

25031202



ILLINOIS TEFAP

course

The St. Louis Area Foodbank is an equal opportunity provider.

Welcome

Welcome!

The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP) supplements nutritional need by providing USDA food to low-income and food insecure neighbors. TEFAP is a federal program, but TEFAP administration varies from state to state. The Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS) and the Missouri Department of Social Services (DSS) run things differently.

That's why we offer two TEFAP courses. If you serve TEFAP food in Illinois, you're in the right course.

We're glad you're here!



ILLINOIS TEFAP

Introduction

Who needs to know?

IDHS requires one person from every Illinois TEFAP distribution site to complete TEFAP and USDA civil rights training. That said, they encourage all distribution site staff and volunteers to attend.

We agree—we think everything from serving neighbors to site inspections is easier when more people know what to do.

We recommend that new staff and volunteers complete these courses during onboarding. If your service continues for more than a year, we'll welcome you back the month of your service anniversary.

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Introduction



Why?

You may wonder, *Why does the USDA require us to take these courses every year?*

Their intention is to remind us of why we take extra care when serving USDA food. We want to provide equitable access to safe food for neighbors in need.

Usually there aren't significant changes in TEFAP and civil rights rules from year to year.

When changes do come up, routine training is how we keep everyone informed.

ILLINOIS TEFAP

Introduction



What's it about?

IDHS asks Illinois food banks to provide TEFAP training based on the *TEFAP Distribution Site Manual*. The site manual summarizes policies, processes, and the documents we use.

During this course, we'll review program standards. We'll explain program expectations for:

- **Serving neighbors**
- **Site inspection**
- **Food safety and storage**

We'll call out what's stayed the same and give you details about changes. Then we'll link you to the posters, forms, and the manual you'll need. As always, your questions are welcome.

Let's get started!

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Serving neighbors

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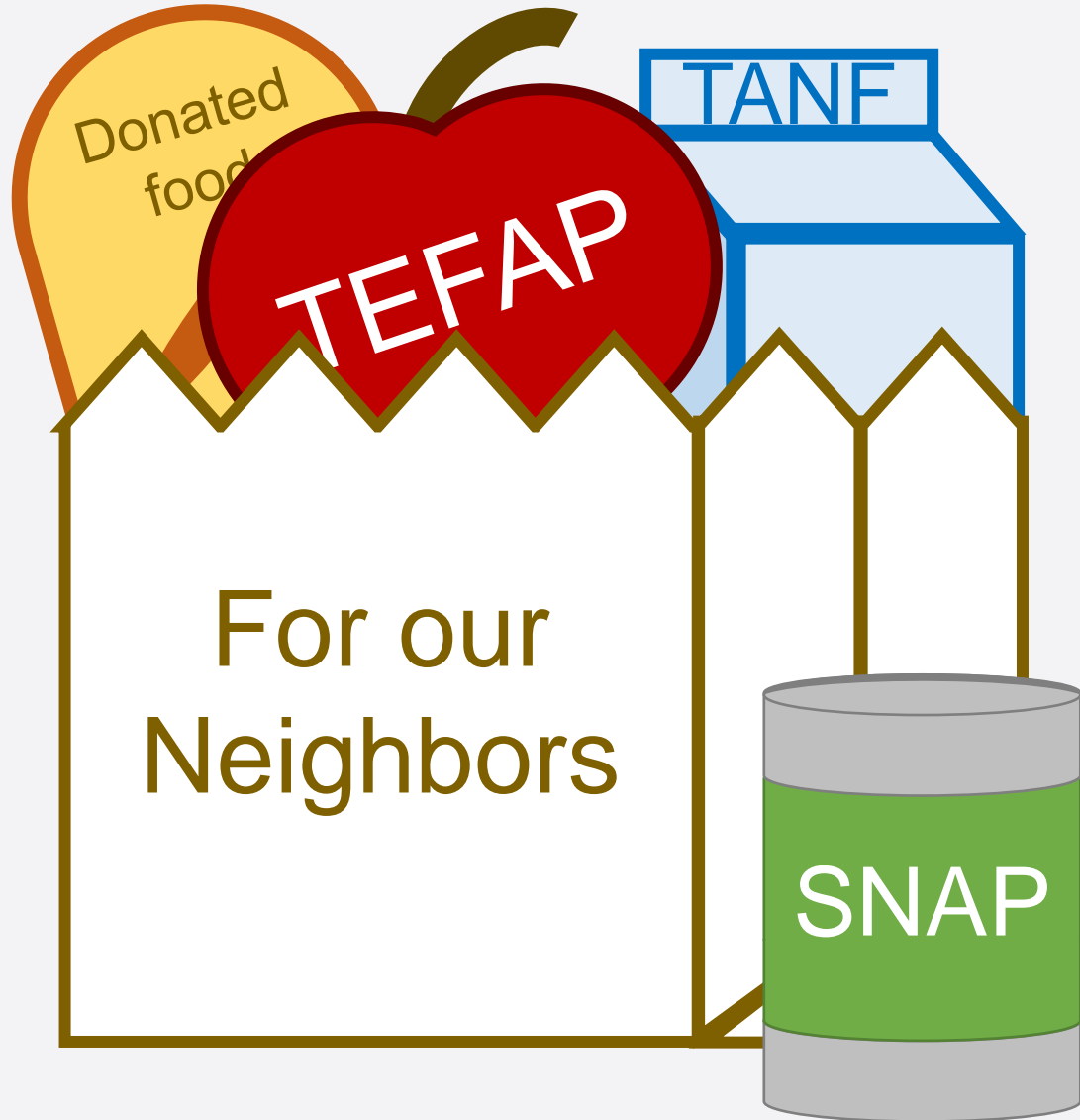


Filling a need

We believe that every person deserves nutritious food that supports a full life for them and their families. As generous as local donors are, the need is still greater than the supply.

Through TEFAP funding, the USDA purchases food and makes it available to Feeding America distributors like SLAFB. TEFAP helps fill the gap between local donations and the need in our community.

Do you know how many neighbors your site serves each month? Your site inspector will ask—be ready!



Outreach

When serving TEFAP neighbors, you'll notice we track participation in other USDA programs our neighbors may benefit from, such as **TANF** and **SNAP**. We'll talk more about these programs later.

Some of our neighbors may also be eligible for USDA programs related to pregnancy and children like **WIC** (Women, Infants, and Children), **After School Meals**, and the **Summer Food Service Program (SFSP)**.

To connect neighbors with the most up-to-date information about USDA programs, follow our link to the USDA Food and Nutrition Service under "related resources" on our course page.

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Program differences

IDHS has different rules for food pickup sites than for sites with meal service. The neighbor intake process isn't the same, and monthly reporting is different.

The USDA uses the information they get back from us to accomplish different things.

Please, if your site serves meals **and** offers pantry services, make sure the food is properly separated and tracked as two programs.

Thank you—your effort has a real-world impact on decisions that benefit our neighbors.

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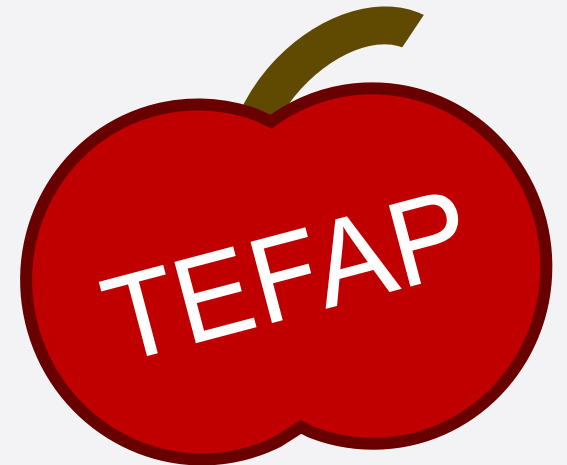
Eligibility

The USDA allocates TEFAP food by county, based on the number of neighbors with low or no income. A neighbor who lives in a different Illinois county might visit your TEFAP site because it's convenient to their workplace or is more accessible. IDHS says that's OK! Go ahead and serve them.

IDHS considers anyone eating at a soup kitchen or shelter automatically eligible, no questions asked.

Think about these factors:

- There is a risk to neighbors when they provide personal information—we're glad they don't have to.
- Unhoused neighbors, newly arrived neighbors, or neighbors with disabilities may not have documentation to verify their identity or residence.



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Kitchens & shelters

TEFAP partners providing meals submit meal service information in their monthly reports to SLAFB. For this report:

- Count **meals served**, not neighbors served.
- Count multiple helpings to the same neighbor as additional meals.
- Document how you track meal count (such as counting the number of plates neighbors took, or the number of trips made they through the line).

TEFAP allocations are adjusted based on the number of meals each month—10 neighbors might eat 12 meals, so meal count is a more accurate measure of the need than neighbor count.

If your site serves meals but doesn't offer pantry services, feel free to skip ahead to the next section of the course (site inspection). The information in the rest of this section is only relevant for food pantries.

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Food Pantries

IDHS requires us to ask food pantry neighbors about residency and income as a general check that we're meeting the need the USDA identified. That said, the rules are flexible. IDHS prioritizes filling a need over residential requirements. You may serve residents from outside your county.

This is good news for us—our area has a lot of cross-county traffic flow. Neighbors are entitled to TEFAP food at least once every 30 days, so you don't have to turn away a neighbor just because they're from outside your usual service area. In fact, if it's a neighbor's first visit, we're required to serve them, no matter where they live.

IDHS reminds us that TEFAP pantries may not require neighbors to get a membership or a referral from an outside agency. Also, TEFAP pantries may not charge fees.



Neighbor intake

TEFAP sites may use three different neighbor intake processes. All are completed **before** neighbors collect their food.

