



# Membership Information & Guidelines

*(Last updated: 1/26/2022)*

*This information is to be shared with all who will be  
working with your food program.*

[www.feedingAL.org](http://www.feedingAL.org)



## What is a Food Bank?

Food banking was started in Phoenix, Arizona in the late 1960's when local efforts to collect food for the poor were so successful that a central warehouse was needed. By 1979, food banking had become a national effort and America's Second Harvest, now known as Feeding America, the national food bank network, was officially incorporated. Today, there are over 200 food bank warehouses across the country that belong to the Feeding America network. These warehouses adhere to strict standards governing the handling, storage, and distribution of donated food. Food banking is the largest private sector effort in the United States whose sole purpose is to feed food insecure individuals.

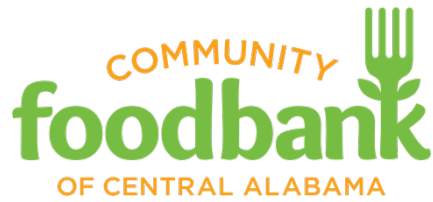
### People who need food assistance include:

- the working poor with low wages and no benefits
- the unemployed
- the elderly and disabled on fixed incomes
- the homeless
- people experiencing temporary emergencies such as fire, eviction, or a major illness
- single women and children

While their situations may vary widely, these people share in common the fact that they lack the resources to both obtain healthy, nutritious foods and meet other financial obligations.

Since 1982, the Community Food Bank of Central Alabama (CFBCA) has responded to the hunger crisis in Alabama by providing food to people in need. CFBCA, along with its network of over 200 partner agencies, has grown into central Alabama's largest hunger-relief organization. **CFBCA is a member of Feeding America and United Way.**





## Information & Fact Sheet

At its core, the CFBCA is a central clearinghouse for the collection and distribution of 12 million pounds of food annually that might otherwise be wasted. While seemingly simple, the handling of this volume of food requires a complex infrastructure and sophisticated management. The CFBCA receives donations from numerous sources, primary among them being the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Feeding America, national retail donors, manufacturers, and food drives. Some of these donations, while edible and nutritious, could not be sold at retail or wholesale outlets for several reasons—over production, unattractive packaging to customers, shelf-life turnover in stores (short code dates and/or out of date), damaged goods, etc. Through their donations, businesses have an opportunity to help those in need in their community while at the same time qualifying for a potential tax incentive. To supplement donations, the CFBCA also makes cost effective, bulk purchases of both dry goods and produce. With the assistance of volunteers, our staff ensures the safe storage and reliable distribution of this food through two main channels: partner agencies and direct service programs.

Our network of over 250 partner agencies is at the center of helping address hunger among families, children, and seniors. Included among these volunteer-driven organizations are food pantries, homeless shelters, soup kitchens, children's programs, and residential facilities for the elderly and disabled. Any charitable, non-profit agency or religious organization meeting the criteria of the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) as a 501(c)(3) agency, that agrees to provide food to needy people at no charge, may apply to become a member agency of the Food Bank.

In recognition of the fact that the reach of our Agency network, while vast, cannot provide service to all vulnerable populations throughout the 8,900 square miles of our service area, the CFBCA also provides direct service through a number of programs. Because hunger has an especially devastating impact on families with children, the CFBCA has developed programs, Weekenders Backpack, Family Market, and Mobile Pantry, which deliver food in targeted ways and in places where children and their families can readily access it.

# Community Food Bank of Central Alabama

## Membership Guidelines

*In order to ensure that food distributed by the Community Food Bank of Central Alabama (CFBCA) is used appropriately, member agencies must adhere to the following guidelines:*

