix of food and groceries are prepackaged and handed to neighbors when they either walk up or drive up to the facility and often without having to leave the car.

On-Site: This distribution model features hot meals that are prepared and consumed by neighbors on site at the partner agency facility.

Mobile Food Pantry Program (MFPP)

The Mobile Food Pantry Program (MFPP) is a supplemental food program offered through the Food Bank that delivers produce and a limited amount of other food items to approved partner agencies. Each distribution will provide between 8-11 bulk food pallets at a minimum of 10,000 lbs. and is intended to serve 250 families. **The MFPP primarily consists of a minimum 80% produce, which helps increase neighbor access to nutritious foods.**

The **type of product that is delivered is based on the available inventory at the time the order is created**, two days before delivery. Agencies do not get to pick and choose what is delivered. MFPP is supplementary to an agency's normal distribution and MFPP agencies are required to meet the Food Bank's Partnership Contract ordering guidelines. MFPP partners must follow monthly reporting requirements for the total number of households served and must submit reports for each Mobile Food Pantry received.

There are three popular distribution models: Food Box/Bag, Client Choice and Drive-thru. Each model has its strengths and weaknesses, and the best choice may depend on your community's specific needs and resources. Some pantries even combine elements of these models to best serve their neighbors.

To learn more about participating in the MFPP, contact your County Relationship Manager.

School Pantry Program

School-based pantries provide an easily accessible source of nutritious food to low-income students and their families in a convenient location. The program serves families in schools with 50% or higher free or reduced lunch rates.

Dry goods and a variety of produce are made available to families. Parents are required to pick up the food during a time that has been determined by the school as the most convenient for the families – this usually occurs monthly during dismissal, parent meetings, curriculum night, open house or some other regularly occurring event. Schools select the model that best meets the needs of their families.

School Pantry Models

For school pantry partners, there are two types of models: mobile pantry and in-school pantry. Partners can either implement one of these models or use both simultaneously.

Mobile Pantry Model

Mobile pantry is a model where Food Bank staff delivers at least 10 pallets of dry goods and produce to the school to feed a minimum of 150 households. **This model works well for schools with limited indoor storage space but a large area to accommodate a truck and families driving or walking to the pantry.** The distribution takes place the day the food is delivered during a two-hour window. The pantry is managed and run by school staff, parents, students, and volunteers with support and technical assistance from Food Bank staff. Food is distributed at a minimum of once a month but may be based on the need and ability of the staff and volunteers.

In-School Pantry Model

In-school pantry is a model where the pantry is permanently housed in a space within the school. **This model works well if the school has an empty small storage closet, office, or classroom.** This model increases the flexibility of the pantry and allows access for individuals who may not be able to attend a monthly distribution. The pantry is managed and run by school staff, parents, students and volunteers with support and technical assistance from Food Bank staff. Food is distributed at a minimum of once a month but may be based on the need and ability of the staff and volunteers. A school must implement the mobile model for 3 months to be eligible for a capacity grant and to start the in-school pantry.

<u>Hybrid Model</u>

The Hybrid Model combines the mobile and in-school pantry models. The school distributes the day the food is delivered and stocks their pantry to allow families to access food in the pantry on a daily, weekly, or monthly basis. **This model also increases the flexibility of the pantry and allows access to more individuals who may not be able to attend a monthly distribution.** This model is managed and run by school staff, parents, students and volunteers with support and technical assistance from Food Bank staff. Food is distributed at a minimum of once a month but may be more based on the need and ability of the staff and volunteers.

General Requirements

School pantry partners are required to adhere to the following requirements:
· Complete school partner interest form here
· School(s) must be at or above 50% free and reduced school lunch
· Partner schools must agree and comply with the terms and conditions outlined in the Program Agreement
· Designate a school site pantry coordinator(s)
· Schedule monthly distributions
· Ability to serve a minimum of 150 families monthly

Physical Requirements

· A paved lot or indoor space for distribution to accommodate orderly distributions for 150 or more families
· Space for a semi-truck to maneuver, park and unload 10 or more pallets
· Space to store empty pallets until the next distribution, or plan to discard pallets
· For in-school pantry: a secured climate-controlled space

Implementation Tactics

· Capacity Building Grants: These grants can help schools that decide to have a school staff or volunteer led in-school model to purchase equipment needed to implement the program, marketing materials, etc.

