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AGENCY GUIDELINES: Becoming A Member

Prospective Agencies:

Prospective agencies must attend a mandatory orientation meeting in order to receive information and pick up membership applications. The orientation includes:

- Overview and history of the Houston Food Bank,
- Review of the membership application and supporting documents requested,
- Nutrition Services overview,
- Distribution and ordering summary,
- Brief safety rules regarding pick up of product,
- Facility Tour.

Membership in the Houston Food Bank is not limited to the guidelines detailed below. Other factors to be considered are:

- Need for food assistance in the community to be served,
- Other food assistance programs provided in the community,
- Houston Food Bank resources required to manage contract compliance,
- Other factors deemed relevant by the Agency Services Committee.

After the completed application is received at the Food Bank:

- An Agency Services Representative will schedule a site visit,
- After the visit, the ASR will submit a report to the Agency Services Committee,
- The committee, which has the final decision, will make a ruling on the application,
- The agency will be notified in writing of the committee's decision.

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GUIDELINES FOR MEMBERSHIP

1. Must be a non-profit organization incorporated for the purpose of serving the ill, needy or children/infants. Must have written documentation of ***501 (c)(3)*** status,
2. The 501 (c)(3) agency must be programmatically, fiscally and legally responsible for the donated product handling/distribution activities,
3. Funds used to pay ***handling fee*** must come from the 501 (c)(3) and all money received and disbursed in connection with the donated product handling/distribution will go through the fiscal books of the 501 (c)(3) agency,
4. Cannot be a private foundation,
5. In operation for ***6 months*** preferred. HFB will still consider agencies with less than 6 mos. of operation and if accepted those agencies will go through a probationary period,
6. Products must be stored in and distributed from ***commercially zoned buildings***,
7. Must demonstrate a base of public support with ***funding*** from at least ***3 sources***,
8. Should have ***food sources other than*** the Houston Food Bank,
9. Must screen clients annually to assure that eligibility requirements are met. Client information must be current, confidential, and kept for 3 years and 90 days from the initial date of service. All intake cards and sign-in sheets must be kept on-site,
10. Have written rules of acceptance/participation in the program, which are applied equally regardless of race, religion, economic status, gender, political affiliation, or etc.,
11. Must serve a defined area. Must post Service Guidelines in an area that is visible to clients, staff, and volunteers,
12. Cannot require clients to attend religious/political meetings, to make statements of faith, or to pledge membership in exchange for service,
13. It is illegal to use Houston Food Bank products for profit-making ventures or social entrepreneurship programs, ***(Cannot sell to clients in exchange for service)***
14. Must have a system of securing products received from the Houston Food Bank,
15. Must comply with the Houston Food Bank food storage requirements,
16. Must complete and submit a ***Monthly Survey Form*** to the Agency Services Department by the ***5th*** of every month for the preceding month, failure to submit Monthly survey could result in agencies ordering privileges being jeopardized.

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17. Agree to ***scheduled*** and ***unscheduled*** visits to your site by HFB Representatives,
18. Agencies that do not order from the Houston Food Bank for ***6 consecutive months*** will be considered to have voluntarily withdrawn membership.

19. **Required fees**: 25.00 application fee (non-refundable). New agencies must pre-pay $500.00 to ensure they are financially viable and able to meet their financial obligations to the Houston Food Bank.

PANTRIES:

20. Must serve at least ***35 individuals*** per month,
21. Must have a current ***Food Dealer's Permit*** from a local health department proving the inspection of the distribution site, (If req'd by health dept.)
22. Be open to the public; church members and pantry workers shall not be served first or given priority items,
23. Must be open at least 4 times per month with 1 day being an evening or weekend for at least 2 hours.
24. Must be client choice.
25. Must provide SNAP applications through the SNAP Box program or the Social Service Outreach Program.
26. Provide and or link to Health Service.
27. Provide and or link to Social Service.
28. Mandatory attendance to annual conference.

MEALSITES:

29. Non-residential programs must serve at least ***25 individuals*** per month,
30. Must have a current ***Health Inspection Report*** from a local health department proving the inspection of kitchens and food storage areas. (Inspections must be done annually,)
31. Must have a valid ***Food Manager's Certificate*** from a local health department proving certification to prepare food.
32. Keep menu logs for each day that food is served including the # of people served,
33. Keep client records and sign-in sheets at the site,

RESIDENTIAL FACILITIES:

34. Must be licensed for a minimum of ***10 clients***,
35. Must have a current ***Health Inspection Report*** from a local health department proving the inspection of kitchens and food storage areas. 36. Must have a valid ***Food Manager's Certificate*** from a local health department proving certification to prepare food,

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36. Must have a current ***Occupancy Certificate*** if there are clients living on-site,

37. Must have a current ***State License*** from the appropriate regulatory agency (Texas Dept. of Health & Human Srvs, Texas Protective & Regulatory Srvs, Texas Commission on Alcohol & Drug Abuse,) Termination/Expiration of license will result in termination of membership,
38. Keep menu logs for each day that food is served including the # of people served,
39. Keep client records and sign-in sheets at the site,
40. Youth residential facilities may not exclusively serve a population placed by the Texas Youth Commission or the Texas Juvenile Probation Commission,
41. If clients are required to pay a fee, money used to pay shared maintenance fees cannot come from the provider family or the family of the client,
42. Must use Food Bank products only for qualified clients. Staff can be allowed to share in the meals only if it is part of the "program" and the number of staff is incidental to the number of qualified clients participating in the meal.

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