

Montgomery Area Food Bank

Mobile
Food
Pantry
Program



Definition of a Mobile Food Pantry:

A form of outreach to the needy in your community;
a highly effective way to get large quantities of food
to a large number of people in a short amount of time
for very little money

HOW A MOBILE FOOD PANTRY DISTRIBUTION WORKS

The following steps and suggestions will help you host your own Mobile Pantry. Many of these best practices are from people who have already hosted a pantry, so they are "lessons learned" from experience.

1. Signing up to host a Mobile Pantry

- Please fill in the MP SIGN UP SHEET and include the date you want to have it. Wednesdays and Fridays are currently the only days we conduct Mobile Pantries. NO deliveries on Saturday or Sunday. Include the time (example: 9:00 – 11:00 AM or any 2 hour time frame that begins in the AM) and the location.
- Return the sign up sheet by mail, fax or by dropping it off at the food bank.
- Food Bank staff will contact you with confirmation of time, date, and location.

2. Signing up eligible clients to receive the food

- Choose the day(s) and time(s) for your client sign up. (Usually 1-2 weeks before the distribution)
- Have 2-3 volunteers to help sign up the clients by filling out the Eligibility Criteria Form.
- Allow yourselves about 1-2 hours for sign up.
- Sign up will take about 5 minutes for each client
- You may ask clients for identification (Driver's License, ID card, pay stub, etc.) However, *we* do not require that you ask for any identification. You may also ask for their SSI or food stamp card number. Clients receiving government assistance are automatically eligible for FB food because they have already been deemed needy.

3. Notify the recipients

- You should limit the number of people you sign up to between 120 and 150 households.
- You may limit the number who want to sign up to just one neighborhood, or one or two specific zip codes, as long as it is not limited by race, age, sex, origin, religion (You cannot limit to only your church members), disability, etc.
- Have your client screening (Eligibility Criteria forms) completed about 1 – 1½ weeks prior to the day of the MP.
- Keep check-in procedures to a bare minimum at the distribution site, but do have some type of check-in to be sure the people you are serving are the ones who have already signed up.

4. Managing the Distribution

- Our driver unloads food outside. IT CANNOT BE UNLOADED ON A DIRT OR GRASSY OR GRAVEL AREA! If you want to move the food inside of a building, you must make arrangements to do so. We do not recommend this because you will be hand carrying 10,000 to 12,000 pounds of food!
- If you are using tables, set them up before the designated time of arrival of the Food Bank truck.
- When the Mobile Pantry arrives at a designated area, the driver will get your signature on the invoice before leaving. The Food Bank driver unloads the truck.
- It is the responsibility of the agency to break down pallets, open boxes and display the product. Distribution should take no longer than two hours (example: truck arrives at 8:30 A.M.; distribution from 9:00 A.M. to 11:00 A.M.) Have volunteers (15 is a good number) on site for the following purposes:
 - *Set up tables; *do client check-in; *help unload the boxes from the pallets; *break open the cases and stack product on the tables; *help clients load their vehicles; *direct traffic.
- You should plan on providing bags or boxes for the clients to use OR tell your clients to be sure to bring their own containers to carry their food home. As cases are emptied, they can be used. Laundry baskets work well for this.
- Have extra eligibility forms to accept walk-ins when they show up, if you choose to do this.

5. After the rush

- Have volunteers dispose of trash. Stack pallets and bread trays to be returned to the Food Bank.
- We stress that all the product should be distributed on the scheduled MP date. Provisions should be made before the MP for any product left at the site. **It will not be returned to the food bank.** Suggestions: give to senior adults or perhaps a subsidized housing neighborhood in the local vicinity. Or save and give out later.

Items Normally Available for Mobile Pantries

- The Food Bank **chooses the foods for each mobile pantry.**
- The only way we can supply this much food at this low cost is to offer slow moving items that the shoppers often will not take, but that the clients want.
- Typical loads include bakery product, fresh produce, dairy product, snacks, dry milk, and/or drinks.
- Prime items like meat and precious canned goods will hardly ever be on Mobile Pantry loads.
- If you require these prime items, you can shop for them, pay the regular shared maintenance fee and we will deliver them with the regular load.

Tips to Make Your Mobile Pantry a Success

- PLEASE PROMOTE "CLIENT CHOICE"! When clients visit a Pantry, one of the best features they encounter is **choice**—not an element that occurs very often in the lives of needy people.
- Let your participants choose the foods that best meet their families' needs. **Do not** bag/box items ahead of time. This gives the clients no choice and defeats the idea of the Mobile Pantry.
- You may want to set some limits on prime product. After all participants have gone through items once, offer seconds or even thirds.
- Remember: Mobile Pantries can never be considered as a substitute for a grocery store; however, the foods that clients receive will **supplement** what they are able to purchase, and provide a tremendous boost to their economic situation.

PLEASE NOTE :
This form MUST be filled in COMPLETELY.

County where distribution will be held (required)

**At present, the MAFB has some funds to help your agency host one or more of these pantries.
For a fee of \$250.00, we can deliver a truckload of food to your community.
The food bank selects this product for you and the delivery fee is included in the \$250 fee.**

*****THE TRUCK UNLOAD AREA MUST BE PAVED OR CEMENTED!***
THE TRUCK CANNOT BE UNLOADED ON A DIRT OR GRASSY OR GRAVEL AREA!**

**Montgomery Area Food Bank
The Mobile Food Pantry Sign Up Sheet**

The truck is scheduled for two-hour periods on Wednesdays and Fridays only.

Name of Agency

Name of Contact Person

Phone Number of Contact Person

Email of Contact Person

Address of the distribution site and directions from the Food Bank:

Date you are requesting delivery

2-hour time frame you are going to distribute the product
(for example, 9:00-11:00; 10:00-12:00)

Time you would like the product delivered

This request was filled out by (person's name)

Method of Payment – Please check one

_____ **Agency Check**

_____ **Charge (must have established MAFB charge account)**

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THIS AREA FOR FOOD BANK USE ONLY

Confirmed with agency on: _____

Delivery Date: _____

Delivery Time: _____