· Technical Assistance and Training: The Food Bank will work to train school administrators, staff and volunteers on how the program works and how to manage the school pantry. We will work with you to identify and develop the best implementation plan for your school.

· School Pantry Support: To ensure smooth implementation and limit burdening existing staff, volunteers will be recruited to help with distribution to ensure enough support for a positive experience for families.

For more information contact:
Sequoya Finch, School Pantry Program Manager
sequoya.finch@acfb.org
Phone: 470-588-458

Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP)

Many seniors in our service area experience food insecurity, having to make difficult decisions, such as choosing between paying for medicine or groceries. **The Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP) is a federal program that provides monthly food boxes to seniors 60 years of age and older.**

Since 2010, the Food Bank has been a distributor of these USDA commodities to low-income seniors. The Food Bank distributes over 5,000 boxes throughout twenty-nine counties annually.

The food provided supplements what seniors cannot purchase on their own. The food boxes contain nutritious, nonperishable food items such as cereals, juices, canned fruits and vegetables, meats, grains, shelf-stable or evaporated milk and fresh cheese.

Partner Eligibility

For a partner to be eligible for the program they must:
• Be a designated 501(c)(3) tax-exempt, public nonprofit organization
• Sign a contract
• Sign a state contract
• Serve at least 75 senior households
• Commit at least one year to the program
• Distribute a minimum of 60 boxes monthly
• Be very organized and send in monthly reports
• Complete mandatory onboarding training

Participant Eligibility

Partners should consider the following requirements of senior participants to ensure that the seniors that they currently serve are eligible.

To be eligible, a senior participant must:
• Be 60 years of age or older
• Provide a valid ID
• Apply only in the county in which they live
• Meet the income guidelines

Eligibility Income Limit

Household Size	Annual Income	Monthly Income	Weekly Income
1	$19,578	$1,632	$377
2	$26,572	$2,215	$511
3	$33,566	$2,798	$646
4	$40,560	$3,380	$780
Each Additional Person	Add $6,994	Add $583	Add $135

Income eligibility note: The income amounts listed in the table represent the maximum annual, monthly, or weekly income a household with a senior can earn to qualify for assistance. If a household's income falls below these amounts, they may be eligible for support.

If you are interested in the CSFP Program and serve at least 75 senior households monthly, please click here.

Supplemental Retail Donation Program

The Supplemental Retail Donation Program was created to ensure that food that would otherwise be discarded, is donated to designated food-relief agencies that have the capacity to distribute these donations to those in need. This supplemental program is a way to expand outreach and build partnerships with local retailers in the Food Bank's service area. The objective of this program is to increase donations throughout our service area with Feeding America sanctioned retailers.

Eligibility Requirements

To be eligible to participatein the Supplemental Retail Donation Program, partners must:

• Be a Food Bank partner agency for a minimum of 1 year and adhere to all listed requirements in the Food Bank Partnership Contract
• Be in good standing with all Food Bank departments (i.e. Compliance)
• Spend at least $600 and order a minimum of 7200 pounds of product from the Food Bank on eHarvest in the last twelve months before your compliance visit. Retail pounds do NOT count toward the 7200 lb minimum with the Food Bank
• Have weekly distributions
• Have the necessary means and equipment to complete a retail pickup
• Review the program manual in its entirety
• Submit a signed Supplemental Retail Donation Program MOU (Memo of Understanding) and Manual Agreement form
• Attend annual training

All newly admitted agencies to the program must be on probation for the first 90 days before they are permanently assigned to their stores and are part of the program. Participation in the Supplemental Retail Donation Program is not guaranteed.

Agency Requirements

• Agencies must designate a minimum of (2) staff members/volunteers to oversee the program and report pounds on time to the Food Bank.
• Provide driver(s) to pick up retail donations.
• Perform scheduled pickups from assigned donors/retailers to pick up all available product (no cherry picking).
• Follow all food safety guidelines for transporting and receiving donated products.