1. The *Signature Sheet*
2. The *Proxy Statement*
3. Data entry in computer software

Your site might use all three methods to document your neighbors' identity and TEFAP eligibility by income and address. We'll describe eligibility first, then cover how to document it.

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Verification

No matter which documentation method you use, you'll notice your site isn't required to verify income, identity, or residency.

Sites are prohibited from verifying income. IDHS prohibits TEFAP sites from asking neighbors for their social security cards, pay stubs, or other income data. Instead, ask if they are below the income limit for their household size, yes or no.

Verifying identity and address is allowed, but IDHS limits this process to protect neighbor data and access to TEFAP food. TEFAP sites that verify may check these documents:

- a state ID card or a driver's license
- mail such as a letter from a landlord or a utility bill

Most sites do not verify identity or residency. As with income, these sites ask for the minimum information (name and address).

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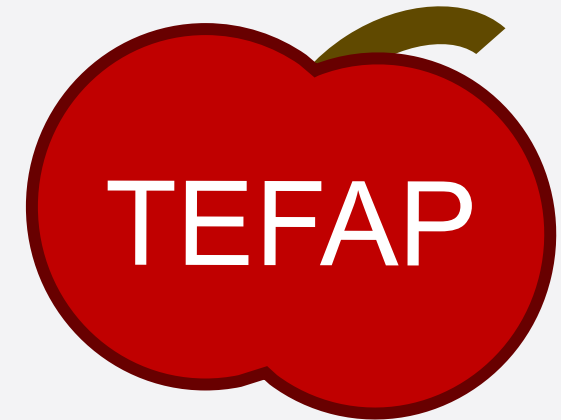
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Why not verify?

To follow civil rights laws, we treat everyone the same. That means if we ask one neighbor to verify that they are who they say they are, we're required to ask all neighbors, every time. Newly arrived or unhoused neighbors may not have proof of residence, but they're still eligible for TEFAP. For unhoused neighbors, write "none" on the address line of their intake forms.

Think about this situation:

Socially, it can feel awkward to ask a well-known unhoused neighbor for documents we know they don't have, every time they visit.



Income eligibility

The Illinois income limit for household size can change each year, based on two factors.

- **Federal Poverty Guideline (FPL):** TEFAP food is available to households with income levels below limits the federal government sets each year for the nation as a whole.
- **Percentage:** States may multiply the FPL by a set percent to help more neighbors qualify.

Based on these factors, every year IDHS prints a new Illinois income chart on their intake forms.

For current eligibility, always check the dates on the *Signature Sheet* and *Proxy Statement*.

DHS MAXIMUM MONTHLY GROSS INCOME FOR RECEIPT OF USDA COMMODITIES FOR FISCAL YEAR 2025 JULY 1, 2024 THROUGH JUNE 30, 2025										
Household Size	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Monthly Income	\$3,765	\$5,110	\$6,455	\$7,800	\$9,145	\$10,490	\$11,835	\$13,180	\$14,525	\$15,870
For households with more than 10 persons, add \$1,340 for each additional person up to 300% FPL										

Updates to the chart in this course may lag behind updates the state makes.

- **No signature is required** (“Signature Sheet” is a legacy name)
- No need to send paper to SLAFB (keep this form on site)
- TANF information is only required if they’re participating that day (the TANF program is not available year-round)

[illegible]

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Proxy food collection

What if a neighbor can't come and collect food for themselves, and someone else offers to collect it for them?

IDHS allows sending a proxy (a substitute) to collect food. Under the USDA, they established a statewide procedure using a Proxy Statement, so everyone benefits in the same way.


- The Proxy Statement replaces the Signature Sheet—proxies don't complete both.
- The Proxy Statement is valid indefinitely—proxies complete a new form when there are changes, such as when a neighbor moves to a new address.
- Neighbors may have as many proxies as they like—they just need to complete a Proxy Statement for each one.
- Proxies may serve more than one neighbor.

We'll go over how to set up a proxy to help a neighbor next.

Proxy Statement

The form requires three signatures/dates.

- The proxy brings the form to the neighbor.
- The **neighbor** enters the same information as the Signature Sheet, plus signature/date.
- The proxy brings the form to the pantry.
- The **proxy** completes, signs, and dates their parts of the form.
- **Pantry staff or volunteers** review the form to make sure the blanks are filled in, sign and date the form, and file it on site.



State of Illinois -
Department of Human Services

THE EMERGENCY FOOD ASSISTANCE PROGRAM - PROXY STATEMENT
Receipt of Pantry Commodities State Fiscal Year 2025 INCOME ELIGIBILITY BASED ON 300% OF THE FEDERAL POVERTY GUIDELINE

This proxy is for the individual who has disabling conditions which make pick-up of pantry commodities by the recipient impossible. It may also be used to serve those whose work hours conflict with those of scheduled distribution of USDA commodities.

Name of Recipient: _____ Date: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Household Size: ☐ Number of children in household 18 years or younger? ☐ SNAP Recipient? (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) ☐ Yes ☐ No

Please check only one box.

DHS MAXIMUM MONTHLY GROSS INCOME FOR RECEIPT OF USDA COMMODITIES FOR FISCAL YEAR 2025 (JULY 1, 2024 THROUGH JUNE 30, 2025)										
Household Size	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Monthly Income	\$3,765	\$5,110	\$6,455	\$7,800	\$9,145	\$10,490	\$11,835	\$13,180	\$14,525	\$15,870

For households with more than 10 persons, add \$1,340 for each additional person up to 300% FPL.

Proxy: _____

Name of Pantry: _____

Address of Pantry: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

CERTIFY WITH MY SIGNATURE THAT: My household monthly gross income does not exceed DHS established limits; the information I have provided above is accurate and true; I will use food received for household consumption only; and I release USDA, the State of Illinois and any agency or person distributing food from all liabilities resulting from receipt of food.

Signature of Recipient _____ Date _____ Distribution Date _____

Signature of Proxy _____ Date _____

Signature of Pantry Personnel _____ Date _____

In accordance with federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex (including gender identity and sexual orientation), disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity. Program information may be made available in languages other than English. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication to obtain program

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Digital intake

We just covered eligibility practices and how to document them using pen and paper. Digital intake can save both time and space. If your site is already collecting information using computer technology, congratulations! Monthly reporting is going to be much easier. Here's what you need to know:

The proxy process isn't paperless—there's no digital Proxy Statement at this time.

The Signature Sheet may be fully paperless. Please check that your site's process captures exactly the same information IDHS requires on the Signature Sheet.

We recommend keeping current paper copies of Signature Sheets on hand. In the event of power, internet, or equipment issues, you'll have a backup method ready to keep neighbor intake moving along—you can complete the data entry later.

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Service Insights

Interested in going digital with your TEFAP intake?

Ask SLAFB to onboard your site to Service Insights on MealConnect! Whether you're doing a full conversion from paper to digital, or simply looking to upgrade software, Service Insights on MealConnect is available to you.

- It's FREE! Feeding America makes this possible.
- SLAFB will provide training and launch support.
- There's a place to track your proxies—just make you've filed a Proxy Statement in the classic paper-with-signatures way.

"We started using Service Insights last summer, and we love it! [The food bank] made the process so easy!"

—SLAFB Illinois TEFAP partner, 4/9/2024



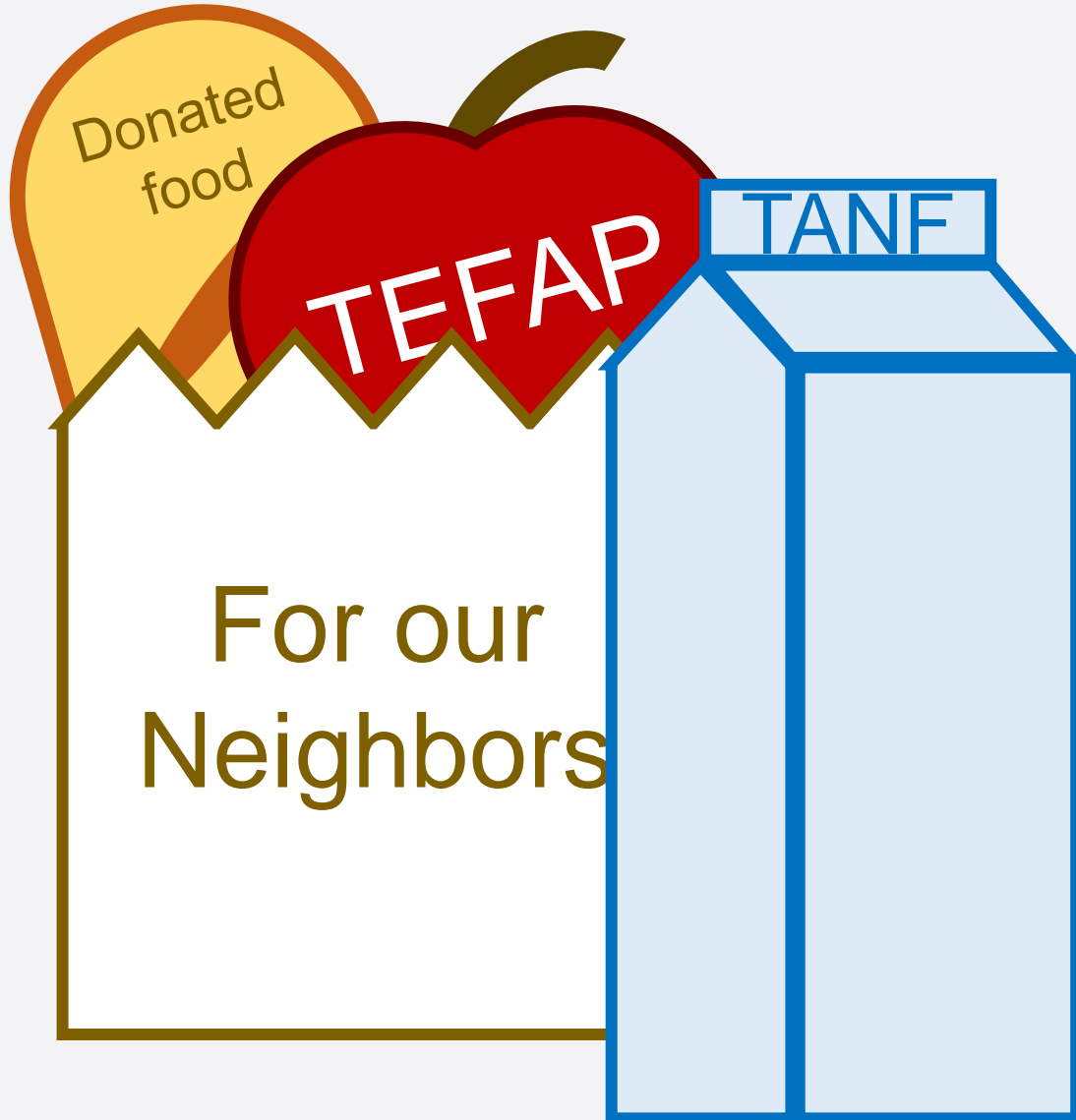
Household info

Monthly TEFAP reporting includes household information we collect during neighbor intake.

