



ARKANSAS  
FOOD  
BANK

MEMBER AGENCY  
HANDBOOK

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# MEMBER AGENCY HANDBOOK

## Table of Contents

Introduction .....	2
Recordkeeping and Reporting .....	3
Inspections .....	4
Types and Uses of Products .....	5
Product Inventory and Shopping Procedures .....	6
Fees and Payment Information .....	9
Food Safety Information .....	10
Suspension and Termination .....	13
Membership Agreement .....	15

# Welcome!



Congratulations on becoming a member agency of the Arkansas Foodbank! Several policies, practices, and procedures are mandatory for all Arkansas Foodbank member agencies. The purpose of this Member Agency Handbook is to describe the requirements and provide information on how to have a successful program.

The Arkansas Foodbank (AF) is the foundation in the fight against hunger. We find pathways to connect people, resources and food to reach those in need, providing dignity, hope and a brighter future for all Arkansans. AF believes the key to ending hunger in Arkansas is found in the tradition of neighbors helping their needy neighbors. We locate, secure, and distribute food to over 400 local partners in our 33-county service area in central, eastern, and southern Arkansas. These partners include food pantries, soup kitchens, schools, colleges, shelters, senior centers, children's feeding sites and other agencies that provide aid directly to hungry Arkansans. We also participate in the distribution of U.S. Department of Agriculture commodities by contract with the Arkansas Department of Human Services. Our partners are central to our efforts to build cohesive solutions to local challenges.

The Arkansas Foodbank is a not-for-profit organization under Internal Revenue Service Code 501(c)(3). The Arkansas Foodbank is approximately 99,000 square feet in Little Rock and has branch warehouses in Warren & Lexa, 70 employees, and an annual operating budget of around \$9 million.

The Foodbank is a member in good standing of Feeding America, a founding member of the Arkansas Hunger Relief Alliance, a United Way agency, and a member of the Better Business Bureau.

As a member of the Arkansas Hunger Relief Alliance, the Arkansas Foodbank and other members work together to increase food donations, collect information about the needs of hungry Arkansans and how these needs are being met, and raise funds and other resources to support the work of the seven hunger relief partners in Arkansas and their member agencies. The Arkansas Hunger Relief Alliance exists to eliminate hunger in Arkansas.

Thank you for your partnership,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Connie Bledsoe".

Connie Bledsoe  
Agency Relations Director  
Arkansas Foodbank

# Recordkeeping and Reporting

## Recordkeeping

All member agencies must keep a copy of the following on hand at all times:

1. Membership Agreement between your agency and the Arkansas Foodbank
2. Membership Application, including all attachments
3. Member Agency Handbook
4. Paperwork indicating non-profit or church designation status
5. Annual pest inspection reports
6. Health inspection licenses, if applicable
7. Temperature Logs for dry, refrigerated, and frozen storage

The following information must be collected and records maintained for **18-24 months**.

These documents will be examined during monitoring visits.

1. Documents of transactions between your agency and the Arkansas Foodbank
2. Monthly inventory reports
3. Documents of transactions with USDA, if applicable
4. A documented method for non-discriminatory distribution to people in need
5. Documentation on Arkansas Foodbank products used for the maintenance of your program, including list of products, amounts used, and how used

**For assistance in developing a method of counting and recordkeeping, please contact the AF Agency Relations Director at 501-565-8121.**

## Reporting

Agencies are responsible for submitting a Monthly Report ***even if no clients were served during any given month***. A sample of this report is included in your Orientation Packet. The report is due the 1st of each month and covers the previous calendar month. For example, the report for January is due by February 1st. These reports are very important to the Foodbank's ability to accurately report people and families served. Failure to complete and submit the reports will lead to suspension. Submitting reports each month is a requirement for receiving grants and other services from the Foodbank.

**The monthly report has a place to report any changes in the following:**

- *authorized personnel*
- *contact person's name*
- *storage or distribution location*
- *equipment changes*
- *mailing address*
- *phone numbers*
- *days and hours of operation*
- *services and/or programs*

# Inspections

The Arkansas Foodbank is required to inspect member agencies **every 18 to 24 months** to ensure compliance with all membership requirements. The purpose of this inspection is to provide an opportunity for interaction at your agency, to identify any potential problems and assist in solving them, and to renew your Memorandum of Agreement. The visit also enables the Foodbank staff to assure donors that we have a sound system of protecting, accounting for, and distributing their donated products.