To learn more about this program, contact retail.team@acfb.org

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eHarvest Ordering Guidelines

eHarvest Overview

eHarvest is the Food Bank's online ordering platform that provides agencies access to the following tools:

- Inventory information
- Place orders for delivery and pick up
- Submit required reports
- Get useful information and important alerts
- Regional delivery schedule
- Link to Learning Library
- Holiday closure schedule
- Expiration date flyer
- Agency order history
- Invoice history
- Account balance

eHarvest training is provided by the CRT team on the 2nd Tuesday and 4th Thursday of each month. **Training is required for all new partner agencies and is recommended for new staff that will be ordering for existing agencies.** Click here to sign up for this training.

There are 3 types of orders that can be placed on eHarvest: item orders, schedule-only orders, and regional orders.

eHarvest Item Orders

eHarvest item orders are orders that the partner agency creates by selecting all the items that will be placed on the order. Item orders are designated as delivery or pickup in the eHarvest order window. All agencies automatically have access to pickup orders. Access to delivery orders must be made through your County Relationship Manager and the delivery address must be approved by the Food Bank. Partner agencies are limited to only one item order at a time.

Delivery Order

The Food Bank opens a limited number of slots for delivery orders Monday–Friday at midnight. **Once slots are open, there will be a 5–7 day order window (excluding holidays and weekends) for partner agencies to select items for delivery orders.** Orders will automatically close at the end of the order window and adjustments cannot be made once closed. Delivery orders may not exceed 30,000 pounds. **Delivery orders have a delivery window from 8 a.m.–12 p.m. on the delivery date selected.** Drivers will call the partner when they are enroute to deliver. If you have an issue with an order please contact CRT.

Delivery Order Minimums

All delivery orders have a minimum number of pounds for the order to be successfully placed. These minimums are based on the number of miles of the delivery address from the Food Bank. Any order that is below the minimum weight will be systematically deleted once the order window ends.

Mileage and Minimum Tiers (Local Deliveries)

• When Food Bank miles are less than or equal to 35 = 2,000 pound minimum
• When Food Bank miles are between 36 and 50 = 4,000 pound minimum
• When Food Bank miles are greater than or equal to 51 = 6,000 pound minimum

Pickup Orders

The Food Bank makes available a limited number of slots for pickup orders Monday–Friday at midnight. Once slots are open, there will be a 5–7 day order window (excluding holidays and weekends) for partner agencies to select items for pickup orders. Orders will automatically close at the end of the order window and adjustments cannot be made once closed. Pickup orders may not exceed 30,000 pounds. Pickup orders slots have a 30-minute pickup window between 7 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. that is selected when creating the order.

eHarvest Schedule Only Orders

Mobile Food Pantry (MFPP)

- Agency selects date of delivery
- Agency selects morning or afternoon delivery:
    - Morning delivery window: 8 a.m.–10 a.m.
    - Afternoon delivery window: 12 p.m.-2 p.m.

Each MFPP order will provide between 8-11 bulk food pallets at a minimum of 10,000 lbs. and is intended to serve 250 families. The type of product that is shipped is based on the available inventory at the time the order is created two days before shipment. Agencies do not get to pick and choose what items are shipped on MFPP.

School Partner Pantry (Mobile & In–School)

- Schools work with School Pantry Program Manager to determine date of delivery
- Delivery schedules are entered internally by School Pantry Program Manager
- Delivery windows : 8 a.m.–10 a.m. and 12 p.m.–2 p.m.
- Order is built internally by CRT
- Order consists of produce, shelf stable items, meat etc.
- Order weight varies based on the number of neighbors being served
-

Community Mobile Food Pantry

- County Relationship Manager selects from available dates for agency
- Orders are entered internally by CRM
- Delivery window: 12 p.m.-2 p.m.
- Order is built internally by CRT
- Order consists of mostly produce
- Minimum 10,000 pounds up to 12,000 pounds

eHarvest Regional Orders

Regional orders are cross-dock orders delivered to a central site for multiple partner agencies that may be located from the Food Bank at a distance that may make pick ups difficult. Regional delivery partner agencies will pick up their order from the cross-dock location. The regional delivery calendar is available on eHarvest, and the regional delivery slots become available 7 business days prior to delivery and close 4 days prior to delivery. Orders for regional agencies are dropped at one central location and agencies will retrieve them from there.