Household size informs the USDA how many neighbors TEFAP food reached.

- Household size (number of people who eat there)
- Number of children 18 and younger (TANF only)
- Yes or no: Is the neighbor a SNAP recipient

Next, we'll explain why we collect data about these programs.

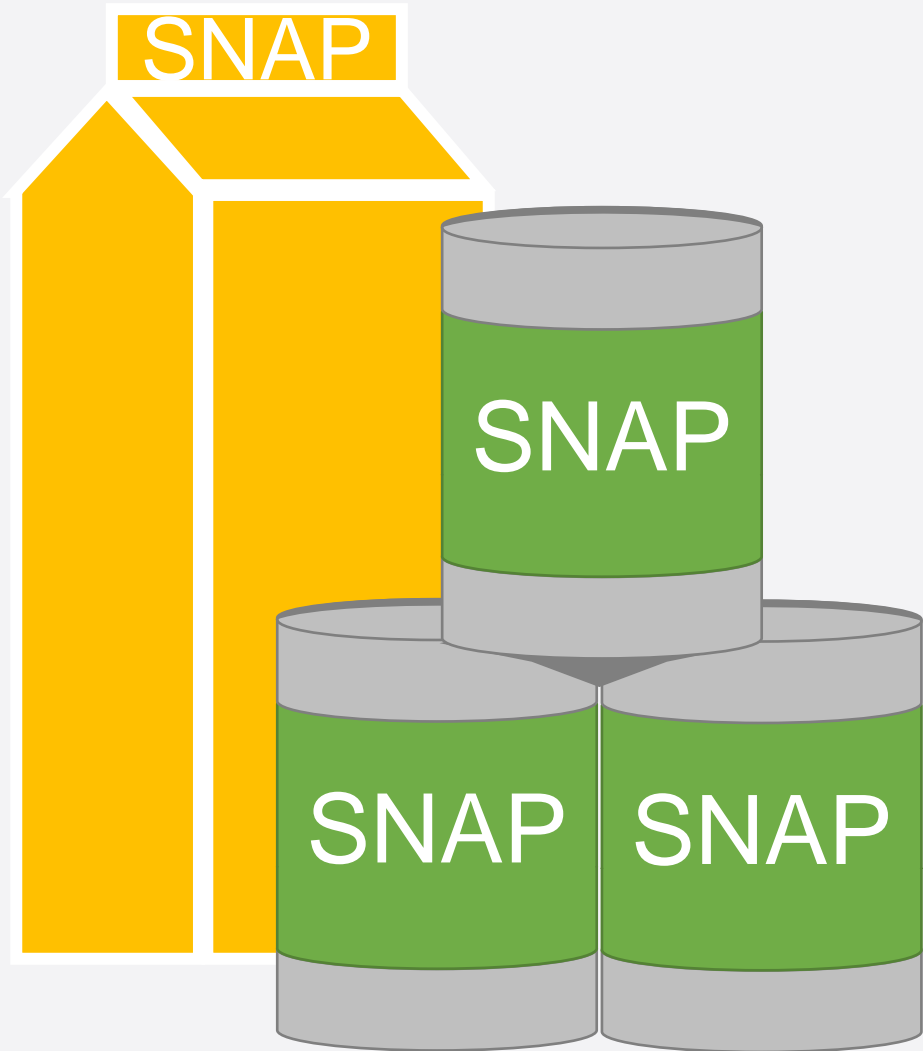


TANF

The **TANF** program (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families) primarily serves children when school is closed for the summer, usually June, July, and August. The US Department of Health and Human Services awards TANF funds to IDHS.

Based on the availability of TANF funding, food banks purchase TANF food in bulk for TEFAP sites. Together, we distribute TANF items like cereal, peanut butter, and milk.

During neighbor intake, **we only document the number of children in a household when TANF distribution is active**, not year-round. We may not give out TANF food without getting this number first.

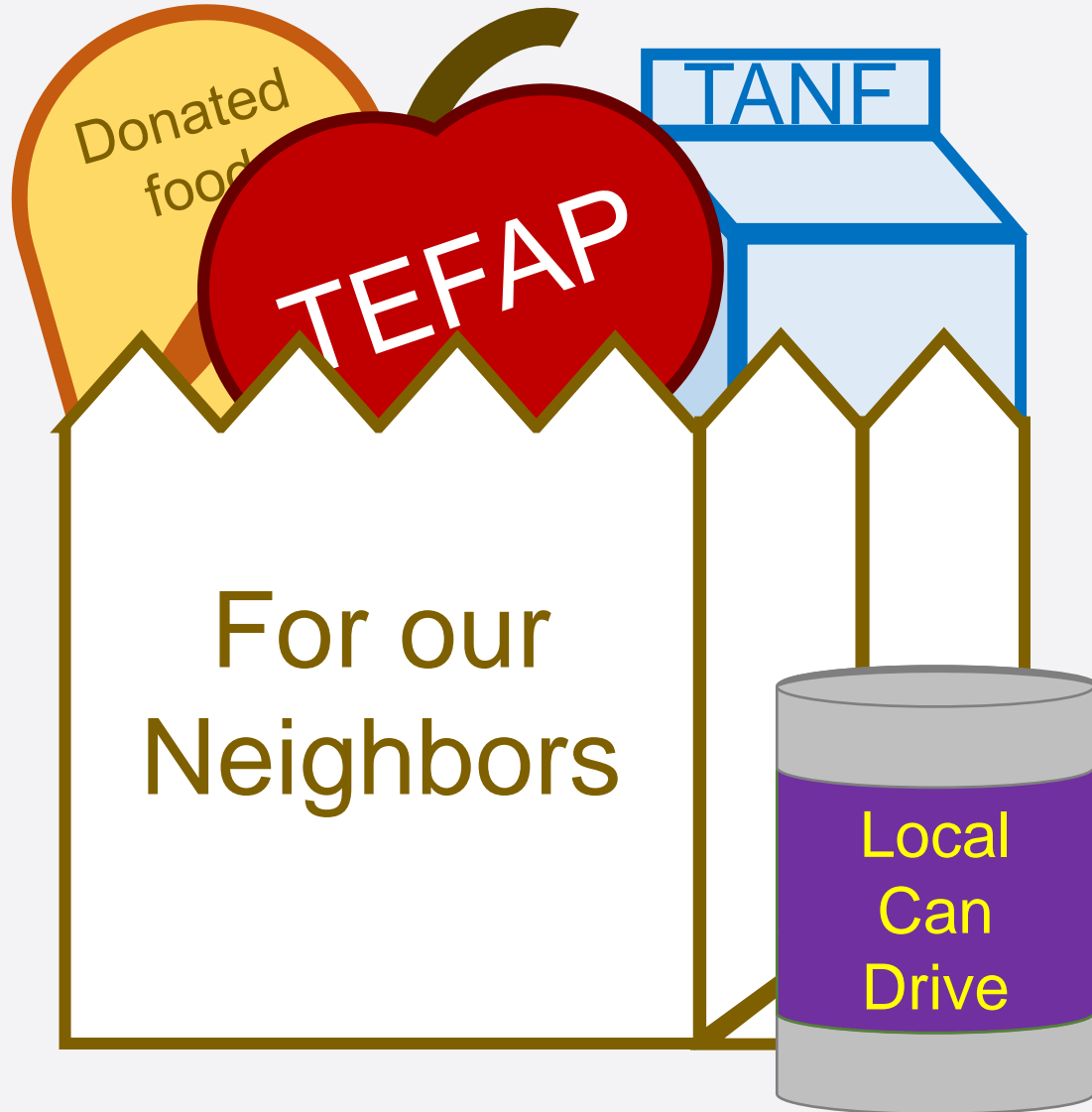


SNAP

SNAP stands for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program. As part of USDA program outreach, we track participants, distribute SNAP applications, and provide contact information. We also help neighbors with the application process if they wish.

IDHS provides us these talking points when explaining SNAP to neighbors:

- SNAP offers nutritional assistance to millions of people.
- Neighbors get a SNAP card they can use at grocery stores to buy food.
- Regardless of SNAP eligibility, neighbors can continue to get food at their pantry.



Mixed sources

The main rule that guides distributing TEFAP food is mix it up! Distribute TEFAP foods in combination with food from other sources—TEFAP food may not be distributed separately.