1. Member agencies must be either (1) tax-exempt, nonprofit organizations described in section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Service Code or (2) a church recognized by the IRS as such. Proof of the applicable status is required and must be maintained.
2. Member agencies must use food received from or through a relationship with the CFBCA to serve the ill, needy, or children— with primary service to the needy. The use of food must be related to the reason the agency is tax exempt.
3. To apply for membership with the CFBCA, an applicant must provide the following documentation (in addition to the membership application):
  - a. Letter of Determination from the Internal Revenue Service verifying their tax-exempt status - 501(c)(3). Churches applying must provide a copy of their 501(c)(3), or a letter from denominational headquarters stating the church applying for membership is in good standing in that denomination. Churches that do not have an official 501(c)(3) may qualify for membership if they meet certain established criteria; however, the ultimate determination will be made by food bank staff.
  - b. A copy of Charter or Articles of Incorporation
  - c. A list of members of the governing body, designating the officers and mailing addresses and phone numbers of those officers.
  - d. A copy of the governing Board's approval for participation in the Food Bank
  - e. Certificate of Liability Insurance Coverage
  - f. Proof of funding sources and projected budget for the food program
  - g. Evidence (pictures, brochures, etc.) of operation of a food program for a minimum of 4 months prior to application
  - h. Proof of pest control services provided by a reputable company at least quarterly
4. Once approved, member Agencies must agree to:
  - a. Take responsibility to provide food free of charge to recipients that are truly needy.
  - b. Support the operation of the CFBCA through the payment of a shared maintenance fee of sixteen cents per pound for food received from the Food Bank (as applicable).
  - c. Place a minimum of one order (of at least 1,000 lbs.) every six months.
  - d. Allow monitoring visits by CFBCA representatives. Sites will be monitored at least once every two years but may be monitored more often.
  - e. Keep consistent, accurate records required by the CFBCA. Agencies must also submit monthly reports to the CFBCA regarding the recipients they are serving with the food received. Records should be kept for a minimum of four years.
  - f. Ensure that food storage space and food preparation areas are appropriate. Space must be kept clean, secure, organized, and free of rodents/pests.
  - g. Maintain licensing and/or certification by all required health authorities and the CFBCA.
  - h. Update the CFBCA about any changes in the Agency's food program, program location, or personnel, including a change in your 501(c)(3) status.

- i. Provide transportation to pick up food at the CFBCA.
  - j. Pay outstanding balance within 30 days of pick-up. If account becomes past due (carrying outstanding balance of more than 30 days) within the first year of membership, that agency will be required to pay upon pick-up for a minimum of 12 months following the violation.
5. Agencies may not sell, barter, trade, or exchange food for money, services, or property. Recipients are never to be charged for food or asked for a donation. Agencies that are found charging recipients for food or asking for a donation from recipients are in violation of Food Bank policy and will have their membership terminated immediately, and all food product on hand will revert back to the Community Food Bank of Central Alabama.
  - a. Food may not be sold in any circumstance including sale in a thrift store, flea market, or any other event.
  - b. Food may not be used as payment for volunteers.
  - c. Food must not be used for consumption by any agency (church or service organization) for group meals, picnics, or barbecues, parties, or for any social or fundraising event.
  - d. Food must not be taken for personal use.
6. Agencies may not discriminate on any basis when distributing food to participants, including but not limited to: race, color, national origin, age, disability, sex, gender identity, religion, reprisal, and, where applicable, political beliefs, marital status, familial or parental status, or sexual orientation.
7. Agencies may not require food recipients to listen to religious messages, attend services, or work in exchange for food.
8. Loss of USDA food valued at \$100 or more must be reported to the CFBCA immediately. Once the CFBCA has been notified, a letter of condemnation must be obtained from the health department. In the event of burglary or fire, a report must also be filed with the local police or fire department and must be submitted to the CFBCA. All USDA food lost must be replaced by the responsible agency.
9. The CFBCA must be able to prove to the Internal Revenue Service that the member Agencies that receive food from the food bank fulfill the requirements above. Obtaining food under false pretense or for fraudulent purposes is a violation of the Criminal Code of the State of Alabama.

**FAILURE TO COMPLY WITH THESE RULES WILL RESULT IN  
DISMISSAL FROM THE FOOD BANK.**

*Please keep this copy in your files at all times for your reference.*

## Community Food Bank of Alabama Probation/Suspension Policy

The Community Food Bank of Central Alabama (CFBCA) will conduct an on-site visit of each member Agency prior to membership approval. Once approved, each member Agency is monitored a minimum of once every 2 years. However, the CFBCA reserves the right to monitor a member Agency more frequently to review storage areas, distribution practices, and records.

### **Probation:**

A member Agency found in violation of its Agency Agreement or these Membership Guidelines may be placed on probation for a period not to exceed three months. Notification must be in writing. The Agency Relations Manager and/or any staff member knowing of any violations will notify the Director of Agencies, who has authority to place member agencies on probation.