Regional Delivery Sites and Days

- Cartersville
     3rd Thursdays
- Gainesville at Georgia Mountain Food Bank (GMFB)
      1st and 3rd Mondays
- Griffin
     Second Mondays
- Rome at Northwest Georgia Hunger Ministries, Inc.
     Second Wednesdays
- Rome 2
     Fourth Wednesdays

Delivery Window:
     8 a.m.-12 p.m.

Poundage Requirements:
- All regional orders have a 1,200-pound minimum and a 30,000-pound maximum.
- The Gainesville region has a 1,100 pound minimum

For issues or questions with your regional delivery please contact CRT.

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Order Fulfillment Guidelines

Warehouse Pickup

This set of instructions provides essential guidelines for agencies picking up warehouse orders from the Food Bank.

Appointment and Transportation

- The warehouse fulfillment dock operates Monday–Friday 7 a.m.–11:30 a.m. and pickups are **by appointment only.**
- Appointments are scheduled in eHarvest at the time you create an order and are on a first come first serve basis.
- Agencies must arrive at their scheduled appointment time with **adequate transportation** to pick up their order in one trip.
- Agencies should bring volunteers if they require assistance breaking down pallets and loading their order. The maximum amount of volunteers per agency allowed in the dock area at one time is 5.

Arrival Procedure

- Upon arrival, agencies must use the callbox at the gate to alert the warehouse clerk.
- Agencies will need to provide their agency code to the clerk.
- The clerk will assign the agency to a dock and provide instructions on where to proceed for pickup.
- **Vehicle limit: If an agency requires multiple vehicles to pick up their order, only two vehicles per agency can be on the dock at a time.**

Loading the Order

- A **fulfillment clerk will greet the agency and inform them of the total weight** of the order and the number of pallets.
- If the fulfillment clerk determines that the vehicle cannot accommodate the load, the agency must speak with the fulfillment supervisor for further assistance.
- Fulfillment clerks can only load orders with motorized equipment and cannot assist agencies with manually loading orders if pallets need to be broken down to load into pickup vehicles. Please stack all pallets and any trash neatly before driving off the dock.
- Agencies **must pick up the entire order.** The fulfillment clerk will not load partial orders.
- Any order weighing over 8,000 lbs. should be picked up using at least a 26-foot box truck, preferably from Penske or Ryder, or a larger vehicle.
- Agencies using U-Haul trucks should remember that:
  - These trucks are designed for moving furniture and boxes, not for loading heavy pallets or equipment. U-Haul trucks may require the order to be down stacked inside the truck, and empty pallets should be stacked on the side.
  - Most U-Haul trucks have weight limits that may prevent proper loading.

Inclement Weather and Open Trucks

- Agencies using open trucks to transport food must provide appropriate coverings to protect the food from weather conditions. Examples of open vehicles include:
  - Pickup trucks
  - Flatbed trucks
  - Any truck without a fully enclosed cargo area

  Not having the proper equipment can prevent agencies from being able to pick up their orders.

Safety on the Dock

- For safety reasons, agencies are not permitted to stand on the dock during loading. They should wait off the dock until the order is loaded.
- Agencies should refrain from climbing in and out of the dock doors; instead, they must use the designated agency door to enter and exit the warehouse.

No Idling Policy

The Food Bank has a strict no-idling policy. All vehicles must be turned off once parked on the lot.

Prohibited Items

- No weapons of any kind are allowed on Food Bank property.
- Due to food safety guidelines, pets are not allowed in the dock area.

Completion of Order Pickup

Once the order has been loaded, the agency should proceed inside the warehouse to receive their invoice and make a payment, if required.

Delivery

This following information outlines our transportation operations and delivery processes in order to ensure the integrity and quality of the food delivered.

Transportation Infrastructure

Our transportation processes are designed to support the rapid and safe distribution of food supplies to our partner agencies. We operate a fleet of vehicles that are equipped with temperature-controlled compartments to ensure that perishable items remain fresh during transit. Each vehicle is regularly maintained and inspected to comply with safety and health regulations. Our fleet profile consists of (CDL) straight trucks, tractors, trailers and (non-CDL) small passenger-carrying vehicles. All our drivers are required to possess a CDL and have the proper experience.