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Monthly report

The monthly report summarizes information from neighbor intake, reports operating time, and tracks how well supplies met demand.

Make sure to support the staff member or volunteer who takes responsibility for completing the report. Take the time to do neighbor intake correctly, and store their records carefully.

New in 2024: Food pantries enter monthly TEFAP reports online! *Good-bye, postage costs!*

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Site inspection

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Site inspection

Government review

There are more than 680 TEFAP distribution sites throughout the state of Illinois. SLAFB partners are unlikely to host an Illinois site inspector often. It's possible for a site inspector to arrive and find that no one on site that day has prior experience with government site inspections.

Don't be surprised... be ready!

In this section, we'll prepare you for site inspections. We'll go over IDHS's site inspection checklist and call out what's changed.

Please share what you learn!

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Site inspection



Who's coming?

To receive TEFAP food, each site signs a contract that gives SLAFB, IDHS, and USDA inspectors the authority to conduct unannounced inspections. Site inspectors will have identification to show they are who they say they are. No additional paperwork or permission is needed to give them access. Please let all staff and volunteers know it's OK to let them in.

SLAFB: Partner Relationship Coordinators visit network partners routinely. Their goal is to provide program support.

Health Department: The health department is mainly concerned with food safety in the community. They check that local codes are satisfied.

State: IDHS reviews USDA program compliance at Illinois sites.

Federal: The USDA reviews USDA program compliance all across the nation.

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Site inspection



When do they visit?

Government inspectors do not have to announce their visits ahead of time.

- The USDA made unannounced visits to some Illinois partners in 2024.
- IDHS site visits may be announced, or unannounced.

IDHS visits TEFAP sites routinely, but they don't necessarily visit the same sites every year. Their goal is to visit your location at least once every four years.

State inspectors want to know what our neighbors experience. They want to come during hours when neighbors are being served. Site visits give inspectors an opportunity to verify **hours of operation**. We'll explain what that means, and show you how it impacts the site inspector's assessment of your site.

Hours of operation

The USDA regulates “hours of operation.” This phrase causes some confusion because in the food business, “operations” include activities like receiving, restocking, or preparing food.

The USDA’s hours of operation refer to a consistent, publicized schedule for serving neighbors, like dining hours at a restaurant or open hours at a grocery store.

TEFAP sites can’t require neighbors to make appointments. To maintain access, TEFAP sites are required to be open to neighbors at least two hours per week.

Location Operating Hours

Monday	9:00 AM - 2:00 PM
Tuesday	9:00 AM - 2:00 PM
Wednesday	9:00 AM - 2:00 PM
Thursday	9:00 AM - 2:00 PM
Friday	9:00 AM - 2:00 PM

Hours based on time zone: **Central Standard Time (CT) (UTC-5)**

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Site inspection



Posting hours

Like grocery stores and restaurants, TEFAP sites publicize their hours in a variety of ways.

Reliable information is critical for our neighbors. Site inspectors want to see that your site's open days and hours are the same in each place they're posted, such as:

- A sign outside the entrance (IDHS encourages sites with marquee signs to post hours there if possible)
- A clearly visible sign inside the site
- Online at *Find Food Illinois* and *Feeding Illinois*
- Online at SLAFB (Vivory)

Checking and updating posted hours is a small task with a big impact. Partners who prioritize this task know it's not just compliance, it's mission critical. Your work makes a big difference! Thank you.

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Site inspection



Exceptions

Holiday closures: Holidays are a predictable exception to regular operating hours. Make sure reduced holiday hours or closures are broadly communicated in advance.

Rural exemption: If staying open two hours a week becomes a burden, sites may apply for a *rural exemption*. This is a special pre-approved exception that allows reduced hours, so partners in sparsely populated rural areas can continue providing effective distribution of TEFAP. Site inspectors may ask about this, so be sure everyone at your site knows what it means!

Emergency closures: Emergency closures occur at unpredictable times, but we predict they will happen! Think about how often we see severe weather alerts. Prepare ahead and plan how to communicate.

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Site inspection



Phone numbers

Online, there's an option to post phone numbers along with hours of operation. During emergency closures that impact only your part of our metro area, a phone number to other sources of help can be a lifeline. SLAFB would like to see two phone numbers on posted signs and online. Include the official phone number for the distribution site, plus a backup number neighbors can call when the site is closed.

Acceptable backup numbers include SLAFB's number, 211, or a cell phone number answered by site staff or volunteers. We've found that 211 does a good job serving neighbors. Their resources go beyond locating emergency food to help with other needs. During emergencies such as flooding, neighbors may need several types of help all at once.

ILLINOIS TEFAP

Site inspection



Site observation form

Earlier, we mentioned the site inspection checklist. Officially, IDHS calls it the *TEFAP - Distribution Site Observation Form*. To prepare TEFAP partners for site inspection, IDHS includes a copy in their site manual so everyone knows what to expect. If you wonder if your manual is up-to-date, check the link here on our course page and ask us plenty of questions. When in doubt, our Partner Relationship Coordinators will get you answers.

It's critical to review the most up-to-date IDHS checklist and get your questions answered ahead of a site inspection. IDHS made changes in the 2020's that expanded the checklist.

We'll call out some of the recent changes here. For those of you who are new to site inspections, we'll explain what some of the older checklist items mean as well.

General

GENERAL INFORMATION	YES	NO	Comments
How many individuals are served each month?	# _____		
Does this site operate under the rural exemption?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Does the food Bank Deliver food?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
If yes, how many times is food delivered monthly?	# _____		
How many cases of food are currently in inventory?			
What is the site's service area?			
Does the site serve individuals from outside their service area?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

General Information questions haven't changed. If you were inspected today, could you answer them? The inspectors may ask any person, even the newest volunteer, for answers. Did you know that inspectors check inventory to see if sites are successfully moving food out into the community? Ideally, you won't have food on hand longer than two to three months. Six months? Ask SLAFB for help!

For those of you who are new to site inspection, the checklist isn't set up where "yes" always means "pass" and "no" always means "fail." Yes and no describe how you operate, and for some questions either one could be an acceptable practice. There're likely to be follow-up questions so you can explain. If needed, the inspector can document why the practice is acceptable in comments.

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Site inspection

Public awareness

The **Public Awareness** questions should look familiar from the civil rights course. At TEFAP sites we're required to display the USDA's **And Justice for All** poster, which contains the full *Nondiscrimination Statement*.

You may remember that posting "hours of operation" also meets a civil rights requirement to maintain effective, public notification about a USDA program. If your signage mentions TEFAP or USDA food, include the *Nondiscrimination Statement* as well.

PUBLIC AWARENESS SIGNAGE/REQUIRED POSTERS	YES	NO
Is Distribution Site Manual accessible to staff?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are the site's name and days and hours of operation visible to public?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is the <i>And Justice for All</i> poster prominently displayed?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

ILLINOIS TEFAP

Site inspection

Site manual

By now, you may be wondering: *Should I be taking notes?*

That's not a bad idea! IDHS took great notes for you in their *TEFAP Distribution Site Manual for Food Pantries, Soup Kitchens, and Homeless Shelters*.

Besides being a good reference after this course, here are three more reasons to get a copy of the newest site manual:

1. IDHS requires that this manual is kept on site.
2. Site inspectors may ask about the manual during site inspection to see if typical volunteers know about it and can show where it's stored.
3. The manual contains a copy of the site inspection checklist.

Check the dates on the cover to make sure that the copy is current. If it isn't, check the links on the course webpage, or contact SLAFB for assistance.

ILLINOIS TEFAP

Site inspection



Posters

You may be thinking, “Didn’t there used to be more? There’re only three posters on the checklist: And Justice for All, Hours of Operation, and the site manual.”

True! There’ve been many rapid changes in the 2020’s. For example, in September 2023 the USDA canceled the requirement for religious organizations to display the **Written Notice to Beneficiaries** and provide referrals. In July 2024 they reinstated the requirement with clarification about referrals, updating the process to better align with existing law.

The state of Illinois publishing cycle for their site inspection checklist fell in between those dates. For partners who serve from locations where religious activities take place, there is one more poster than the checklist shows. We’ll look at that next.

Beneficiary Rights

By law, TEFAP sites where religious activities like worship, instruction, or proselytizing take place must offer USDA food distribution in a separate space or at a separate time. The USDA requires these sites to provide the Written Notice of Beneficiary Rights **before** neighbors participate in TEFAP.

Use the notice in one or both of these ways:

- As a poster visible to all entering the TEFAP site
- As a flyer provided to neighbors at each distribution

As of 2024, IDHS prints referral information directly on the notice. If a neighbor asks to be served elsewhere, please direct them to contact information at the end of the page (shown here).

Written Notice of Beneficiary Rights

Name of Organization: _____
(food pantry, soup kitchen, or shelter)

Because The Temporary Food Assistance Program (TEFAP) is supported in whole or in part by financial assistance from the Federal Government, we are required to let you know that:

1. We may not discriminate against you on the basis of religion, a religious belief, a refusal to hold a religious belief, or a refusal to attend or participate in a religious practice;
2. We may not require you to attend or participate in any explicitly religious activities (including activities that involve overt religious content such as worship, religious instruction, or proselytization) that are offered by our organization, and any participation by you in such activities must be purely voluntary;
3. We must separate in time or location any privately funded explicitly religious activities (including activities that involve overt religious content such as worship, religious instruction, or proselytization) from activities supported with direct Federal financial assistance; and
4. You may report violations of these protections, including any denials of services or benefits by an organization, by contacting or filing a written complaint with the U.S. Department of Agriculture
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights Executive Director
Center for Civil Rights Enforcement
1400 Independence Avenue SW
Washington, DC 20250-9410, or by email to program.intake@usda.gov
5. If you would like to seek information about whether there are any other federally funded organizations that provide these kinds of services in your area, please contact:

To find local TEFAP distribution sites contact:

The USDA Hunger Hotline:

Phone: 1-866-3-HUNGRY or 1-877-8-HAMBRE to speak with a representative from 7:00 AM – 10:00 PM ET.