The Director of Agencies will notify the Chief Executive Officer of any agency that is placed on probation and the reason for this action. The member Agency may appeal its probationary status to the Chief Executive Officer by delivering such an appeal, in writing, to the Director of Agencies.

The purpose of the probationary period is to place a member Agency on notice that it must bring its program into compliance or risk suspension. During the probationary period, the member Agency will normally retain all of its rights and privileges as a member of the Food Bank; however, some violations may call for an immediate hold on obtaining any further product from the CFBCA. If the violation is not rectified by the end of the probationary period, the Director of Agencies shall have the authority to extend the probationary period or to recommend suspension of the member Agency. The member Agency may appeal this decision as previously outlined. A member Agency's probationary status terminates when one of the following occurs:

1. The member Agency exhibits to the Agency Relations Manager, Director of Agencies, and/or Chief Executive Officer that the violation has been rectified; or
2. The Chief Executive Officer suspends the member Agency.

### **Suspension:**

A member Agency may be suspended, without first being placed on probation, if found in violation of #1, 2, 3, or 4 below. Agencies found in blatant violation of #5, 6, 7 or 8 and placed on probation a maximum of three times will also be subject to suspension. Upon suspension, an agency loses all rights and privileges as a member of the CFBCA. At the end of the suspension period, an Agency may reapply to become a member Agency with the CFBCA; however, re-approval for membership is not guaranteed.

### **Violations:**

1. Exchanging donated food or other products for money, property, or services.
2. Removal of donated food or other products from an on-site program for personal use.
3. Using donated food or other products in a manner that is not related to the exempt purposes of the food bank.
4. Delinquent in reimbursement of shared maintenance contributions. Member Agencies are expected to pay shared maintenance and V.A.P. charges within 30 days of pick-up.
5. Donated food or other products are stored, refrigerated, or frozen improperly.
6. Donated food or other product is stockpiled.
7. Member Agency is in violation of any state or local statute, ordinance, code, or regulation.
8. Member Agency otherwise violated the Agency Agreement between itself and the CFBCA.

## What is a Shared Maintenance Fee?

The Food Bank does not charge agencies for donated product that agencies receive from the Food Bank. Donated product is provided free of charge. Members are required to contribute towards the overall operation expenses of the Food Bank through payment of a nominal fee, called a Shared Maintenance Fee.

The total cost incurred by the CFBCA to receive, organize, store, and deliver an increasingly wide variety of product, including highly perishable retail donations and fresh produce, while meeting increasing food safety requirements, is not insubstantial. Your contribution towards these costs is based on the number of pounds of product that you source from the Food Bank.

The allowable shared maintenance rate per pound is established by Feeding America and may be up to \$0.19 per pound. Currently, the shared maintenance fee at the CFBCA is \$0.16 per pound. While this cost is subject to change, the staff at the Community Food Bank of Central Alabama works hard to keep the cost of our operations down and the cost of the shared maintenance fee as low as possible.

## Required Records to be kept by Member Agencies

*Keep all records for a minimum of 4 years. Records should be easily accessible, on-site, and organized. Please keep documents, as noted below, in **two (2) binders**.*

### Binder #1

1. Copy of Membership Application
2. Copy of Agency Agreement
3. Copy of U.S.D.A. Agreement, if applicable
4. Membership Guidelines
5. Updates to any of the above

### Binder #2

1. Copies of all **Invoices** from the Food Bank.
2. **Temperature charts** for each dry, refrigerated, and freezer storage area used. Temperatures to be recorded daily. (*Temperature charts are not necessary if food is distributed immediately and not stored.*)
3. **Perishable Product Transport Temperature Logs:** If you receive refrigerated or frozen foods, record temperatures of food upon each pick up from the Food Bank or any of its affiliate retail partners and upon arriving back at your facility.
4. Copies of **Monthly Reports** submitted to the Food Bank with statistical information about recipients served (total served by age and gender).
5. Record of each recipient household served, capturing demographic data needed for Monthly Reports. *For agencies electing to not receive USDA food, the **Request for Food Assistance information sheet**, or a similar form, should be completed for each recipient household.* Agencies receiving USDA Food **MUST** have each recipient household complete a current TEFAP form at least once within the year.
6. **Member agencies receiving USDA foods are also required to:**