Establishing a New Delivery Site

All delivery sites must be preapproved by your County Relationship Manager and the transportation department before deliveries can be made. Please contact your County Relationship Manager to request a new delivery site. The County Relationship Manager will then contact the Food Bank transportation team to set up a new delivery site survey. A member of the transportation team will meet with the partner agency at the proposed delivery site to assess whether Food Bank trucks can safely access the site. This includes a thorough inspection to check that there are no low-hanging wires, large holes, or other obstacles that could impede truck entry and exit. All delivery sites must meet Food Bank safety and accessibility standards before being approved for delivery.

Scheduling & Routing

Deliveries are made based on the date they were scheduled for by our partners. Our dynamic routing system optimizes routes in both planned and real-time schedules based on multiple conditions. Unlike static routing, which follows pre-determined paths, **dynamic routing adjusts to factors like traffic congestion, equipment breakdown, product returns, road closures, and weather conditions**. This flexibility allows for more efficient use of resources, reducing fuel consumption and delivery times.

Additionally, dynamic routing improves customer satisfaction by providing more accurate delivery windows. This not only helps in reducing our carbon footprint but also ensures that food reaches its destination in the shortest possible time. Partners receive their delivery based on the type of program that delivery falls under, as shown in the service windows below:

Local Delivery	8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.
Regional Delivery	8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.
A.M. Mobile (Including schools)	8:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m.
P.M. Mobile (including schools)	12:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Our Food Bank trucks are scheduled to service many locations on any given including donation pick-ups in addition to deliveries. It is crucial for partners to stick to their scheduled delivery windows to ensure smooth operations and services.

Supplemental Retail Donation Program

The following information details requirements and protocol surrounding pickup and documentation for receiving donated products through the Supplemental Retail Donation program.

Donation Pickup Process

• On the assigned date, arrive within the store receiving hours or time previously agreed upon with the store.
• Bring all the needed equipment to successfully pick up your donation.
• Check in with the receiving clerks, usually through the back door.
• Must collect all donated products available from every product category. You are not able to pick and choose.
• Record temperatures at the store.
• Transport product back to agency in reliable vehicle and with proper equipment.
• Record temperature, weight, pests or damages upon arrival at agency.
• Move product to proper storage and distribute following the guidelines in the Partnership Contract.

Equipment Requirements

• Reliable vehicle
• If picking up from Publix: refrigerated truck required OR donations must be stored under insulated blankets or in coolers in a pickup or box truck/van
• If picking up from Costco/Sam's Club/BJ's: box truck or pickup truck
• Passenger cars are only permitted for Dollar General
• Digital scales
• Food grade thermometers
• Enough storage (dry, cooler, and freezer) to store retail donations safely
• Bins, totes, or boxes to pick up food
• Weather-resistant tarps or bins when transporting food exposed to the elements (i.e. pickup truck bed)

All drivers picking up products should have some form of identification.

Reporting

• Agencies must keep records of temperature logs of all donations received. Temperature logs must be kept for 1 year and have ready for site visits.
• All pounds received must be reported online within 24 to 48 hours after pickup.
• All pounds for the current month must be entered and submitted to the Food Bank by 2:00 p.m. on the last business day of the month.
• Failure to submit reports on time can result in removal of retail stores or from the program.

Agency Requirements

• Agencies must designate a minimum of (2) staff members/volunteers to oversee the program and report pounds on time to the Food Bank.
• Provide driver(s) to pick up retail donations.
• Perform scheduled pickups from assigned donors/retailers to pick up all available product (no cherry picking).
• Follow all food safety guidelines for transporting and receiving donated products.

To learn more about this program, contact retail.team@acfb.org

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Invoicing & Payment Guidelines

Invoicing

Agencies are invoiced once they receive their order. Please see the following information regarding invoice protocol.

- Delivery invoices are provided to agencies by driver at the time of delivery.
- Invoices are provided to agencies by the fulfillment supervisor at the time of warehouse pickup.
- Invoices can be assessed, viewed, and printed from eHarvest up to one year of invoice date.
- Restock invoices are mailed to the agency address on file.
- Restock fees are incurred if orders are cancelled after being picked and staged.
- Invoices may reflect a different total than the order form due to items being unavailable, damaged, or removed from an order due to quality control issues.

Invoice discrepancies must be reported to the CRT team within 24 hours of pickup or delivery. Pictures are required if you are reporting damaged product.

Payment Terms

- On Account: Agency has 30 days from date of receiving order to remit payment.
- Check Day Of: Agencies picking up warehouse orders must remit payment at the time of pickup.