The process for an inspection includes an initial communication from an Agency Relations Team Member via email or phone call to schedule the appointment. If there is no response after three (3) attempts, the agency will be made inactive until the inspection is conducted and completed.



**Your agency's practices regarding the hunger relief services you provide will be reviewed during the monitoring visit. Other items that will be checked include:**

1. Sanitizing processes
2. The cleanliness of the areas where food is stored and handled
3. The cleanliness of all appliances and equipment
4. The availability and condition of hand washing stations and restrooms
5. Records described in Section II of this handbook
6. Storage and garbage disposal to ensure standards are being met
7. Pest control records
8. Temperature control in storage areas
9. Refrigerators and freezers
10. Vehicles used to transport food and grocery products
11. Customer service standards
12. Exit signs and fire extinguishers

Feedback from our agencies is also very important to us, so we sincerely appreciate all of your suggestions, needs, or concerns, whether during this monitoring visit or throughout the year.

## Types and Uses of Products

### Types of Products

A variety of food and no-food products is available through the Arkansas Foodbank, including fresh and frozen foods, canned goods, paper products, cereal, beverages, cleaning supplies, and USDA commodities. Availability depends on what is donated or otherwise procured; therefore, ***inventory may vary greatly from week to week.***

**Donated Food:** Donated food may be ordered by all member agencies. There is no cost for the products, however, a handling fee of 18 cents per pound is charged. This fee helps to cover the costs of collecting, sorting, storing, and distributing donated products to member agencies. This is not a charge for the product.

**Purchased Food:** The Arkansas Foodbank often supplements inventory by purchasing high quality food at reduced rates. Our goal is to insure that the items AF members depend upon are always available at lower than regular market prices.

**USDA Commodities:** Eligibility for distribution of USDA commodities is by contract only and is determined by DHS. Once approved to receive USDA commodities, an agency must comply with all regulations set forth by the Arkansas Department of Health and the Arkansas Department of Human Services. Commodities are free of charge.

### Uses of Products

All items drawn from the Arkansas Foodbank should be used only in activities included in the member's tax-exempt purposes and solely for feeding people who are ill, in need, or infants.

#### Arkansas Foodbank products can never be:

1. Sold, bartered, or traded
2. Used as compensation or gifts for volunteers or employees
3. Used at an agency function or party (*unless it primarily benefits needy clients*)
4. Used at church suppers, board meetings, fundraisers, or any events that are not to feed people in need
5. Used for any purpose other than to further an agency's services to people in need

# Product Inventory and Shopping Procedures

## Accessing Products from the Arkansas Foodbank:

Each agency must have a list of people on record authorized to access products at the Arkansas Foodbank. The agency must keep this information accurate and up-to-date to ensure that your agency is always able to select and receive products.

## Follow These Steps

Agency Express is our online ordering system available through any Internet connection. All AF members are required to use Agency Express for ordering. The shopping list is updated regularly.

**1**

### SCHEDULE THE APPOINTMENT

The Scheduler allows the agency to self-schedule appointments associated with orders. It also allows for the creation of new appointments as well as the ability to edit existing appointments dates and times within the requirements of the three schedule models of Standing Appointment, Pick Up and Delivery.

**2**

### SHOP

Please read the shopping list carefully and pay close attention to sizes and fees. *(How to complete the shopping list is covered extensively in new member/new shopper orientation sessions. If you have questions about completing the shopping list, please contact a member of the AF Agency Relations Department.)*

Your order should be submitted by 8:00am, 48 business hours prior to your pickup order or delivery.

## Product Inventory and Shopping Procedures

### 3

### ORDER PICK UP OR DELIVERY

The following guidelines have been developed by the staff of the Arkansas Foodbank to help make your shopping experience as pleasant and efficient as possible. Please read this list carefully.

If you pick up your order at the Little Rock Warehouse:

- Please be on time for your appointment. If you would like to cancel your appointment, please contact us **48 hours** before your scheduled appointment.
- You are responsible for loading your own vehicle. When time permits, assistance may be available. Please request assistance, if needed.
- Before you leave, you are responsible for making sure that all products ordered are received. Your signature on the invoice confirms that all products were checked and received.
- Since most products are donated, they are distributed "AS IS." Sorry, no refunds or exchanges.

