

houston**food**bank 

Partner

Proudly serving the community together

Partner Guidebook 2019

Dear Community Partner,

Welcome to the Houston Food Bank (HFB) network of partners! We are excited to work with you to provide food for better lives throughout southeast Texas.

HFB is a hunger-relief organization that has been in operation since 1982. HFB is the largest food bank in the United States in terms of distribution. We serve a network of 1,500 community partners in 18 southeast Texas counties, including food pantries, soup kitchens, meal sites and shelters. With partners like you, we were able to distribute 122 million nutritious meals in 2017.

As we move forward, we hope to align ourselves with transformational partnerships like yourself to not only address the issue of hunger but also the root causes of food insecurity. We understand that for many of the people we mutually serve the need for food is just a symptom of larger issues they may be dealing with such as low-wages, unemployment, inconsistent housing, or low access to healthcare. Hunger-relief organizations must be willing to both provide the food that sustains people today and connect them to the long-term solutions that end the need for emergency food assistance in the future to truly be successful. We understand that this is a difficult task but believe that through transformational partnerships with organizations like yourself, our mission to provide food for better lives can be achieved.

To develop and maintain a successful relationship with partners, we have created the Partner Guidebook, which contains information you and your organization need to successfully navigate your partnership with HFB. The information in this guidebook details our policies and best practices of food distribution. Please let your Community Partner Liaison know if you have any additional questions or need clarifications on any of the information in the guidebook.

Thank you for joining us in our mission to provide food for better lives. We appreciate your partnership and the work that you are doing to help those in need.

Best Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R. Young', written in a cursive style.

Reginald Young
Sr. Director Strategic Partnerships
Houston Food Bank

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Introduction

OUR MISSION

Food for better lives

OUR VISION

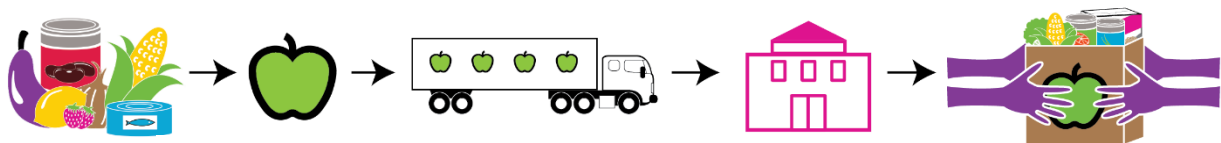
A world that doesn't need food banks

WHO WE ARE

The Houston Food Bank is America's largest food bank in distribution, leading hunger relief in 18 southeast Texas counties. The hunger-relief partner programs operate nearly 400 food pantries, hot meal sites, residentials and other hunger-relief programs in neighborhoods and communities where there is limited, and possibly scarce, food access. The Houston Food Bank annually distributes 122,000,000 meals and feeds 800,000 people.

HOW WE WORK

The Houston Food Bank is a part of a network of food banks under Feeding America. HFB collects, sorts, and distributes donated food and non-food that's secured from corporate food donors, state and federal food assistance programs, and Feeding America. Partners place orders online, receive the orders via a delivery system from HFB, and provide the food through their hunger-relief programs to their community or neighborhood.



OUR PARTNERS

The Houston Food Bank (HFB) works with a range of partners to help us achieve our mission.

- **Feeding America (FA):** The nation’s largest domestic hunger-relief organization. Feeding America is a network of more than 200 partner food banks, including the Houston Food Bank, which engages our country in the fight to end hunger.



- **Feeding Texas (FT):** Feeding Texas is a statewide, 501c3 nonprofit organization whose mission is to lead to a unified effort for a hunger-free Texas. They move millions of hungry Texans toward food security through a statewide network of food banks; strengthen the collective response to hunger through collaboration and scaling success; and lead the public conversation needed to solve hunger in Texas.



- **United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) / Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA):** TDA administers USDA commodities and enforces federal policies and procedures on the state level.