Accounts carrying a past due balance of 30 days or more will automatically be placed on a systematic financial hold on the 1st of each month.

Please allow adequate time for mailed payments to reach the Food Bank and be processed by the accounting department. Accounts that have been placed on systematic hold will be unable to order until their past due balance is remitted to accounting.

Checks should be made out to the Atlanta Community Food Bank. To learn more about how the Food Bank processes payments and checks please see the following video. Processing Checks Video

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Product Storage Guidelines

Storage Requirements

Agencies are encouraged to take only as much food as they can store properly. You should feel free to order as often as you like. However, we strongly discourage stockpiling food items as this can lead to food spoilage and waste. Please be sure to check the food regularly to determine its freshness. A good practice is to ensure freshness is to adopt a 'FIFO' system – first food in is the first food out.

Food Safety

The Food Bank follows these guidelines provided by our umbrella organization, Feeding America–the national network of more than 200 food banks.

• Non-perishable food can be safely distributed up to one year past the expiration date. (Feeding America bases this on FDA & USDA stipulations.)

• Snack foods can be distributed up to three months past the expiration date.

• Over the counter (OTC) medicines must be within date in order to be distributed. The expiration date should at least be one month ahead of the current month. Any OTC medicine containing pseudoephedrine or ephedrine cannot be distributed.

• Food must have a label to be distributed.

• Many of the foods you will receive from the Food Bank require cold or frozen storage. It is mandatory to keep a thermometer in your storage refrigerator and freezer to monitor the temperature.

• Food items that have damaged packaging might be perfectly fine to eat. However, cans with dents on seams, sharp edged dents, or leakage should be discarded. Dry foods in packages that expose the contents to air and water should be discarded as well.

- Food must be stored properly to comply with the federal Good Samaritan Law. Liability issues are covered by the federal Good Samaritan Law, if food is transported and stored properly. The federal Good Sam Law only covers foods which have been commercially processed.
- Food should be stored on the shelf, off the floor, and out of the cardboard boxes
- Cleaning supplies should be stored apart from food items.
- Food Bank partner agencies must have a pest control plan, a current contract with a licensed professional exterminator, and an extermination logbook. The extermination logbook will hold your contract and receipts for each visit. This must be available for review when a Food Bank representative visits your site. The Food Bank recommends monthly exterminator visits, although some sites may require more frequent visits.

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Distribution Guidelines

Backpack Program

Backpack programs provide nutritious, easy to prepare, kid-friendly food at no cost to students or their families outside of school-operating hours. Most backpack programs distribute groceries on Friday and take a break during the summer.

To get started in the Backpack program, you must:

- Determine that there is a need for such programs at your local schools.
- Connect with at least one school support person that will be responsible for receiving, distributing and reporting brown bag usage.
- Notify your CRM of your backpack program.

Which students are eligible to receive brown bags?

This program should be available to any family in need. Each participating school should have at least one school support person to determine which students would most benefit from the program.

As a backpack distributing agency with the Food Bank, you must:

- Provide the Food Bank with the name of the school, counties served, and the number of participants per school that your program operates in.
- Distribute brown bags to eligible schools on a weekly basis.
- Abide by GNAP/ TEFAP guidelines.
- Submit monthly service reports of distributed brown bags by each school on eHarvest.
- GNAP/TEFAP agencies must indicate the total number of brown bags distributed using GNAP/TEFAP commodities per month.

GNAP

On the day of the distribution, partner agencies must abide by the following GNAP guidelines:

- Only distribute GNAP commodities to households with children 17 years and younger or 18 and enrolled in school.
- When GNAP items are distributed to qualifying households the following information must be collected on the required GNAP intake form:
  - Number of people in the household
  - Number of children in the household
  - Qualifying factor: receives one or more of the following services: TANF, TANF transitional, At-risk qualifiers (household income based)
  - Signature of person filling out the form

TEFAP

- Only distribute commodities to recipients deemed eligible according to the eligibility income guidelines established by the state.
- Have at least one representative present during TEFAP distributions who has attended TEFAP training with the Food Bank.
- Determine the number of TEFAP commodities to be distributed to each household size.
- Complete the TEFAP Commodity form.
- Display the "And Justice For ALL" poster and Written Notice of Beneficiary Rights.
- Collect TEFAP Household Eligibility (832) for all households receiving TEFAP commodities.