If you pick up your order at the Warren Branch/Delta Branch:

- Please be on time for your appointment. If you are going to be late, call the Warren Branch Director at 870-226-4266 or the Delta Branch Director at 870-714-6256 so other agencies can be served in a timely manner.
- Agency representatives are not allowed in the warehouse unless accompanied by a Warehouse staff member. This is to ensure your safety since forklifts are always in motion throughout the warehouse.
- You are responsible for loading your own vehicle. When time permits, assistance may be available. Please request assistance, if needed.
- Before you leave, you are responsible for making sure that all products ordered are received. Your signature on the invoice confirms that all products were checked and received.
- Since most products are donated, they are distributed "AS IS." Sorry, no refunds or exchanges.

*Step 3 continued on next page.*

## Product Inventory and Shopping Procedures

### 3

#### ORDER PICK UP OR DELIVERY

If your order is delivered:

- Please provide a telephone number at which you can be reached AND the street address for your agency.
- Please be available to meet the truck. The Foodbank's delivery schedule is very tight, and in order to accommodate you and everyone else on the schedule the drivers need to be sure of the location and that someone will meet them when they arrive.

### 4

#### PAYING FOR YOUR ORDER

Your order must be paid for when it is picked up or delivered. Payment can only be made by agency check. Personal checks or cash are not accepted.

Credit is extended to an agency with prior approval **ONLY**. If you are interested in opening a credit account with the Arkansas Foodbank, please contact the AF Finance Department at 501-565-8121. The credit approval process takes about a month. This is not a revolving credit account. Balance must be paid within 30 days.

# Fees and Payment Information

## Fees

Each member agency is required to pay an annual membership fee and may be required to pay handling, delivery or other fees.

### **Membership**

The annual membership fee is \$75 for organizations with one site and \$100 for members with more than one site.

These fees help cover the costs of membership services, including educational opportunities, inspections, and other costs associated with meeting Feeding America standards of safe food handling.

### **Handling**

The handling fee (\$0.18 cents per pound) is an apportioned assessment of member agencies that helps cover the costs of collecting, sorting, storing, and distributing donated products to member agencies. This is not a charge for the products.

### **Missed Pick Up Appointments at the Little Rock Warehouse**

A \$10 fee will be charged to any member that fails to keep an order pick up appointment at the Arkansas Foodbank warehouse in Little Rock and does not call **48 hours** before the appointment to cancel.

## Payment Information

All fees and invoices must be paid with a check from your agency. Personal checks and cash are not accepted.

Fees are due upon receipt of the order, unless an agency has established a line of credit with the Arkansas Foodbank. An invoice is past due after 30 days and renders the agency subject to suspension of membership until payment is received or arrangements for payment are made.

If your agency is experiencing difficulty with payment, an agency representative should contact the Arkansas Foodbank Finance Department immediately at 501-565-8121.

Debtors are subject to payment plans or suspension. The agency may ask to be removed from the payment plan once the balance is paid. At the discretion of the Arkansas Foodbank, an agency may remain on a payment plan indefinitely. Failure to adhere to the payment plan may be cause for suspension. In the event of perceived discrimination regarding repayment, an agency may appeal the payment plan or suspension before the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Rhonda Sanders.

## Food Safety Information

Please follow these guidelines for any products that are of questionable quality. Discard all products with any of the following package conditions, see list below.

### FOR CANS:

- rust that cannot be buffed off
- rust around the rim
- a dent that comes to a point or sharp crease
- a dent on the seam of the can
- a dent of the rim of the can
- “puffed” cans where internal pressure has deformed the cans
- products with no labeling

### FOR BAGS AND BOXES:

- any signs of infestation or contamination
- any puncture or tear that has broken the innermost seal
- any exposed items that have been taped or repackaged into a bag or box
- products with no labeling

### FOR JARS AND BOTTLES:

- any containers that have been opened or if the protective seal is broken
- any sign of contamination or grime around the rim
- products with no labeling

### FOR NON-FOOD ITEMS:

- personal care items that are taped or resealed
- items with missing manufacturer’s seals broken or missing
- cleaners and paper goods that are taped or resealed with visible contamination



**WHEN IN DOUBT, THROW IT OUT  
(IN THE GARBAGE).**

# Food Safety Information



## Shelf-Life Determination Table

Rules of Thumb for Products That Have Passed “Use By” Date\*

Item	Time Past “Use By” Date
Low acid jars and bottles	6 months
High acid jars and bottles	1 year
Canned goods	2 years
Sealed dry goods (beans, rice, pasta, etc.)	1 year
Candy, cakes and cookies	6 months
Crackers and cereals	1 year
Fresh bread and rolls	2 weeks
Refrigerated dairy products	3 weeks
Refrigerated juices	4 weeks
Frozen baked goods	3 months
Frozen pasta and dough	6 months
Frozen vegetables	6 months
Frozen meat	1 year

\*Based on information from “The Food Keeper – A Consumer Guide to Food Quality & Safe Handling.” To download a copy, please visit the Arkansas Hunger Alliance Relief website at [www.ARhungeralliance.org](http://www.ARhungeralliance.org) or call 501.399.9999 for more information.