- **Food and Financial Donors:** Local donors provide over one-third of our food and non-food donations. Financial contributions from sources throughout the region subsidize operations and enable HFB to have an annual fee system and low cost purchased items.

- **Partners:** Partners include but are not limited to food pantries, hot meal sites, shelters, direct distributions, youth programs, senior programs, drug and alcohol rehabilitation, child and adult day cares, and residential or group home programs. Partner agencies are the foundation of the HFB’s hunger-relief network. Partner agencies are expected to maintain compliance and contracts with FA, FT, HFB, USDA, and TDA guidelines and compliances.



ABOUT THE HOUSTON FOOD BANK

Hours of Operation and Inventory Dates

Food Bank Days & Hours of Operation

Front Desk – 713-223-3700

Monday thru Friday 7:00 AM to 9:00 PM

Saturday 7:00 AM to 4:00 PM

Partner Services Hours of Operation

8:00-5:00 Monday thru Saturday

Holiday Schedule

HFB is closed on the following holidays:

- New Year's Day
- Memorial Day
- Independence Day
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving Day
- Christmas Day

Please pay attention to Partner Announcements for information for other closures

Inventory System

Inventory is completed in January and June every year. Please stay alert to partner announcements regarding ordering and deliveries during that time.

Partner announcements are the emails containing vital information regarding updates, reminders, or general information from HFB. It is the partners responsibility to notify their CPL of any changes or additions to this email list.



Partners,

Partner Service announcements are the primary way of communicating important updates and information. Please notify your CPL if you need to add people to the distribution list or are not receiving them.

Important Attachments

•Occasionally the Partner Services team will need to provide updated or new documents to partners. These will be attached through a hyperlink in the body of the email.

[Privacy Policy](#) | [Unsubscribe](#)
Houston Food Bank
Filling pantries. Filling lives.

Partnership & Liability

As partner agencies of the Houston Food Bank (HFB), organizations must adhere to certain standards and responsibilities as outlined in the annual **Partnership & Liability Agreement**. Failure to comply with the annual **Partnership & Liability Agreement** and the associated responsibilities could lead to the suspension and/or end of partnership with HFB. This section outlines the legal provisions that inform the content of the annual agreement.

THE TAX REFORM ACT OF 1976

The Tax Reform Act of 1976 established specific types of tax deductions to certain corporations when donating inventory. In addition, the act establishes specific parameters on how donated goods can be used and by whom. Since most of the food obtained by HFB is donated, our partner agencies must abide by all the requirements of this federal law.

THE FEDERAL FOOD, DRUG AND COSMETICS ACT

The Federal Food, Drug and Cosmetics Act establishes regulations for the safety of food, drugs and cosmetics. In addition, this act prohibits the re-distribution of contaminated or potentially contaminated products.

Other laws and regulations governing the use of items your partner may obtain from HFB include: The Fair Packaging and Labeling Act, Chapter 21 of the Code of Federal Regulations, and both federal and state labor laws.

The Houston Food Bank and Feeding America are committed to the health and food safety of the communities we serve. The Houston Food Bank provides detailed guidelines that must be met and maintained by all partners to ensure the safe storage and handling of food on the partner level.

NATIONAL CIVIL RIGHTS LAWS

The purpose of Civil Rights policies is to promote fairness and equality of treatment for all people. National Civil Rights law is provided under several federal provisions including: Title VI of the Civil Rights Act 1964, Americans with Disability Act, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Age Discrimination Act of 1975, The Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996, Food Stamp Act of 1977, Executive Order 13166, USDA Departmental Regulation 4330-2, and 7CFR Part 16, Equal Opportunity for Religious Organizations. As a partner of the Houston Food Bank, civil rights training is a requirement for the staff and volunteers that have direct contact with clients.