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Reporting Guidelines

Recordkeeping

To maintain compliance with the Food Bank Partnership Contract there are several record keeping requirements for gathering and reporting service statistics that are expected of all partner agencies. **Collecting, maintaining, and reporting accurate service statistics helps the Food Bank determine rates of food insecurity in our service area and where resources need to be directed.** Recordkeeping can be performed either manually or digitally by the partner agency and must be collected and stored in a manner that can be reviewed and verified by the Food Bank compliance team upon request. The following are recordkeeping and reporting requirements for various distribution types. Partner agencies that have multiple distribution types will need to collect service statistics and report for each. Let the Compliance team know if you want to learn more about digital recordkeeping.

Food Pantry Distributions

The following information should be obtained during Food Pantry distributions:
- Number of households served
- Number of people in each household
- Total number of children served
- Total number of senior citizens served
- Total number of pounds of food distributed

On-Site/ Backpack Distributions

The following information should be obtained during On-Site and Backpack distributions:
- Total number of individuals fed during the past month
- Total number of breakfasts served during the past month
- Total number of lunches served during the past month
- Total number of dinners served during the past month
- Total number of snacks served during the past month
- Total number of brown bags served during the past month
- Total number of home delivered meals served during the past month

*Backpack programs report total number of brown bags served on the total number of brown bags served line.

Mobile Food Pantry Program (MFPP)

The following information should be obtained during MFPP distributions:
- Total number of households served
- Must report for each Mobile Food Pantry received

GNAP

When GNAP items are distributed to qualifying households the following information must be collected on the required GNAP Intake form:
- Number of people in the household
- Number of children in the household
- Qualifying factor: Receives one or more of the following services: TANF, TANF transitional, at risk for one or more of these services.
- Signature of person filling out the form

The following GNAP information must be reported monthly to the Food Bank:

Pantry Distributions
- Number of TANF families
- Number of TANF transitional families
- Number of At-Risk families

Congregate Feeding/Backpack distributions
- Total number of meals served using GNAP foods as ingredients

GNAP On Hand
- The total amount of GNAP foods remained in inventory at the end of the month

TEFAP

When TEFAP items are distributed to qualifying households, the following information must be collected on the required TEFAP 832 Intake form:

- Name and address of the household
- Number of people in the household
- Signature of recipient self-declaring eligibility based on income guidelines

The following TEFAP information must be reported to the Food Bank monthly:

Pantry distributions:

- Total number of households received TEFAP items
- Total number of people in those households

Congregate Feeding/Backpack distributions:

- Total number of meals served using TEFAP foods as ingredients

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Compliance Monitoring Visits

Scheduling

We are required by our national umbrella organization, Feeding America, to assure our donors of your continued nonprofit status and approved programming. We accomplish this by scheduling regular monitoring visits with each partner agency on a 12–18-month rotation. Each monitoring visit will be scheduled in advance by a member of our Compliance team.

Pre-Visit

New partners are visited in the first three months of becoming a partner agency. We want to ensure your ordering, reporting, and account is accurate to ensure a successful partnership with your agency.

On-Site

During these visits, we will need to review the last 12 months of your distribution/usage records, monthly service reports, TEFAP, GNAP, and Enabled reports (if applicable), and Food Bank invoices. We will also need to tour your food preparation area and storage facilities.

Additionally, we will want to discuss your programs, community concerns, and ways in which the Food Bank may be of assistance. Our hope is that these visits with our staff will serve the Feeding America requirement as well as offer us a means to enhance our collective work.

We reserve the right to conduct on-site visits with each agency whenever we have been alerted to a possible problem regarding the integrity of our partnership. We are strong stewards of the donations which come our way and have a compelling responsibility to ensure the donated foods are used in the manner intended.

Action Plans

A finding of noncompliance may result in a required action plan. Failure to adopt any recommended or required steps from an action plan can result in reconsideration of partnership.