State of Illinois TEFAP:

Phone: (217) 558-0030

Or visit the University of Illinois Find Food map:

Website: <https://eat-move-save.extension.illinois.edu/>

This written notice must be given to you before you enroll in the program or receive services from the program, unless the nature of the service provided or exigent circumstances make it impracticable to provide such notice before we provide the actual service. In such an instance, this notice must be given to you at the earliest available opportunity.

Discard

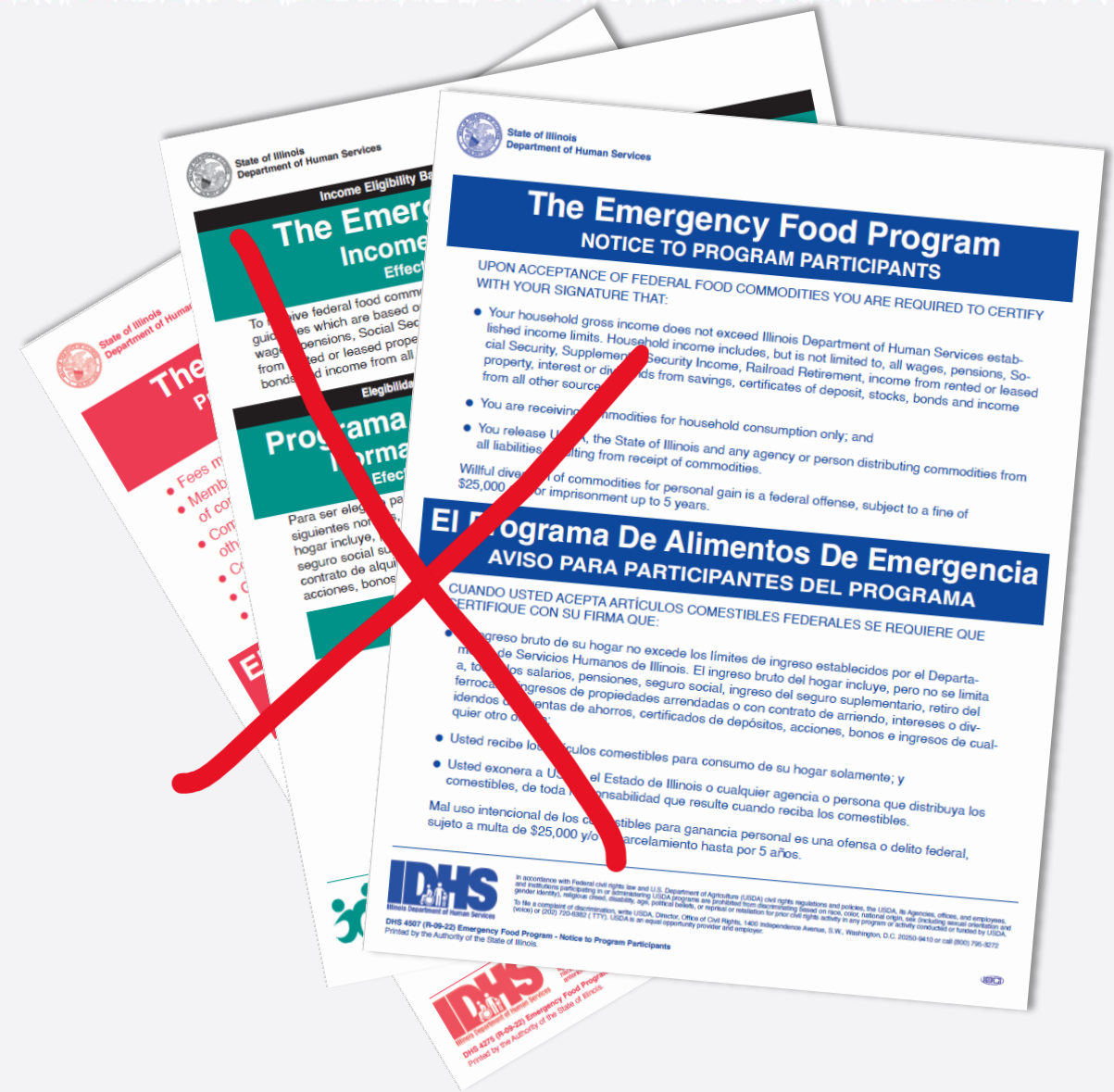
Discontinued posters:

- Red
- Teal green
- Blue

Please discard these three posters—they contain outdated information.

IDHS dropped their display requirements completely. These posters will not be updated and printed going forward. They have been removed from the site inspection checklist.

After completing the course, please look around your site and discard old posters.



Program Procedures

Program Procedures questions haven't changed. This course prepares you to answer them, but the wording is a little different.

“Documentation for the individual” means *Signature Sheets* and *Proxy Statements*. Please show site inspectors any forms they ask to see, paper and digital.

“E-Signature” is just IDHS’s way of saying “names entered by keyboard.” They’re not expecting a touchscreen-drawing signature. We’ll come back to the last two (greyed out) questions, together with safe food storage.

PROGRAM PROCEDURES	
Does the site require documentation for the individual?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
What method of documentation is used?	<input type="checkbox"/> Signature Sheets <input type="checkbox"/> E-Signature <input type="checkbox"/> Proxy Forms
Are forms current and used correctly?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Does the site require individuals to obtain a referral from an outside agency in order to receive TEFAP foods?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Do individuals need an appointment?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Are USDA Commodities distributed with donated foods?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Pest control log maintained by site	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Name of pest control company:	

ILLINOIS TEFAP

Site inspection



Documentation

Whether partners collect information on paper or digitally, site inspectors expect that all documentation is stored and accessible on site. Inspectors check documents from the current year and three previous calendar years.

To save space, it's OK to discard outdated records. If the current year is 2024, all records dated 2020 and older can go. All records dated 2021 onward should be available for review.

Here's some records SLAFB looks for during site inspections:

- Neighbor intake records and monthly report
- TEFAP invoice for each month
- Temperature and pest control logs
- Copies of food safety certificates
- Most recent health inspection report
- Flyers, newsletters, or materials that mention USDA or TEFAP
- Training documentation

Program Integrity

In 2024, IDHS expanded **Program Integrity** to include civil rights questions taken directly from *Food and Nutrition Service Instruction 113-1*. This is a major change from the past, when only the first two questions appeared here. We covered FNS *Instruction 113-1* rules related to these inspection questions in our civil rights course, so we won't cover them again here.

PROGRAM INTEGRITY	YES	NO	Comments
Have there been any complaints filed in the past year?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
If so, have they been forwarded to the food bank?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Have distribution site staff and volunteers been trained on Non-Discrimination, FNS instruction 113.3, and Civil Rights Compliance and Enforcement, to ensure that no person is discriminated against because of race, color, national origin, age, sex, or handicap?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Do potentially eligible persons and households have an equal opportunity to participate in the program?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Are case records coded by race or ethnic origin?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Is the USDA Non-Discrimination poster displayed in a high traffic area?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Is the Non-Discrimination statement included on all printed materials such as applications, pamphlets, forms, or any other program materials including websites?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Are the materials created to ensure inclusivity of all individuals' race, color, national origin, age, sex, and/or disability?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
How is the food bank ensuring program information is being made available to potentially eligible persons, program participants, and program applicants?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Is program information being made available to community organizations who may assist in reaching potentially eligible individuals/families/groups?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Are Civil Rights complaints being handled in accordance with proper procedures?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Are accommodations made to assist non-English speaking individuals? If yes, what methods are used?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Other

Other line items concern general building maintenance and haven't changed.

Next, we'll cover food safety and storage. At the same time, we'll review the three remaining areas of the site inspector's checklist:

- **Dry Storage**
- **Cold Storage**
- **Soup Kitchens and Homeless Shelters**

OTHER	
Windows/doors sealed properly	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Plumbing	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Sewage	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Equipment well maintained	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Garbage and refusal disposal	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Lighting	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Ventilation	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

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Food safety and storage

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Certification

Before we begin, we want to make clear that this TEFAP course provides a basic overview of food handling and food safety. Food safety certification is a separate course.

SLAFB offers ServSafe's **Food Handler – Training for Food Banking** free to all volunteers and staff. Combined, the course and certification exam take about two hours to complete.

One certified person needs to be present during TEFAP distributions to meet USDA regulations. Having many certified volunteers makes meeting this requirement easier.

Some volunteers may have food safety certifications from other places—contact SLAFB to get these certifications on file for your distribution site. Site inspectors check certifications and other food safety documents—such as logs.


Log forms

Site inspectors check **temperature and pest control logs**.

IDHS does not provide forms for logging, leaving it up to partners to create their own logs. To help, SLAFB created a temperature log for partners. Some partners use this form already.

New in 2024: SLAFB created a pest control log for partners. If you aren't using one already, this log may help you get started.

A link to each log is available on the course webpage for downloading and printing.