THE EMERGENCY FOOD ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (TEFAP)

The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP) is funded under the U.S. Farm Bill and administered at the Federal level by the Department of Agriculture's Food and Nutrition Service. The USDA uses the funding for TEFAP to buy food, including processing and packaging. This food is also known as commodities. The amount of commodities allocated to each of the states is contingent on its amount of low-income and unemployed population.

Each state designates a department or partner within the state to regulate the administration and distribution of the commodities. The supervising partner in Texas for TEFAP Commodities is the Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA).

TDA provides all guidelines for partner eligibility, handling and storage of the commodities, distribution to clients, client record maintenance and all other program related materials.

Houston Food Bank

As a member of Feeding America, the Houston Food Bank has the right to institute additional criteria for partners to provide for the most efficient and safe use of the limited resources available to partners.

In addition, the Houston Food Bank may change or revise policies and guidelines when necessary to comply with changes in network policy or government oversight. We promise to make every attempt to communicate these changes as quickly and efficiently as we can.



GOOD FAITH DONOR ACT – TEXAS LAW

On June 10, 1981 the Texas State Legislature passed legislation, commonly referred to as the Good Faith Donor Act, to address liability for damages resulting from the condition of donated items. The state law reads as follows: A person who donates apparently wholesome food to a nonprofit organization for distribution to the needy is not subject to civil or criminal liability that arises from the condition of the food, unless an injury or death results from an act or omission of the person that constitutes gross negligence, recklessness, or intentional misconduct. A nonprofit organization that distributes apparently wholesome food to the needy at no charge and that substantially complies with the applicable local, county, state, and federal laws and rules regarding the storage and handling of food for distribution to the public is not subject to civil or criminal liability that arises from the condition of the food, unless an injury or death results from an act or omission of the organization that constitutes gross negligence, recklessness, or intentional misconduct.

THE EMERSON GOOD SAMARITAN FOOD ACT – FEDERAL LAW

On October 1, 1996 the Emerson Good Samaritan Food Donation Act (Emerson Act) was enacted. The Emerson Act is a federal law that provides national standards regarding food donations so that donors have consistent liability information for interstate donations.

The law addresses the liability concerns of donors who contribute food in good faith and states the following: To encourage the donation of food and grocery products to nonprofit organizations for distribution to needy individuals by giving the Model Good Samaritan Food Donation Act the full force and effect of law. A person or gleaner shall not be subject to civil or criminal liability arising from the nature, age, packaging, or condition of apparently wholesome food or an apparently fit grocery product that the person or gleaner donates in good faith to a nonprofit organization for ultimate distribution to needy individuals, except that this paragraph shall not apply to an injury to or death of an ultimate user or recipient of the food or grocery product that results from an act or omission of the donor constituting gross negligence or intentional misconduct. The term “apparently wholesome food” means food that meets all quality and labeling standards imposed by federal, state, and local laws and regulations even though the food may not be readily marketable due to appearance, age, freshness, grade, size, surplus, or other conditions.

Food Ordering and Product Return Policy

FOOD SOURCING

The inventory at HFB comes from a variety of generous donors and food bank specific networks

- **Local Donations:** Local food companies, wholesalers, distributors, retailers, community members, faith groups, and businesses
- **Feeding America:** The national nonprofit organization that solicits donated food and grocery products from national suppliers for distribution through HFB's network
- **USDA:** Provides food through The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP)
- **HFB Purchased Food:** Purchased staple items from outside vendors to help ensure a reliable supply of nutritious foods to our feeding programs. Core inventory items include rice, beans, ground meats, pasta, fresh and canned fruits and vegetables.



Additional Sources of Product

Partners of HFB should **not exclusively rely** on HFB for its food and grocery products. Partners should try to obtain **other sources** of food by seeking donations, working with sponsors, and, if necessary, by purchasing from a wholesale or retail store.

ORDERING FOR A PANTRY: AGENCY EXPRESS

Pantry, Residential, and Meal Sites are the only partners that can order items from Agency Express (AE3).

