



Welcome to the Southeast Texas Food Bank

We are pleased that your organization/church is interested in entering into a Partnership with the Southeast Texas Food Bank. After reviewing the following information, we anticipate you being able to determine whether or not your organization meets the criteria to complete the request for membership.

Eligibility for partnership at the SETX Food Bank, an organization/church must be able to provide a copy of its IRS 501(c)(3) letter of nonprofit status from the IRS (not the state tax EIN document). Churches who fall under the 501 (c)(3) of a denomination may fulfill the 14 point requirements and prove that the primary mission of the agency is a charitable service to the ill, needy, or infants (minor children). The agency must distribute donated products free of charge and may not sell or use donated products in exchange for money, other property, or services.

Below you will find a listing of the programs we currently have at SETX Food Bank. It is important we know what type of program your organization/church is operating. Programs should be in operation for at least three months before applying. Completion of a partner application does not guarantee a partner membership.

The location of a program is one of the determinants whether or not membership will be granted. If the program is in a well-served area and is unable to provide services on a different day/time than existing programs, Southeast Texas Food Bank may not consider members.

Program Definitions:

Emergency Programs:

- Soup Kitchen – Provide a congregate meal daily, weekly or monthly
- Shelter – Provide shelter to someone that would otherwise be homeless
- Pantry – Provide non-prepared food items to anyone in need according to poundage recommended by the SETX Food Bank based on Family size.

Non-Emergency Programs:

- Residential Program – Provide temporary or long time supportive housing for a variety of reasons.
- Internal Pantry – Provide non-prepared food items only to clients in a residential or transitional program.
- Day Program – Program providing service during the day such as a senior center, daycare or after school program. Provide either a snack or a meal.

Requirements for ALL Programs:

- _____ Food must be kept in a secure room at room temperature (between 50° - 80°). Food and non-food items must be kept separate. All items need to be at least six (6) inches from the floor, two (2) inches from the wall and thirteen (13) inches from the ceiling.
- _____ Must have at least one functioning refrigerator and freezer dedicated to the program (a combo unit is acceptable) with working thermometers in place. There needs to be written temperature logs for each unit with a minimum recording every other day. (While not all places do this before membership, it is important that as soon as you decide you want to become a member, you begin this process.)
- _____ Coordinator/Director of the food program must have access to the internet and email on a regular basis on the agency site.
- _____ All Pantries are required to order and distribute a minimum of 1000 lbs. of food from the SETX food monthly.
- _____ Allow staff of the SETX Food Bank to visit the agency. Including, but not limited to, a one time a year monitor visit.
- _____ Food from the SETX Food Bank may not be given to staff/volunteers unless they qualify as required by all participants in the program. Food must not be stored or prepared in a personal residence. This includes using Food Bank food as a reward for volunteering.
- _____ Emergency programs must post at minimum an 8.5 x 11-inch permanent sign indicating the day(s) and hours of operation.
- _____ Clients and meals must be accurately tracked and reported. It is imperative to track the number of households properly and separate individuals served each month. Soup kitchens/meal programs must have a consistent meal count method such as people count or plate count.
- _____ A minimum of two volunteers/staff are required to be trained in Food Safety (from the Food Bank) with one of those being on site any time the pantry is open to distribution. The intensity of training depends on program type.
- _____ Emergency and internal pantries need to have at least two persons pass the training and test.
- _____ Soup kitchens and programs serving meals to 20 or more people need to have at least one Qualified Food Manager on location during food preparation times. All staff and/or volunteers involved in the cooking/serving process need to have Food Safety at a minimum.

In addition, to the above requirements, pantries must also:

- _____ Must be open a minimum of two times a month the entire year. Ideally the program would be open weekly. One of these times must be during the non-working hours.
- _____ Operating days and hours must be consistent each month.

Soup kitchens and Residential Feeding Programs must also:

- _____ Any agency that serves prepared food is required to have one person certified in Food management.
- _____ Any volunteer/staff that serve food must be trained in Food Safety as required by Texas State Law.

- _____ Southeast Texas Food Bank makes food safety a high priority and kitchens need to be properly equipped with:
 - i. Three sink system for proper sanitation practice.
 - ii. A separate handwashing sink.
 - iii. Latex or plastic gloves for food preparation/cooking.
 - iv. Access to hot and cold water supplies.
 - v. A dishwasher if using reusable plates, cups and utensils.
 - vi. Proper pest controls in place.

Please register for the Agency Information Meeting listed. It is at this meeting you will receive the access code to download a full application. Completing an application does not guarantee membership.

Please note, SETX Food Bank does not accept membership applications from October – December.