PEST CONTROL LOG – WEEKLY INSPECTION

Partner: _____

Month/Year: _____

Date	Insect management	Interior rodent management	Exterior rodent management	Initials
	Device/Compound Used: Applied: Inspected: Target Insect: Location:	Device Used: Activity: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Location:	Device Used: Activity: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Location:	
	Device/Compound Used: Applied: Inspected: Target Insect: Location:	Device Used: Activity: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Location:	Device Used: Activity: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Location:	
	Device/Compound Used: Applied: Inspected: Target Insect: Location:	Device Used: Activity: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Location:	Device Used: Activity: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Location:	
	Device/Compound Used: Applied: Inspected: Target Insect: Location:	Device Used: Activity: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Location:	Device Used: Activity: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Location:	
	Device/Compound Used: Applied: Inspected: Target Insect: Location:	Device Used: Activity: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Location:	Device Used: Activity: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Location:	
Reminders	Do not use home pesticides. Do not use poison or bait stations in food storage areas. Prevent insect infestation through good cleaning practices.	Do not use poison or bait stations indoors. Place glue traps along walls approximately 2-3 feet apart. Prevent rodents from entering buildings; look for entry points such as door gaps. Disposal: 1. Wear gloves. 2. Place mice in a Ziploc bag/trash bag (sealed tightly). 3. Place the bag in trash container that is sealed tightly. 4. Clean/sanitize area.		

If professional service is used: Attach receipt/report.

Pest control

We mentioned earlier that we'd return to **Program Procedures**. When site inspectors review food storage practices, they check that systems for keeping food safe to eat are in place. They want to see logs that document routine checking for signs of pests or temperature control issues. Contact information for professional help, like a pest control company, should be readily available.

PROGRAM PROCEDURES	
Does the site require documentation for the individual?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
What method of documentation is used?	<input type="checkbox"/> Signature Sheets <input type="checkbox"/> E-Signature <input type="checkbox"/> Proxy Forms
Are forms current and used correctly?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Does the site require individuals to obtain a referral from an outside agency in order to receive TEFAP foods?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Do individuals need an appointment?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Are USDA Commodities distributed with donated foods?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Pest control log maintained by site	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Name of pest control company:	

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Invoices

Invoices document the handoff from the food bank to partners. Count the TEFAP items as you accept them: they should match the quantity printed on the invoice.

SLAFB works hard to ensure food reaches partners in good condition. The invoice also transfers responsibility for food condition from SLAFB to partners. Before parting ways, check: does the food look OK?

Get in touch with the food bank immediately if you suspect missing food, pest activity, or product damage at receiving. Accept the food after you've resolved any issues.

Then, store your invoices. Like temperature and pest logs, site inspectors review invoices.

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Clean

Cleaning TEFAP sites is similar to cleaning commercial kitchens and restaurants. TEFAP sites must comply with state and local laws, policies, procedures, and warehousing standards.

Site inspectors check to see if food containers, shelves, and floors have been wiped clean of food spills. Pests will nest in packaging, so they'll also look to see how clean-up is handled generally.

Food storage equipment should be well-lit and positioned for cleaning. Positioning dry storage shelves four or more inches away from walls makes it harder for pests to nest in corners, because nesting materials and dry spills fall to the floor.

Shelving adjusted to six or more inches above the floor leaves room for brooms and mops to reach under shelves and keep the floor clean.

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Organized

Organizing TEFAP sites is similar to organizing a grocery store. We reduce the risk of bacterial and chemical cross-contamination by keeping goods separate and contained.

Be sure to clearly separate non-food items from food items. In addition to food, we often distribute household items like soap and laundry detergent. Keep cleaning products on a separate rack, or at least on a lower shelf than food items.

Well-organized storage is not crowded. In dry storage, maintain at least two feet of clearance above food on the top shelf to prevent overheating. Food should not be stored in direct sunlight.

Air circulation around food in cold storage is also important to maintain the correct temperature.

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Cold storage

In 2024, IDHS added a question to **Cold Storage**: Are all temperature logs posted near cold storage devices?

Refrigerators and freezers must have working thermometers. Checking and logging the temperature is a routine task.

- Refrigerated foods should measure 35-40° F
- Frozen foods should measure at or below 0° F

While checking temperatures, we can also verify that storage containers are accurately labeled with the contents and a date.

COLD STORAGE	YES	NO
Are refrigerators and freezers clean and organized?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do all cold storage(s) have working thermometers?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are temperature logs posted near cold storage devices?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is food appropriately labeled?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is equipment well-maintained?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are refrigerator temps on or between 35°F to 40°F?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are freezer temperatures on or below (\leq) 0°F	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is frozen food properly rotated using the FIFO method?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

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Dry storage

In 2024, IDHS reworded questions about **Dry Storage**. We talked about most of these items, but you might be wondering what site inspectors mean by: “Does the inventory seem appropriate for service area?”

If your site serves neighbors with dietary restrictions, it’s appropriate to be flexible and adapt to honor their restrictions with a mix of foods that still meet their nutritional needs. It’s inappropriate to limit nutritional offerings, such as protein. We’ll explain FIFO food rotation next.

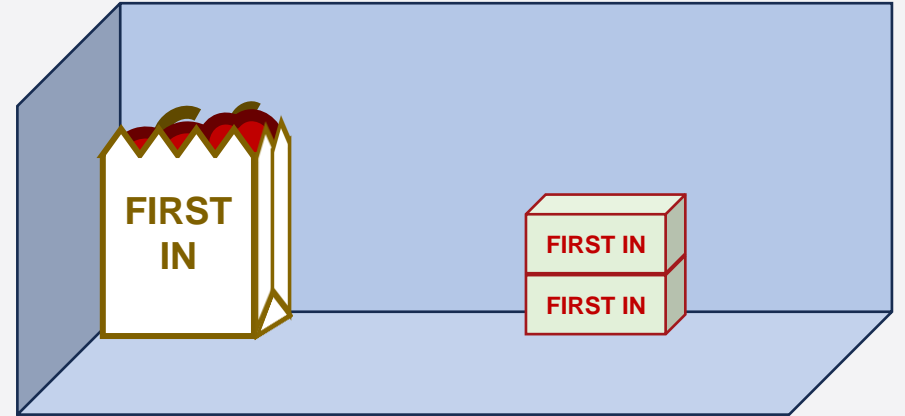
DRY STORAGE	YES	NO
Are the shelves, storage area, etc. clean and organized?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are pest proof containers in use?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is food elevated at least six inches above the floor?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is food kept at least four inches away from the walls?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Does the inventory seem appropriate for service area?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is food properly rotated using the FIFO method?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

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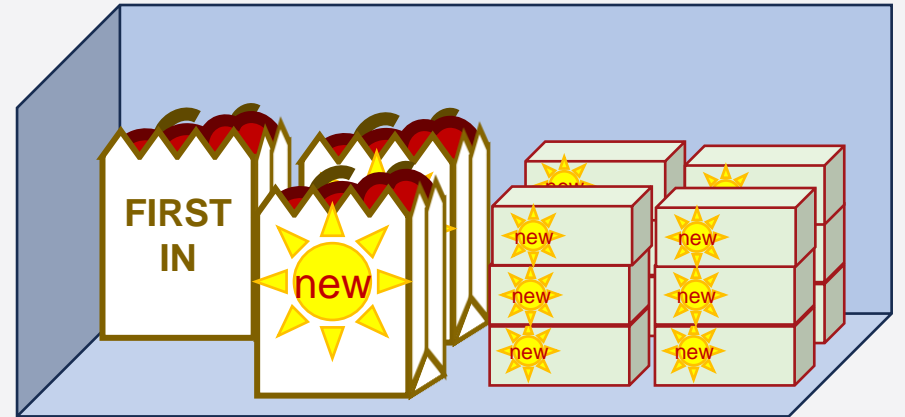
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Rotate for FIFO

Tina accepts fresh donations. One bag of apples and two boxes of tomatoes were left in the cooler from yesterday.



Tina puts away the new apples and tomatoes.

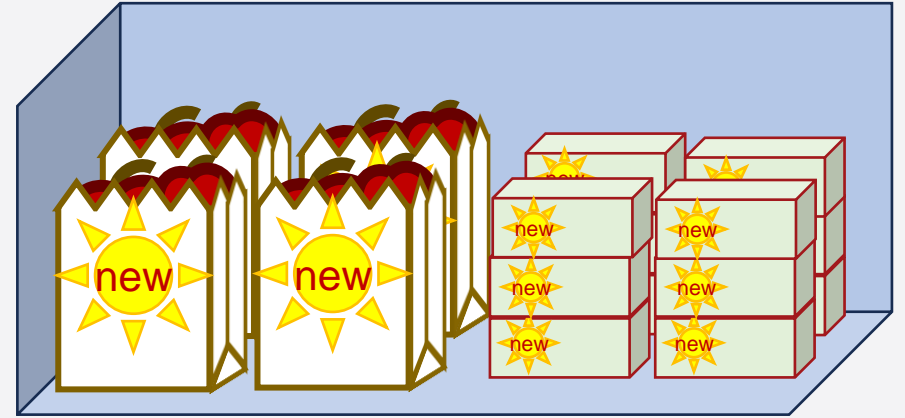


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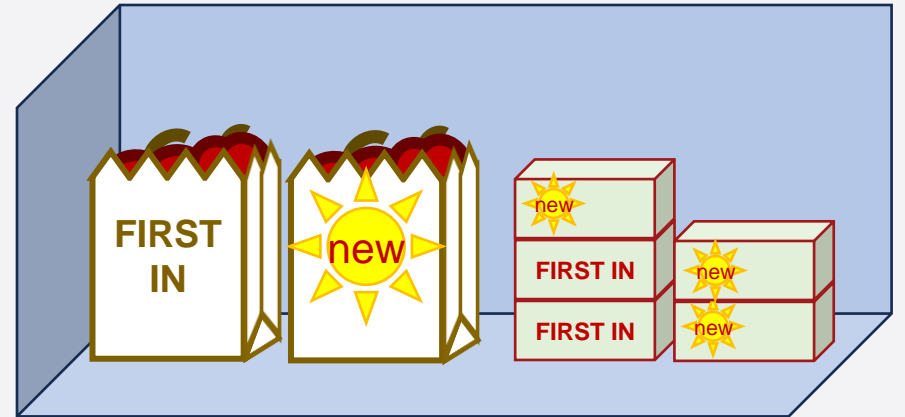
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Rotate for FIFO

Tina made a mistake. When new deliveries of food come in before shelves are completely empty, we rotate for freshness.