ORDERING DEADLINES

Partner orders can be processed in 48 hours and we are able to process 2 orders marked for the same delivery date. Please see the chart below for order deadlines.

Partner Submits Order	Receive Order/Product
Monday before noon	Wednesday
Tuesday before noon	Thursday
Wednesday before noon	Friday AND Saturday
Thursday before noon	Monday
Friday before noon	Tuesday

SUBMITTING ORDERS

It is the responsibility of the Partner to ensure that orders are submitted properly. If the process is not followed completely, HFB may not receive the request and the order may be cancelled or postponed to the next available delivery date.

- Partners are allowed two opportunities to order for the same delivery
- Partners cannot place orders more than 2 weeks in advance of pick up/delivery date

INCOMPLETE ORDERS

If a Partner receives their order and finds there are missing items, they must notify HFB within 3 business days by filling out an [Overages, Shortages, Damaged](#) (OSD) form. We advise Partners to check the order prior to signing the invoice.

Please notify HFB at partners@houstonfoodbank.org for further concerns with incomplete orders.

NAVIGATING AGENCY EXPRESS

To receive food from HFB, agencies must place orders through the AE3 online ordering system. Inventory items change frequently; it is recommended that agencies check the inventory as early as possible and as often as necessary. AE3 updates daily and new items are added throughout the day.

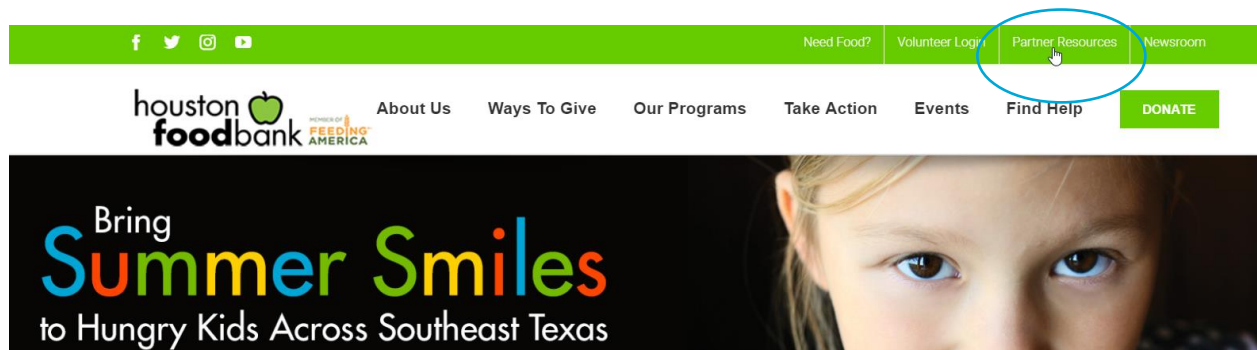
AE3 can be found on the Partner Resources section on HFB's website.

Bookmarking the page as your "Favorite" setting will allow for quick and easy access.

HOW TO ORDER ONLINE

Log into AE3 by using the assigned login ID, password and a program code for your partner account. The login, password, and program code are assigned to each partner by a Community Partner Liaison (CPL).

1. Go to www.houstonfoodbank.org
2. Click Partner Resources on the right, upper most part of the page



3. Scroll down to the Product Ordering Section
4. Click Online Ordering. You will be taken to Agency Express

Monthly Reports Product Ordering

- Monthly Survey Reports are due by the 5th of every month.
 - Fax: 832-202-2878
 - E-mail: [Patricia Sosa](mailto:Patricia.Sosa@houstonfoodbank.org)
 - Mail: 535 Portwall Street Houston, Texas 77029
- Red Barrel Reports must be completed by the 5th of every month via Meal Connect.
- Retail Pick Up Reports must be completed weekly via Meal Connect.