- a. **Keep a running inventory record of all USDA food only.** (*Inventory each USDA food received separately. For example: Canned chicken, canned carrots, orange juice, etc.*)
- b. **For Food Pantries:** Keep on file a signed copy of the Eligibility Criteria for Emergency Food Assistance (TEFAP) for each recipient household served. This form is valid only for the period indicated at the top of the TEFAP form. A new TEFAP form **MUST** be signed annually by each recipient household.
- c. **For Soup Kitchens & Residential Facilities:** Keep on file a Log of menus for meals/snacks served, including number served at each meal, foods served, date served, and indicating any USDA foods used in preparation of the meal.
- d. Display, in an area visible to recipients, the **“Justice for All” poster.**
- e. Keep on file a non-discriminatory **Civil Rights Grievance Procedure** (*Template provided*). This procedure should be adopted by agency’s leadership and displayed.
- f. **Religious organizations** must also post **The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP) – Written Notice of Beneficiary Rights** poster.

## Ordering Food

1. Agency orders must be placed at least once every 6 months via the Food Bank’s online ordering system (Primarius Web Window) with a minimum of 1000 lbs. per order. As part of your Food Bank training, at least one member of your agency staff must attend online ordering training. This training covers how to place orders and schedule pickups. You will be advised as to upcoming training dates.
2. An agency may pick up food from the Food Bank no more than two times per week.
3. All product picked up from the Food Bank must be covered during transport. Agencies transporting either refrigerated or frozen food items must also provide a means of active or passive temperature control during transportation.
4. **Procedure for order pickup:**
  - a. When you arrive at the warehouse, let the warehouse office staff know that you have arrived. Do not pull up to a loading dock until your scheduled pickup time.
  - b. Proceed to the “Agency Sign In” counter to sign in.
  - c. You may wait for your scheduled pickup time either in your vehicle or in the break room (when open). For safety reasons, you may not wait in the warehouse.
  - d. At your scheduled pickup time, a warehouse worker will let you know when to pull your vehicle up to the dock for loading.
  - e. Once your order has been loaded, please promptly move your vehicle away from the loading dock so that the next agency can be loaded.
  - f. Invoices will be automatically emailed to your agency.
5. Pay outstanding balance within 30 days of pick-up. If account becomes past due (carrying outstanding balance of more than 30 days) within the first year of membership, your agency will be required to pay upon pick-up for a minimum of 12 months following the violation.



## Product Dating

Inconsistencies in the current food dating system have led to consumer confusion and misinterpretation. According to the most conservative estimates, Americans waste 160 billion pounds of food each year, largely due to this confusion and misinterpretation. Most food date labels are intended as indicators of freshness and quality, not food safety. For a more in-depth discussion of food dating, please see the NRDC Report [The Dating Game: How Confusing Food Date Labels Lead to Food Waste in America](#) (Sept. 2013).

If you cannot locate a copy of this article, please contact the Food Bank for an email copy. The following information is from “foodkeeper.com”.

Canned Goods	Shelf Life After Code Date
Beans	3 Years
High Acid Foods, Fruit, Pickles, Baked Beans, Tomatoes, etc.	1-2 Years
Low Acid Foods, Gravy, Soups, Pasta, Cream Sauces, Vegetables	2-3 Years
Meat - Beef, Chicken, Pork, Turkey	2-3 Years
Condiments, Sauces, Syrups	Shelf Life After Code Date
BBQ Sauce	1 Year
Jams, Jellies, Preserves	18 Months
Ketchup, Cocktail Sauce, Chili Sauce	18 Months
Mayonnaise	3-6 Months
Mustard	2 Years
Salad Dressing	1 Year
Salsa	12-18 Months
Spaghetti Sauce	18 Months
Dry Goods	Shelf Life After Code Date
Pancake Mix	9 Months
Brownie, Cake, and Muffin Mix	12-18 Months
Cereal	1 Year
Cookies	4 Months
Crackers	8 Months
Dried Fruit	6 Months
Dry Beans	1 Year
Graham Crackers	2 Months
Macaroni and Cheese Mix	9-12 Months
Oatmeal	12 Months
Pasta	2-3 Years
Peanut Butter	18 Months
Popcorn kernels	2 Years
Popcorn Microwave Bags	1 Year