At the end of the day, two bags of apples and five boxes of tomatoes are left—yesterday's product is still there.

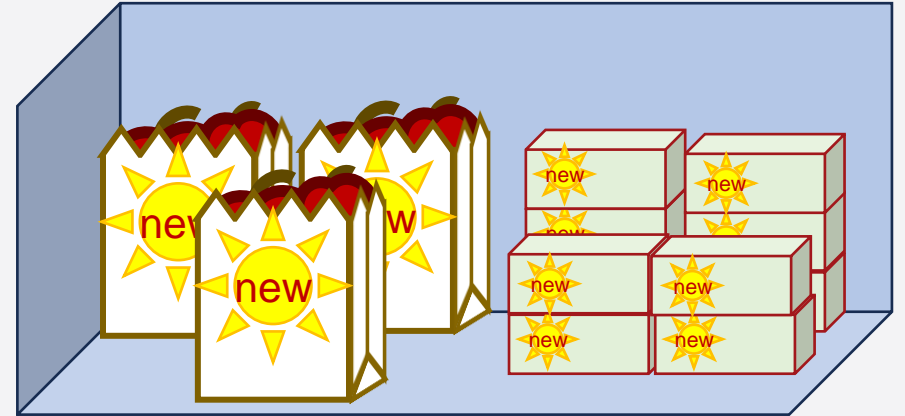


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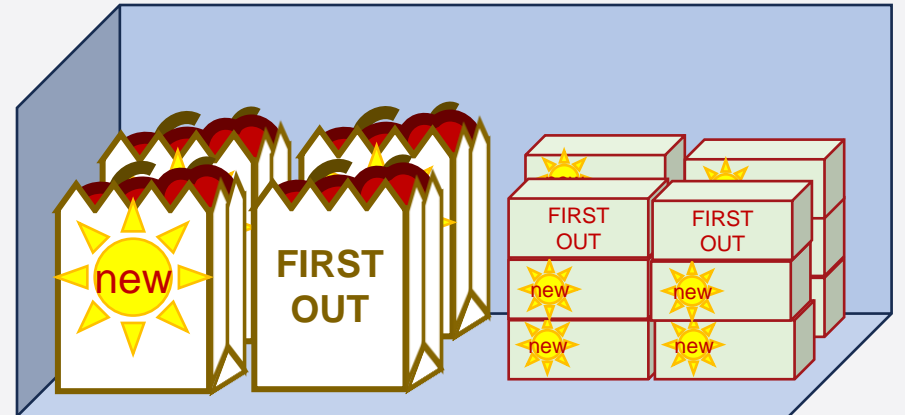
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Rotate for FIFO

To rotate food, begin by removing yesterday's food. Then, put away today's delivery at the back of the shelf.



Return yesterday's items to the shelf. Now the items that arrived in first will be the first items out to neighbors today.

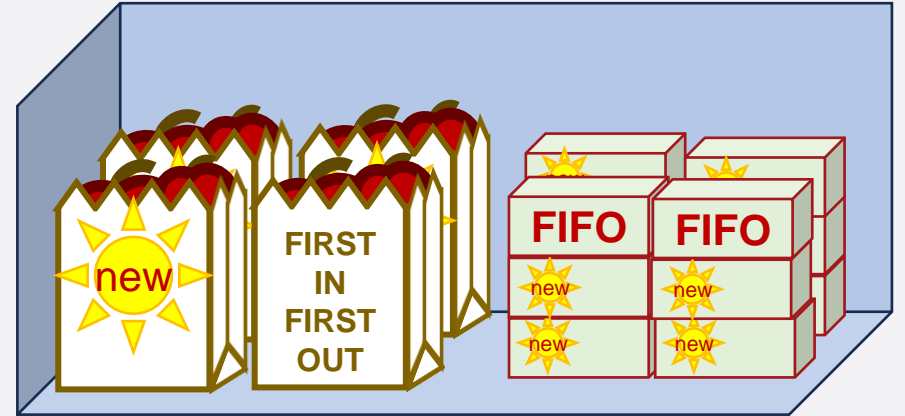


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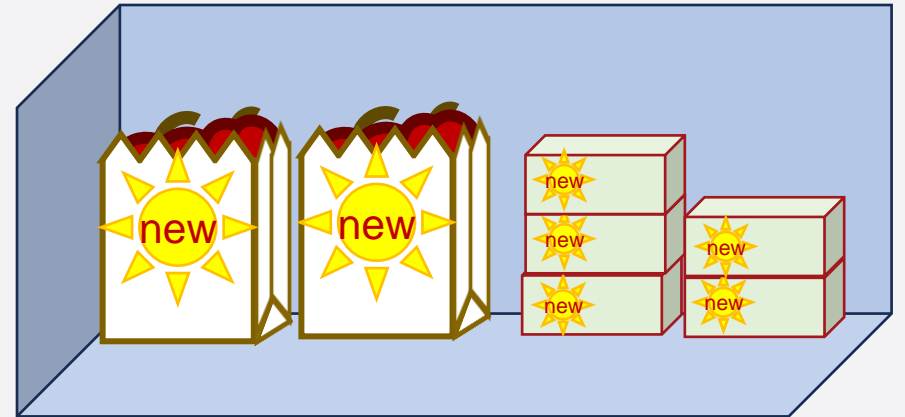
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Rotate for FIFO

This rotation rule is referred to as **FIFO**, or “first in, first out.”



Rotating for FIFO prevents undated food from aging in storage.

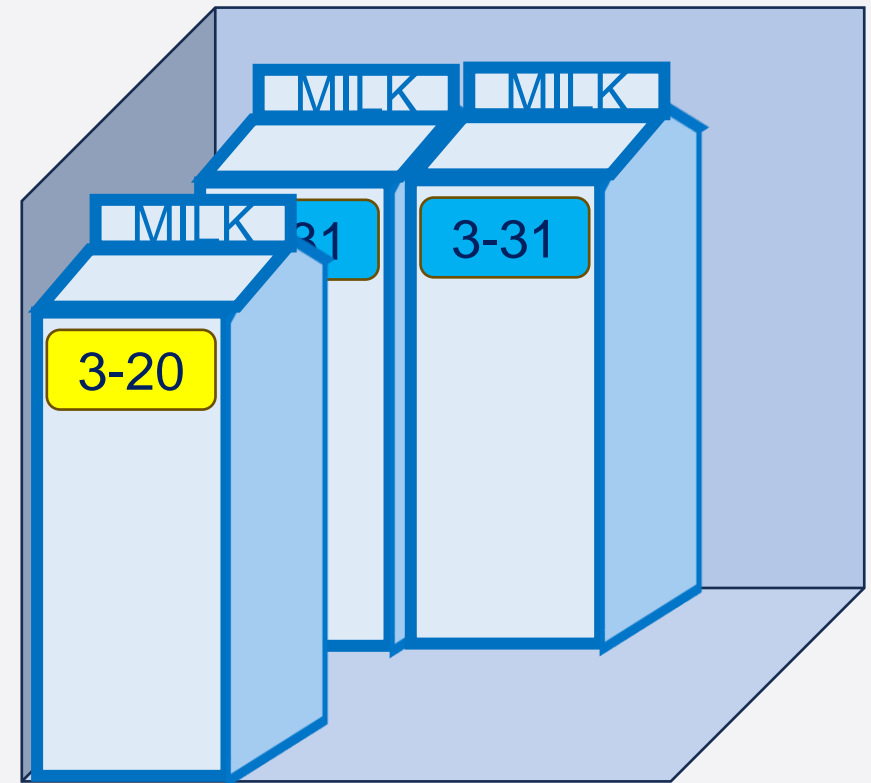


Rotate for FEFO

Today, Tina accepts milk with an end date of 3-20. Two cartons of milk with an end date of 3-31 are still left from yesterday. She puts today's milk in front. She wants the food that expires first (3-20) to go out first.

Tina is correct.

First expired first out (**FEFO**) meets the same goal as FIFO: we don't want food to age in storage.



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Dates on TEFAP food

We use FEFO and FIFO rotation methods for both cold and dry storage. When food isn't dated, such as fresh fruits and vegetables, we rotate food using the FIFO method.

There are several types of end dates on TEFAP food: "Best by," "Sell before," or "Best before" dates, to name a few. **For USDA food, please treat them all as expiration dates.** When food is dated, the USDA expects us to discard TEFAP product after its end date. No one wants to waste food, so checking end dates and rotating food is very important.

Please let SLAFB know if you have a lot of food about to expire. We'll work with you to distribute it another way and prevent waste.

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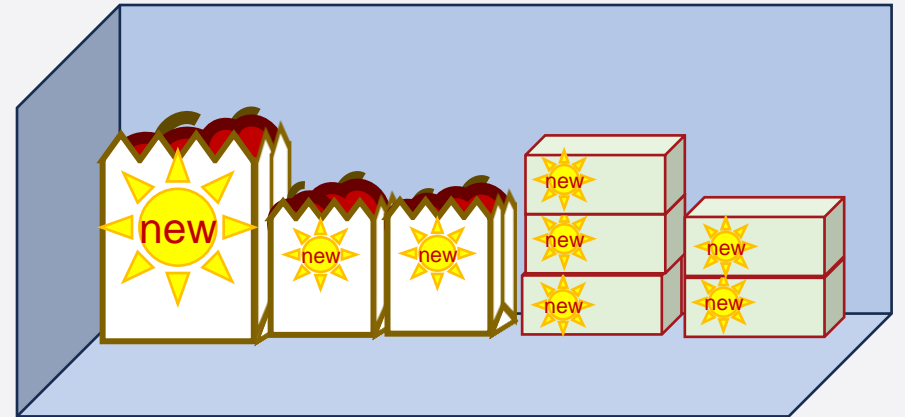
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Repacking food

Phoenix is a ServSafe-certified food handler who accepts local donations of bulk foods. They often repack bulk donations of potatoes and apples to make portioning and storage easier for the smaller households in their community.