Online Product Ordering

- [Online Ordering](#)
- [Instructions for Online Ordering](#)

Defined Orders

- [Defined Order Request](#)
- [Explanation of Defined Orders](#)

Schedule Your Community Event (Please book min 14 days before event)

↑

5. Log into Agency Express by following these steps:

User ID: first letter of first name followed by last name (ex: ksmith)

Password: change12 (all lowercase, one word)

Program Code: 0037p followed by Partner ID # (ex: 0037p123456)

6. Begin to shop by clicking on Order Options then Shopping list



7. Search for the item(s) you need

- Show All - The fastest way to bring up all the available items in stock
- Item No. - Search by item number
- Item Name/Item Description - Search by description

8. Select the item, put the amount in Order Qty, and select Add to Cart

Shopping List - Sort By -

Tip: Please Add to Cart requested items before leaving page

Order Qty	Available Qty.	Item No.	Description	UOM	Unit Price	VAP Fee	Pack Size	Feature Type	Gross Weight	Favorite
<input type="text" value="40"/>	44	PR165	Cereal, Assorted	CS	0.00	0.00	12 lb		12	<input type="checkbox"/>



You must hit Add to Cart to ensure your items are added before you go to another page. If you don't, your selections won't be added to your cart.

When selecting product, pay close attention to the packaging information.

- TIP: click on item number and it will give you additional information about packaging.*
- TIP: pay attention to available quantity to ensure you get what you need.*

Pay close attention to the Unit Price

Pay close attention to the Unit Price. Due to Annual Fees, most of the inventory on AE3 won't have a Unit Price. However, if an item is a purchased product, it is possible there will be a fee associated with the item you're ordering.

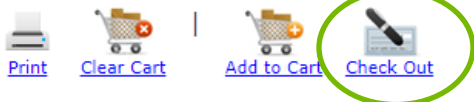
Mustard **doesn't** have a Unit Price. The oil **does** have a Unit Price

<input type="text"/>	87	11021	Mustard, Sriracha	CS	0.00	0.00	12 x 12 oz		9	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="text"/>	1806	P1338	Oil, Vegetable Regular Purchase	CS	9.68	0.00	12 x 16 oz		12	<input type="checkbox"/>

9. When you are finished selecting items click on Check Out

Shopping Cart

Total Line Items	Total Due
2	\$0.00
Available Credit Limit	Gross Weight
\$500.00	756



You have the option of deleting an item, changing the quantity of an item or continuing to shop from this page.

- **Pay attention to the total weight of your order**

- **Point to point** delivery must have a minimum of **4,500 pounds** per order
- **Spokes** do not have a minimum poundage for delivery

10. Select a delivery date:

My Appointment

Reference Number: **P03464825**

Pickup/Delivery Date: Time:

Delivery

Comment (Please limit characters (&, <, >, ", ', when PO is updated or su

June 2019						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
						+
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						

Shopping Cart

The **green box** shows your delivery date

If you don't see the green box, then you're trying to order too far in advance. I.e.: if this order was being placed on June 13 then there wouldn't be a green box.

Orders may be placed **10 days in advance** of your next scheduled delivery date.

11. **Submit Cart** will place your order

Shopping Cart

[Print](#) [Clear Cart](#) [Continue Shopping](#) [Update Cart](#) [Submit Cart](#)

AE3 EXPLANATION

PO Number: a number that is established once an item is added to the shopping cart. This does not mean your order is complete. Once your order has been processed, the PO number converts to a Partner Invoice (AI).

Partner Invoice: the number that is generated after your order has been processed. It is the most effective way to track your orders. When inquiring about your orders to your Community Partner Liaison, please use the AI number.

Order Management: Once your order is placed, you will be re-directed to Order Management where current and past orders are listed.