## Storage Requirements

The following storage requirements must be strictly adhered to in order to maintain product quality and safety. Each of the following items will be examined during a monitoring visit.

1. The food storage facility should be temperature controlled with adequate ventilation.
2. The structure should be secure, with locks in good working order.
3. Pest control inspection, and treatment if necessary, should be performed regularly. Where evidence of infestation occurs, a commercial pest control company must be engaged.
4. Storage space is adequate.
5. Inventory is rotated.

### FOR DRY STORAGE:

1. All food is stored off the floor. If supply exceeds shelving space, excess can be stored on pallets, but must be at least one (1) inch from all walls and four (4) inches off the floor.

## Food Safety Information

2. All containers are properly sealed.
3. No food is stored in bathrooms.
4. Thermometers must be present in all dry storage areas.
5. All non-food products must be stored separately from food products. At a minimum, all non-food products should be stored on lower shelves and never above food products.

### FOR REFRIGERATED AND FROZEN STORAGE:

1. Refrigerators should be maintained at temperatures not exceeding 40 degrees Fahrenheit.
2. Freezers should be maintained at temperatures below freezing, from 0 (zero) degrees to -10 degrees Fahrenheit.
3. Thermometers should be present in all refrigerators and freezers.
4. All refrigerators and freezers should be defrosted and cleaned with a USDA-approved disinfectant at least two times per year, or as needed.

### Recommended storage temperatures (Fahrenheit)

Item	Storage Temperature
Produce	40 degrees or below
Dairy, Eggs	40 degrees or below
Meat and Poultry	36 degrees or below
Seafood	32 degrees or below
Bakery	70 degrees or below
Candy	70 degrees or below

### Disposition of Damaged and/or Spoiled Products

Product received from the Arkansas Foodbank is received in “as is” condition. It is the agency’s responsibility to inspect product at the time of pick up or delivery, whichever is the case. At that time, notify the warehouse personnel if you think something you have received is unusable.

If you encounter unusable product during distribution to your clients, contact the Arkansas Foodbank immediately and speak to the Arkansas Foodbank Chief Operation Officer or Warehouse Manager. Based on the information you provide, you will receive instructions for use or disposal of the product in question. Please have the following information available when you call:

1. Type of product as it is listed on your order form or invoice.
2. Date product received from the Arkansas Foodbank as listed on the order form/invoice.
3. Code dates from the product itself.
4. Reasons you question the product.

## **Suspension and Termination**

Our member agencies are the cornerstone of direct service to those in need in our state, thus, we strive for service excellence and harmony in achieving our mission. However, situations do occur that require evaluation, investigation, and action. We will attempt in every way to work with an agency that falls into non-compliance of standards and will do so in an amicable and professional manner, including utilizing the services of the Arkansas Hunger Relief Alliance to resolve concerns that cannot be resolved by the agency and the Foodbank. Although this type of communication and resolution is preferred, there are guidelines and obligations that, if breached, are cause for suspension or loss of membership.

The following are violations that will result in the suspension or termination of your Arkansas Foodbank membership. Please make sure everyone in your agency is aware of these violations.

- 1. Providing false information on your agency's membership application or monthly reports.**
- 2. Failure to comply with any of the membership criteria.**
- 3. Exchanging Arkansas Foodbank products for money, property, services, or other products.**
- 4. Storing Arkansas Foodbank products in a residence or unapproved facility.**
- 5. Taking Arkansas Foodbank products for your own personal use.**
- 6. Using Arkansas Foodbank products in any manner not related to the tax-exempt purposes of the program.**
- 7. Stockpiling Arkansas Foodbank products in amounts not commensurate with your level of distribution.**
- 8. Transporting, refrigerating, or storing Arkansas Foodbank products improperly.**
- 9. Violating any federal, state, or local statute, ordinance, code, regulation, or law.**
- 10. Breaking the agreement between your agency and the Arkansas Foodbank.**
- 11. Failing to pay fees and invoices in a timely manner.**
- 12. Failure to complete required safe food handling training.**

An agency may be suspended from participation in Arkansas Foodbank programs if found to be in violation of any of the above. Suspension may be 30, 60, or 90 days in duration. Suspension may completely exclude the member agency from accessing supplies or may limit the types and amounts of supplies that the affected agency may access. A suspended agency will be notified in writing of the reasons for suspension, and the details of how the agency may successfully restore their agency status.

