Remove Barriers to Visitation



DISCOVER
Discover and understand the behavior.

The primary focus of **removing barriers to visitation** is to allow neighbors to access services as frequently as they deem necessary. While this journey will look different for every agency partner, we seek to provide opportunities for **weekly visitation**.

Other desired outcomes include serving neighbors regardless of where they live (no geographic restrictions) and eliminating the requirement of specific forms of identification for entry.

CONSIDER
Consider why the behavior is important to support neighbors in need.

Systemic barriers related to frequency limits, geographic restrictions, identification requirements and others make it challenging to get food when it is needed the most. If we can reduce these barriers, more people will be able to navigate the complexity and stress of accessing food in ways that can truly be transformational!

Navigating the process of finding a convenient pantry, understanding the steps to get food, building the courage to enter a pantry, and getting comfortable with the service experience can be challenging. Having to do that from scratch multiple times a month because the needs of a neighbor's family don't match the access and food they receive is overwhelming. For those undergoing significant stress and trauma, this adds a burden that could be avoided if return visits were allowed based on the needs of the neighbor.

Additionally, individuals may prefer to go to a pantry in another area where they know fewer people but are turned away because that pantry doesn't serve their home zip code. Expanding your service area will provide convenient access to people who work near you but live elsewhere, or to people on public transportation who pass by your facility on their way home.

> "Originally we allowed neighbors to come once a month. A neighbor told us, 'I come when I can, but how can you expect me to only visit once a month when you don't give me enough food to last till then?' Our shift was born from that conversation. We removed geographic restrictions and our limits on the number of shopping trips allowed by neighbors, so they can come as often as they need."

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TAKE ACTION

Determine the path forward and take action with the information and resources available.

1. **Listen to understand neighbor's needs that we may be missing:** Have a conversation with your team about what populations in your service area you may be missing or those who visit once and never return. Would removing visitation barriers help you reach these populations?
2. **Review your current policies:** Have a conversation with your team about why you have these policies in place. Ask questions like "Is this a necessary requirement?", "Who is this policy benefiting?", and "Who is this policy burdening?".

We know that additional resources are needed to bring this to life. This is what you have stated would be needed to allow neighbors to visit more frequently:

- More food
- Volunteers or additional staff
- Funding
- Space in the pantry (infrastructure)

ENGAGE WITH US

If you're interested in **removing barriers to visitation:**

Grants Interest Form

Fill out the Grants Interest Form to inform the Food Bank of your resource growth needs. If opportunities arise that fit your needs, you will be contacted by a member of our staff.

Contact County Relationship Manager

Contact your County Relationship Manager who can partner with you to grow capacity and connect you with partner agencies exploring or currently implementing this behavior.