Order Status Explanation:

- **New Order:** Status appears once an order is submitted.
- **Sent to Food Bank:** The order has been sent from Agency Express to HFB's system.
- **Acknowledged:** The order has been received from Agency Express and is being processed.
- **Released:** The order has been completely processed and is ready for pick up. No changes/cancellations can be made through Agency Express from this point.
- **Invoiced:** Once the order is fulfilled and received by the Partner, it is invoiced. Please note: The item quantity and the total amount due on the PO may not reflect the same amounts on your invoice.
- **Cancelled:** Orders need to be canceled at least 24 hours in advance. Please notify your Community Partner Liaison with any cancellations.

Partners of HFB must keep an **active account** via ordering. Partners are expected to order at **minimum** every **6 months**. Inactive ordering every 6 months will result in the partner involuntarily withdrawing their membership and require the partner to reapply with HFB.

Online order updates: The online inventory system is updated every 3 to 5 minutes. This will update available quantities and add additional items received throughout the day. Remember, items are on a first-come, first-served basis. Depending on the number of orders, some items may be out of stock by the time a Partner's order is validated.

CATEGORY EXPLANATION

Shopping List										
- Sort By -										
Tip: Please Add to Cart requested items before leaving page										
Order Qty	Available Qty.	Item No.	Description	UOM	Unit Price	VAP Fee	Pack Size	Feature Type	Gross Weight	Favorite
40	44	PR165	Cereal, Assorted	CS	0.00	0.00	12 lb		12	<input type="checkbox"/>

Order Qty: the partner types in the amount of product they're ordering

Available Qty: the amount of inventory HFB has in the warehouse

Item No: categories of inventory will be indicated

PR: Product Recovery, assorted product

P: Purchased, HFB has purchased this item. A partner may incur a fee if ordering this item

D: Disaster, these items are held for disaster

S: USDA

Description: the description of the product is listed here

UOM: Unit of Measure, how the product is packaged

CS: Case

PL: Pallet

EA: Each

Unit Price: most items on AE3 will have a Unit Price of 0.00, P items can have a fee listed here

Gross Weight: the weight of the UOM

ORDERING FOR A FOOD FAIR OR MOBILE PANTRY: APPOINTMENT PLUS

Pantry partners may order food fairs or mobile pantries to **enhance** their pantry distributions. **Mobile** partners may order **only** mobile pantries. The Houston Food Bank uses an online ordering system called [Appointment Plus](#) for mobile and food fairs.



Food Fair

1. Go to the [Partner Resources](#) page
2. Scroll down to the Product Ordering Section, then to Select Your Community Event, and select Mobile Pantry or Community Food Fair:

Partners may only create 1 account for Appointment Plus. Multiple accounts for a partner create confusing duplicates.

Schedule Your Community Event (Please book min 14 days before event)

- [Mobile Pantry or Community Food Fair](#)
- [Nutrition Education for Your Clients](#)
- [CAP Mobile Pantry and SNAP Assistance](#)

3. You will need a Username and Password to access the scheduling system. Your initial set up will be:

Username: Partner Number (example 10999)

Initial Password: Foodbank1!

You will be asked to change your password once you have logged in.

4. The first thing you will see is a drop-down menu for the delivery type. The only two you should select are **Mobile Food Pantry** or **Food Fair**

The screenshot shows the Houston Foodbank website interface. At the top is the logo for "houston foodbank" with a green apple icon. Below the logo is a navigation bar with links for "Home", "Appointments", "Account", and "Log Out". The main content area is divided into two sections. On the left is the "Appointment Locator" section, which features a "Select Schedule" dropdown menu. The dropdown menu is open, showing options: "Select Schedule", "CAP Mobile", "Food Fair", "Food For Change Mobile", "Mobile Food Pantry" (which is highlighted in blue), and "School Market Mobile". On the right is the "Appointment Activity" section, which displays a "Welcome Samantha" message and a "Future Appointments" table. The table has one entry: "Thursday, September 13, 2018 at 8:00am".

5. You will select the date and time just as shown below, and then be able to enter the delivery address information. Any **new locations** for mobile unit distribution must be **inspected**, and **approved** by Partner Services before the mobile unit can be scheduled. Scheduling an **uninspected/unapproved** site will result in the **cancellation** of the event. Please refer to the Mobile Sponsorship Guide for more information.