Probation & Suspension of Partnership

Possible Reasons for Noncompliance

- Inadequate storage.
- Inadequate recordkeeping procedures.
- Unsanitary conditions onsite.
- No clear food program hours of operations.
- Exchanging Food Bank donated product for money, property, labor, services, or attendance at worship services or barter to individuals or organizations.
- Removal of Food Bank donated product from an approved member agency for private use or sale by the agency's employees, members, or volunteers.
- Using Food Bank donated product in any manner not related to the exempt purposes of the Atlanta Community Food Bank.
- Delinquencies in reimbursement of the share contribution fee.
- Delinquencies in timely submission of the monthly service reports.
- Food Bank donated products are improperly transported, stored, distributed and/or stockpiled.
- Food Bank donated products, USDA commodities or purchased products are not accounted for through accurate, available recordkeeping by the partner agency.
- Partner agency is in violation of any applicable local, state, or federal statute, ordinance, code or regulation.
- Partner agency is involved in activity that could impair the reputation of the Atlanta Community Food Bank.
- Partner agency does not permit Food Bank staff to complete a monitoring visit within a reasonable time period of the request.
- Partner agency otherwise violates the basic agreement between itself and the Food Bank.

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Additional Resources

Nutrition Program

Everyone deserves the opportunity to live a long and healthy life. Race, ethnicity, zip code, gender, education and income level should not determine one's access to healthy food or the other factors that contribute to our overall well-being.

Our Nutrition and Wellness team provides inclusive and culturally responsive nutrition education programming that reflects our neighbors' cultural, lifestyle and dietary needs and preferences. We offer engaging, compelling, and relevant educational opportunities using the food from our inventory in healthy and convenient ways. We prioritize online learning opportunities and make nutrition information available at our partners' sites to remove the barriers of transportation and time constraints that many of our neighbors' face.

Visit our Learning Library Nutrition section to learn more, accessible on our Partner Resources page.

Grants

The Food Bank's Grant Program serves to provide financial resources to partners to assist them in building capacity and increasing access for neighbors. To be eligibile for grants, partners must follow a set of guidelines, accessible here. Partner eligibility is also based on program participation.

For partners who are in need of resource growth opportunities, please complete our Grants Interest Form here.

Oasis

The Food Bank provides a shared, no-cost platform called Oasis Insights, a neighbor-services database designed for food banks and their network of partner agencies to track neighbor assistance directly. Gathering intake information in a shared platform includes the collection of basic, administrative data from the people you serve, and then using that data to identify insights about who you serve and how to serve them better.

Key features include:
- All software and subscription costs are covered by the Food Bank (free for partners)
- TEFAP, GNAP, and Oasis compliant, including electronic signature capture of all necessary forms
- Barcoding: Use any barcode (generated by Oasis or in neighbor's possession, like a
- gas card) to check people in
- Neighbor aging: By entering date of birth, the system will automatically classify a
- neighbor as a child, adult, or senior
- Appointment scheduling
- Text and email messaging (message and data rates may apply to partners)

For partners interested in getting started on Oasis, please complete the Oasis Interest Form.

Benefits Outreach

Our Benefits Outreach program is a recognized Community Partner as part of the State of Georgia's Department of Children & Family Services (DFCS) SNAP Outreach plan. This allows us to use Georgia Gateway to help neighbors who are applying for the first time, renewing benefits, or who have enrolled in the past.

This program assists with SNAP (Food Stamps), Medicaid, and WIC.

Fill out the Benefits Outreach Interest Form here to connect with the Food Bank's Benefits Outreach team to discuss the best option for your organization.

Learning Library

The Food Bank's Learning Library contains tools, trainings, and resources that serve to support our entire partner network. You can find contact information and service area maps for all of the Partner Relations teams. Additionally, you can view past Partner Newsletters, review past training materials, sign up for new trainings and learn more about the different partner opportunities available. Our Learning Library is accessible through our Partner Resources page.

Partner Newsletter

Our monthly Partner Newsletter is a great resource for partners to stay updated regarding Food Bank updates and alerts, upcoming trainings, and any additional partner-centered information. You can subscribe to our Partner Newsletter on our Learning Library under 'Network Connections'.

Partner Agency Council

The Partner Agency Council is a coalition of network partners who serve as advisors to the Food Bank. In addition, the Council provides practical input and feedback on Food Bank plans to strengthen our network capacity to better meet the needs of our communities. The Council will give voice to the whole network and guide the Food Bank in setting goals and developing solutions that benefit all of our partner agencies.

View our current council members here.