Potato Chips	2 Months
Potatoes, Instant	1 Year
Pretzels	1 Year
Pudding, Prepared (Cups)	1 Week
Rice, Brown	1 Year
Rice, White	2 Years
Toaster Pastries with Fruit	6 Months
Toaster Pastries without Fruit	9 Months
Tortillas	3 Months
<b>Dairy</b>	<b>Shelf Life After Code Date</b>
Butter	1-3 Weeks
Buttermilk	1-2 Weeks
Cheese, hard (Such as Cheddar, Swiss...)	6 Months (Unopened) 3-4 Weeks (Opened)
Parmesan, shredded	1 Month Unopened
Shredded Cheeses	1 Month
Cheese, processed (Sliced)	1-2 Months
Cheese, soft	1 Week
Cottage Cheese	1 Week
Cream Cheese	2 Weeks
Whipping Cream	1 Month
Real Whipped Cream, Aerosol Can	3-4 Weeks
Non-Dairy Topping, Aerosol Can	3 Months
Half-And-Half	3-4 Days
Sour Cream, and Sour Cream based dips	2 Weeks
Eggs	3-5 Weeks
Margarine	6 Months
Milk	1 Week
Yogurt	7-14 Days

# Temperature Records for Storage

Temperature is a factor that affects most foods. Storing food at improper temperatures or exposing foods to less than ideal temperatures can result in an array of problems.

For this reason, the temperature of each dry, refrigerated, and freezer space you are using to store food should be monitored consistently. Thermometers should be placed in each dry, refrigerated, and freezer space that you use. Temperatures for these spaces should be recorded daily on the logs provided. Any inconsistencies should be addressed promptly so that food continues to be stored at the appropriate temperatures.

- Frozen foods should be kept at 0° F or below.
- Refrigerated food should be kept at 35–41°F.
- Dry storage areas should be kept at 45-70°F.

One of the most important reasons to keep cold food cold and frozen food frozen is that bacteria will begin to grow and multiply rapidly at temperatures above 42°F. Even at subfreezing temperatures many bacteria survive, but multiplication of most bacteria is prevented.

Dry food storage also demands temperature control. It is ideal to keep the temperature of dry storage below 70° F. Higher temperatures encourage growth of disease-causing bacteria and permit insect contamination of dry cereal, dry beans, meal, and flour.

If an agency cannot control dry storage temperatures, especially in the warm months of the year, then care should be taken NOT to store perishable foods during these times. Once obtained from the Food Bank, food should be distributed immediately. Canned food will fare better and will not be affected by moderately warm temperatures; however, other dry goods will be negatively affected by periods of exposure greater than 70° F.

Food Banks and agencies alike must be accountable for storing food within these guidelines to help ensure that food remains in good condition.

## Shelf Stable Food Chart\*

<b>Shelf Stable Foods</b>	<b>Unopened in Pantry</b>	<b>in Refrigerator, After Opening</b>
<b>Canned Goods, Low Acid</b> (such as meat, poultry, fish, gravy, stew, soups, beans, carrots, corn, pasta, peas, potatoes, spinach)	<b>2 to 5 years</b>	<b>3 to 4 days</b>
<b>Canned Goods, High Acid</b> (such as juices, fruit, pickles, sauerkraut, tomato soup, and foods in vinegar-based sauce)	<b>12 to 18 months</b>	<b>5 to 7 days</b>

*\*Source: A Consumer's Guide to Food Quality and Safe Handling, The Food Marketing Institute.*

## For the Freezer

### Baked/Cooked Foods

- Baked pies, pastry, cookie dough \_\_\_\_\_ 4-6 mos.
- Baked quick breads, rolls \_\_\_\_\_ 6-8 mos.
- Casseroles/Main Dishes \_\_\_\_\_ 6 mos.
- Fruit Cakes/Unfrosted cakes \_\_\_\_\_ 9-12 mos.
- Leftover cooked foods \_\_\_\_\_ 2 weeks
- Sandwiches \_\_\_\_\_ 1 mo.
- Soups/Stews \_\_\_\_\_ 3 mos.
- Yeast Breads/Rolls \_\_\_\_\_ 9-12 mos.