Repacking means transferring bulk food with low contamination risk into other containers. As a general rule, food exempt from FDA nutrition label laws can be repacked.

Fresh produce that has not been processed, such as whole fruits and vegetables, may be repacked.



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Repackaging food

Gil accepts a TEFAP allotment of frozen chicken. Each package contains six chicken breasts. He sees Phoenix at work and likes their idea. He begins to repackage the chicken, two to a container. Phoenix stops him. “Gil, we can’t repackage that USDA food. It’s got to go out in the original packaging.”

Phoenix is correct. Just like a grocery store, we’re prohibited from repackaging USDA food that is sealed, labeled, and stamped with packing or end dates under federal inspection at the processor.

Repackaging raw and processed foods creates contamination risk. The IDHS manual and the TEFAP contract both state that we have permission to repack food, but **repackaging food is prohibited.**

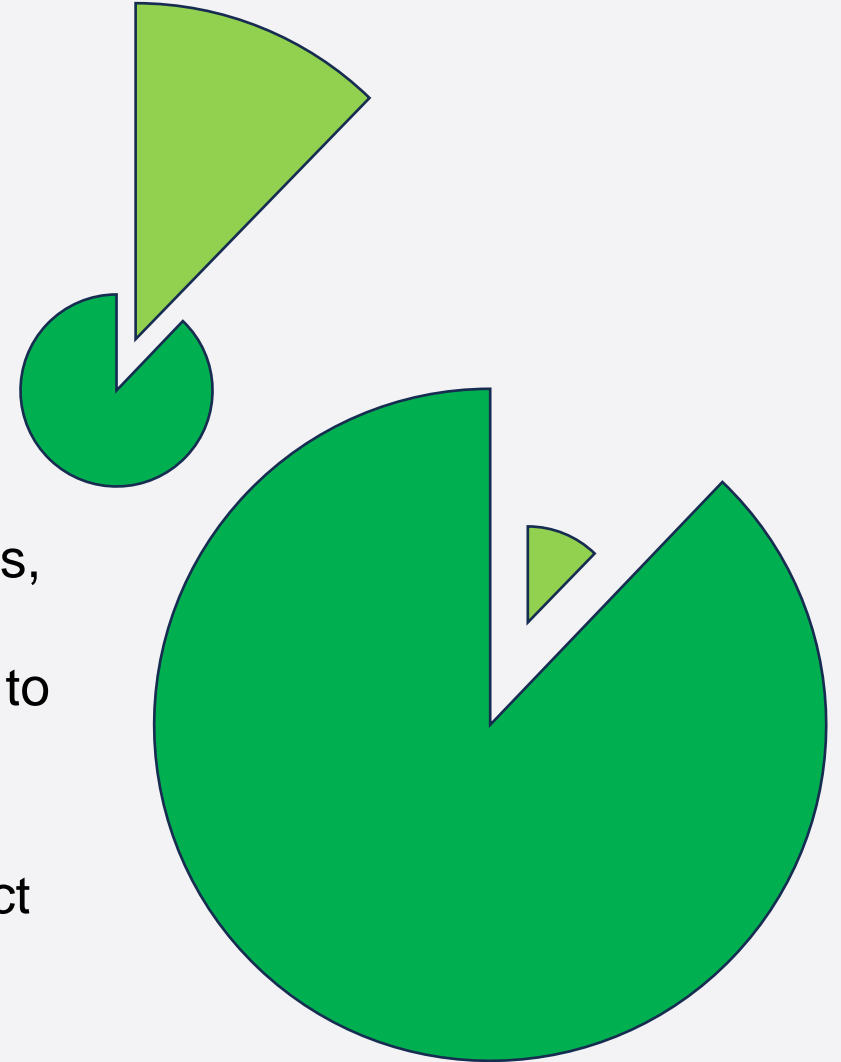
Food quantity

IDHS has two main rules about receiving TEFAP food allotments in Illinois:

- Collect TEFAP food in a timely manner every month.
- Accept the mix of USDA foods as given.

Allotment size grows and shrinks depending on supply. At times, our fair share is not enough or is too much for local demand. Local demand is always changing, too. Unfortunately, refusing to accept the monthly allotment or choosing only local favorites among USDA foods aren't options for this program.

If storing large allotments becomes an issue at your site, contact your Partner Relationship Coordinator to discuss your options.



Transferring food

Gil thanks Phoenix for explaining why he can't repackage food. "I'm trying to solve a problem—this chicken is close to its end date. Neighbors want chicken but for some the package is too large."

Phoenix has an idea. "Let me check with the food bank. Mary has permission to transfer some TEFAP food to us today. Would it help you if we got permission for her to accept some of the chicken?"

TEFAP food distribution is tracked—if there's a recall, we want to know where that food is. The food bank can approve a TEFAP food transfer between TEFAP partners in the same county. We use the **IDHS Transfer Sheet** to track TEFAP food transfers when food is not moving through a location fast enough.

This may be especially useful in regions where cultural or religious dietary restrictions are common.

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Out of condition

Zeke checks a cheese donation. The boxes are all dated “Best by” three months from today, so he accepts them. He opens the first box and puts away 36 packages of cheese. He opens the second box and sees mold through the plastic. He lifts out the cheese and discovers that the plastic wasn’t sealed correctly at the factory. Yuck!

Zeke just identified **out of condition** food. The date on the product is never a guarantee that food is safe to eat. TEFAP food handlers should remove unsafe or poor-quality USDA food and report it right away. SLAFB wants to know! Watch for:

- Poor packaging (bulging or rusty cans, torn bags, leaks)
- Foreign material in product (metal, band-aids)
- Quality issues (odors, appearance)

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Recalls

A food recall attempts to halt the distribution of unsafe food before it reaches to the public. IDHS monitors recalls for all Illinois TEFAP sites. The USDA classifies recalls in three ways.

USDA Recall Classifications

Class I: A reasonable probability that consuming the product will cause serious, adverse health consequences or death.

Class II: A remote probability that consuming the product will cause adverse health consequences.

Class III: Consuming the product will not cause adverse health consequences.

In the event of a food recall, IDHS will inform all Illinois food banks. SLAFB will contact TEFAP partners to explain the recall and any follow-up actions we'll need to take.

Kitchens & Shelters

In 2024, IDHS added site inspection questions and clarified their wording for **Soup Kitchens & Homeless Shelters**. The newest ones are:

- Does the Soup Kitchen also operate a food pantry?
- If yes, is food properly separated and tracked for the two programs?
- Does the Soup Kitchen use non-porous countertops?
- Are workers required to empty shirt pockets and remove jewelry to prevent objects falling into food?

Your site may have always had these practices. If not, please be sure to reach out if you need help making adjustments.

SOUP KITCHENS AND HOMELESS SHELTERS	YES	NO
Is a Serve-Safe manager present?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is a Sanitation license posted?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is a "Must Wash Hands" sign posted?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is a temperature chart posted for cold storage devices?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is the preparation area clean and organized?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is the serving area clean and organized?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is cookware, containers, and silverware clean?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is cookware stored appropriately to ensure safety?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is the 3-step dish washing system clearly labeled?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are kitchen staff and volunteers wearing clean clothes, hair restraints/nets, and gloves?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are clean wiping cloths available adjacent to hand-washing sink?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is there adequate space to perform kitchen activities?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Does the Soup Kitchen also operate a food pantry?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
If yes, is food properly separated/tracked for the two programs?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Does the Soup Kitchen use non-porous countertops?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are workers required to empty shirt pockets and remove jewelry to prevent objects falling into food?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
How are the TEFAP meals that are provided counted?		

Sinks

IDHS clarified two items about sinks:

- Are clean wiping cloths available **adjacent to hand-washing sink**?
- Is the 3-step washing system **clearly labeled**?



Scrape items before washing them. Change wash, rinse, and sanitizer solutions when dirty or diluted.

Clean items in the first sink. Use a hot detergent solution, at least 110° F.

Rinse items in the second sink. Remove all traces of food and detergent.

Sanitize items in the third sink. Follow the sanitizer's time and temperature requirements. Use a test kit to check concentration.

Air dry all items. Place items upside down so they will drain. Never use a towel to dry items.

Shelters only

Lastly, in 2024 IDHS added a subsection for **Homeless Shelters only**.

The questions are self-explanatory, but because they're new, please be sure all staff and volunteers are familiar with the answers.

(Homeless Shelter only questions:)		
How long can neighbors remain in the shelter?		
Is the facility restricted to serving only a specific service population?	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	If yes, which one(s)? Elderly <input type="checkbox"/> Children <input type="checkbox"/> Domestic Abuse survivors <input type="checkbox"/> D & A <input type="checkbox"/>
Does the shelter receive funding from the DHS Emergency Food & Shelter program?	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	

This ends our review of food safety and storage. As always, please bring your questions to your Partner Relationship Coordinators.

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Next steps

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Next steps



SLAFB partners...

...distributed over 2 million pounds of TEFAP product to Illinois neighbors in FY23!

2,277,898

THANK YOU

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Next steps

Next steps

Congratulations! You've completed your annual Illinois TEFAP training. Please follow the link provided to document your course completion.

You'll also find links to the TEFAP distribution site manual, the civil rights course, and contact information. Get your questions answered!

Thank you for partnering with us!