

Emergency Feeding Program of Seattle & King County

Referral Agency and Distribution Center Policies and Procedures

Referral-only Agencies

I. Meetings

A representative from each agency is expected to attend at least one of EFP's bi-annual Educational Conferences.

II. Food Cards

Staff persons or volunteers interview Service Recipients accessing needs and ensuring that the EFP Food Card is filled out completely. Staff is responsible for insuring that the Service Recipient knows the Distribution Center location and hours of operation.

The Interviewer is responsible for making sure that the Food Cards are filled out completely.

Complete Food Cards are extremely important to both EFP's ability to successfully track hunger trends and to insure funding from King County municipalities, the State of Washington, and private foundations.

Staff is also responsible for providing information on other available resources (both from within the agency and to outside sources of help) to the Service Recipient in order to meet other needs and address additional problems.

III. Emergency Use Only

The Emergency Feeding Program is not a food bank, and our food packs are not intended for supplemental use. EFP provides an emergency measure to fill in the gaps for people in immediate hunger crisis with no food available to them at all from other sources.

The decision in defining "emergency" will be left to the discretion of staff.

A person returning to receive an EFP Food Card or Food Pack more than once a month should be informed of other resources (e.g. food banks) in the community. Staff ultimately has the authority to give out Food Cards/Packs based on individual circumstances, but the Service Recipient should know that this particular service provided is intended for emergency use only.

IV. Agency Qualifications

To qualify to participate in the Emergency Feeding Program of Seattle & King County, an agency must:

- Be open to all people (see Non-Discrimination policy on next page)
- Never engage Service Recipients in religious proselytization/persecution of any kind
- Interview those seeking food to determine need
- Be willing to provide information about additional resources (e.g. food stamps, employment opportunities, energy assistance, shelters, etc.) to enable a household to strive towards self-determination, independence and solvency.

Distribution Centers and Distribution/Referral Agencies

I. Food Distribution

Any entity serving as a Distribution Center provides aid to those in crisis hunger situations by giving them nutritionally balanced Food Packs. This food is supplied to the Distribution Center by the Emergency Feeding Program of Seattle & King County (or in some cases, by neighboring faith communities). Food is either donated to EFP, or else purchased with money from funding municipalities, the State of Washington (Emergency Food Assistance Program), the federal government (Federal Emergency Management Agency), or with general donated Program funds.

II. Volunteers and/or Staffing

The agency serving as a Distribution Center is responsible for recruiting a team of volunteers to staff the center, or for appointing designated staff person(s) as responsible for food distribution. A volunteer team size is unique to each site, and is dependent upon hours of operation, volume of food distributed, and other factors. The staffing schedule is ideally arranged so that at least two people at a time are able to work together. The details of each volunteer coordination effort will be discussed with EFP staff upon beginning a new distribution site.

III. Non-Discrimination

The Emergency Feeding Program of Seattle & King County, its Board of Directors, staff, volunteers, and partnering agencies provide services to all persons without regard to race, color, religion, sex, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, national origin, creed, age, or disability. In addition, no distribution center, referral agency or other entity in partnership with the Emergency Feeding Program of Seattle & King County may engage service recipients in religious proselytization of any kind whatsoever nor require clients to participate in religious services as a condition for receiving food.

IV. Confidentiality

Personal information collected, used or acquired by EFP or any of its distribution partners shall be used solely for the purpose of the program. EFP and its distribution partners agree not to release, divulge, publish, transfer, well or otherwise make known to unauthorized persons the personal information without express written consent of the service recipient or as provided by law. EFP and its distribution partners must have a client release form to use when sharing any service recipient information with others.

V. Providing Space

If not already present, the agency will be responsible for providing a small reception area where people may come to receive their food on the days and during the hours in which the Center is operational. Adequate, clean, pest-free storage space for the Food Packs will also be provided by the Distribution Center. Limited refrigerator space (for margarine) is desirable but not required.

VI. Providing Time

Hours and days of operation are determined by each individual agency. Recommended hours are two to three hours per day, three days per week. The most-needed times are usually evening and weekend hours.

VII. Receiving Referrals

People in need are sometimes referred to the Distribution Center by social service agencies in the same geographical area. Volunteer staff review the EFP Food Card, receive the Card, and store it until the end of the month at which time it is returned to the EFP office by mail.

VIII. Distribution Center Contact Responsibilities Include:

- Maintaining the volunteer staffing schedule
- Orienting new volunteers/staff to EFP and to its Policies and Procedures as described herein
- Returning EFP Food Cards and Snack Pack forms to the EFP office at the end of each month
- Keeping track of inventory and need, and ordering appropriate Food Packs from EFP at least one week in advance of desired delivery date