### Eggs

- Whites \_\_\_\_\_ 12 mos.
- Whole & Yolks \_\_\_\_\_ 9 mos.

### Fish

- Lean (bass, cod, flounder) \_\_\_\_\_ 6-8 mos.
- Fat (mackerel, salmon, etc.) \_\_\_\_\_ 3-4 mos.
- Shellfish \_\_\_\_\_ 4-6 mos.

Fruits \_\_\_\_\_ 9-12 mos.

Vegetables \_\_\_\_\_ 9-12 mos.

### Poultry

- Chicken \_\_\_\_\_ 12 mos.
- Game Birds \_\_\_\_\_ 8-12 mos.
- Turkeys, Ducks, Geese \_\_\_\_\_ 6-8 mos.

### Meats

- Bacon/Franks \_\_\_\_\_ 1 mo.
- Beef Roasts \_\_\_\_\_ 6-12 mos.
- Chops/Steaks/Cutlets \_\_\_\_\_ 3-4 mos.
- Cooked Meats \_\_\_\_\_ 2-3 mos.
- Corned Beef \_\_\_\_\_ 2 weeks
- Ground Beef, Lamb, Veal \_\_\_\_\_ 3-4 mos.
- Ground Pork \_\_\_\_\_ 1-3 mos.
- Lamb-Fresh \_\_\_\_\_ 6-9 mos.
- Meat Pies-Cooked \_\_\_\_\_ 3 mos.
- Pork-Fresh \_\_\_\_\_ 3-6 mos.
- Prepared Meat Dinners \_\_\_\_\_ 2-6 mos.
- Stews-Cooked \_\_\_\_\_ 3-4 mos.
- Veal-Fresh \_\_\_\_\_ 6-9 mos.

**Freezer Facts:** Raw foods which have a high water content — lettuce and other salad greens, celery, watermelon, cantaloupe, and similar products — are *not recommended* for freezing. Similarly, clams, hard cooked eggs, luncheon meats, salad dressing, mayonnaise, and mixtures *made with these ingredients*: sour and heavy cream, custards and meringue, cake batter, jellies & jams, and gelatin desserts also do not freeze well.

## For the Refrigerator

### Cheese

- Natural & Process \_\_\_\_\_ 4-8 weeks
- Cream, Neufchatel, Ricotta, & Cottage \_\_\_\_\_ 1-2 weeks

Eggs \_\_\_\_\_ 3 weeks

Fruit (Open Cans) \_\_\_\_\_ 1 week

Vegetables (Open Cans) \_\_\_\_\_ 3 days

### Leftovers

- Casseroles/Main/Soups \_\_\_\_\_ 2-3 days

### Meat

- Bacon \_\_\_\_\_ 5-7 days
- Beef/Lamb/Pork/Veal-fresh \_\_\_\_\_ 2-4 days
- Beef, Corned \_\_\_\_\_ 1 week
- Frankfurters \_\_\_\_\_ 4-5 days
- Ground Beef/Lamb/Pork/Veal \_\_\_\_\_ 1-2 days
- Ham Slice \_\_\_\_\_ 3-4 days
- Leftover cooked meats \_\_\_\_\_ 4-5 days
- Luncheon Meats \_\_\_\_\_ 1 week
- Sausage, fresh pork \_\_\_\_\_ 1 week
- Sausage, smoked \_\_\_\_\_ 3-7 days
- Smoked Ham, whole \_\_\_\_\_ 1 week
- Variety Meats \_\_\_\_\_ 1-2 days

Milk \_\_\_\_\_ 10 days

Poultry \_\_\_\_\_ 1-2 days

Seafood (Fresh) \_\_\_\_\_ 1-2 days

**Refrigerator Reminders:** Wasted food is wasted money! Be sure to refrigerate perishables as soon as you return from the store. Also, check packages for storage instructions such as “*refrigerate after opening.*” This notation is often found on bottles and jars of products such as mayonnaise or salad dressing. Proper refrigeration will ensure the quality of such products.

Use airtight containers or moisture/vapor-proof wrap (aluminum foil, plastic bags, or plastic wrap) to protect foods that have been opened.

Refrigerator temperatures should be maintained at 34°F to 40°F. Cold air must circulate freely, so foods should not be crowded.

\*Source: Kraft, Inc. 1986, Glenview, IL 60025