If representatives of a suspended or terminated agency believe the agency has been unjustly treated, they may appeal the decision to the Arkansas Foodbank Chief Executive Officer. If the issue is not resolved to the satisfaction of the agency, a written review request may be submitted to the AF Board committee designated to review appeals within ten (10) working days of the date of the notice of suspension or termination. If a terminated agency's circumstances change, the agency may re-apply for membership. Please contact the AF Chief Community Initiatives Officer at 501-565-8121 with any questions about this process.

## Suspension and Termination

### Cancellation of Membership by Agency

Agencies may terminate Foodbank membership by writing a letter to the Foodbank, Attn: Agency Relations Director stating the reason(s) for cancelling membership. In addition:

1. Please submit your monthly report for the last month of activity with the Foodbank, including a report for USDA commodities distribution, if applicable.
2. Return any unopened cases of USDA product to the Arkansas Foodbank
3. Pay all outstanding invoices.
4. The disposition of any equipment received from the Arkansas Foodbank will be determined on a case-by-case basis.



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# ARKANSAS FOODBANK MEMBERSHIP AGREEMENT

The following criteria must be agreed to and complied with for your agency to become and remain a member in good standing of Arkansas Foodbank (AF). An official representative of your agency is required to complete and sign this agreement annually signifying that the following criteria are understood and will be faithfully met. Placing a check mark by the item indicates that you understand and agree to comply with the criteria. ***If the item does not apply to your organization, indicate this by putting N/A in the space beside it.***

\_\_\_\_\_ agrees to adhere to the following membership criteria.

\_\_\_\_\_ Our organization qualifies under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Service code or meets the definitional requirements of the IRS code to qualify as a church.

## **In operating our food program, we agree that we will:**

\_\_\_\_\_ Not discriminate in the provision of service, against any person because of race, color, citizenship, religion, gender, national origin, ancestry, age, marital status, disability, sexual orientation including gender identity or expression, unfavorable discharge from the military or status as a protected veteran.

\_\_\_\_\_ Never charge clients for food or require clients to pray, donate, or work to eat or receive products. Not sell, transfer, barter, nor offer for sale, the items supplied by AF in exchange for money, property, goods, or services, or otherwise allow items to re-enter commercial channels, and will not use donated products for fundraising.

\_\_\_\_\_ Use all items drawn from AF only in activities included in the member's tax-exempt purposes and solely for feeding people who are ill, in need, or infants.

\_\_\_\_\_ Abide by the AF's policies, procedures and record keeping requirements.

\_\_\_\_\_ Safely and properly handle donated product in accordance with all local, state and federal regulations, including appropriate transportation of all product. ***This includes covering with a tarp any food transported in open pickup trucks or trailers.***

\_\_\_\_\_ Ensure that at least one person on staff has successfully completed a food safety course. (If meals are prepared and served on site, at least one staff member must commercial food safety certification.)

\_\_\_\_\_ Accept food in "as is" condition.

\_\_\_\_\_ Follow AF recall guidelines.

\_\_\_\_\_ Notify AF when any claim of liability with respect to food is received.

\_\_\_\_\_ Discard any unfit food received from AF, and immediately notify AF staff.

\_\_\_\_\_ Allow regular monitoring by AF representatives to verify compliance with these criteria and the information provided on the agency's application and monthly reports.

# ARKANSAS FOODBANK MEMBERSHIP AGREEMENT

- \_\_\_\_\_ Support the operation of AF by paying a handling fee on a per pound basis for applicable products.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Pay an annual membership fee of \$75.00 or \$100, if more than one site.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Accept that the original donor, AF and Feeding America offer no express warranties in relation to the product.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Hold harmless from any claims or obligations in regard to your organization or the donated product, the original donor, AF and Feeding America.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Release the original donor, AF and Feeding America from any liabilities resulting from the donated product.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Adhere to any use of product restrictions placed on items by the AF and any additional donor stipulations.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Submit by the 1st of each month a report on the previous month's service activity.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Order from AF a minimum of six times per year, unless special arrangements have been made with AF staff.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Hold regular distributions at least once a month, display distribution dates and times outside the pantry, and notify AF immediately of any changes in distribution dates and times.

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Arkansas Foodbank Representative Signature**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Please Print Name**

**Date** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Agency Representative Signature**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Please Print Name**

**Date** \_\_\_\_\_