You may book up to **120 days** in advance from the day you are logged into the system. Once the day is selected it will show the available time slots

Appointment Locator

Select Delivery Type

Mobile Food Pantry

10 Pallets

Date

September 2018						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						

Select Appointment Time

Thursday, September 20, 2018	8:00am	Book it
Thursday, September 20, 2018	10:00am	Book it
Thursday, September 20, 2018	3:00pm	Book it
Friday, September 21, 2018	8:00am	Book it
Friday, September 21, 2018	10:00am	Book it
Friday, September 21, 2018	3:00pm	Book it
Saturday, September 22, 2018	8:00am	Book it
Saturday, September 22, 2018	10:00am	Book it

6. The **time slots** for **mobiles** are: Monday-Friday at 8A, 10A, 3P. Saturday 8A, 10A. The mobile will be at your site no later than the delivery times but could potentially be there earlier. Each time slot has a limited number of spots. Once full, you will not be able to select that time

The duration for the mobile unit to be onsite is **3 hours**.

Mobile only sites are required to have **2** distributions per month. Partners who aren't in compliance with this requirement are subject to becoming inactive in our system.

The **time slots** for **food fairs** are:
Monday-Saturday 8A and 11A

Food fairs will also be limited five (5) a day. Food fairs will have the morning delivery window, 3 at 8A and 2 at 11A. Each time slot has a limited number of spots. Once full, you will not be able to select that time.

The duration for the mobile unit to be onsite is **3 hours**.

Mobile only sites you are required to have **2** distributions per month

Please contact your CPL if you'd like to sponsor a mobile for a different site.

Selected Appointment

Schedule Mobile Food Pantry
Delivery Type Mobile Food Pantry
Date Friday, October 5, 2018
Start Time 8:00am

Please complete the following information.

* **Delivery Address**

* **City**

* **State**

* **Zip Code**

* **Delivery Contact Name**

* **Delivery Contact Phone**

* **Delivery Contact E-Mail**

Special Instructions

Finalize Appointment

Pallets and product will remain at your distribution site. You may schedule HFB pick up your remaining pallets via your Community Partner Liaison.

7. Identify appointment time and select **“Book It”**. You will then be able to fill out delivery and contact information.

This information is the delivery information, not the partner information. Address given is where the mobile will be delivered, number and contact information of who will be onsite for the mobile unit delivery.

8. Once you select “**Finalized Appointment**” you will receive an automated confirmation email as well as reminder emails closer to the date of your scheduled food fair or mobile.

If you have any questions, please contact your Community Partner Liaison.

IMPORTANT MOBILE & FOOD FAIR GUIDELINES

Traffic control and **security** from your local police department is encouraged. The partner is responsible for the payment of these safety precautions.

Mobiles and food fair distributions are **prohibited** in apartment complexes, shared parking lots, public streets, and for-profit entities.

Please use the **80/20 rule** when receiving the produce found on Mobiles and Food Fairs.

Partners are responsible for scheduling their mobiles or food fairs. HFB staff will not be able to schedule your mobiles or food fairs.

Please notify your Community Partner Liaison if you need to cancel your food fair or mobile within 24 hours of your event

Use the 80-20 rule, please.

If more than 20% of the produce in a bin must be discarded, please notify the Houston Food Bank and we will refund or replace it.

Based on the resources available to us on an ongoing basis, the Houston Food Bank is able to distribute “Grade 2” fruit and vegetables – a grade lower than the type of produce seen in most grocery stores. Variances in color and shape should not affect the wholesomeness of the produce. Some product comes directly from the grower. Your clients can safely prepare and eat it.

In general, up to 20% of any produce item you receive may need to be discarded by your agency.

If your order has a higher percentage of unacceptable quality, the Food Bank will refund or replace it.

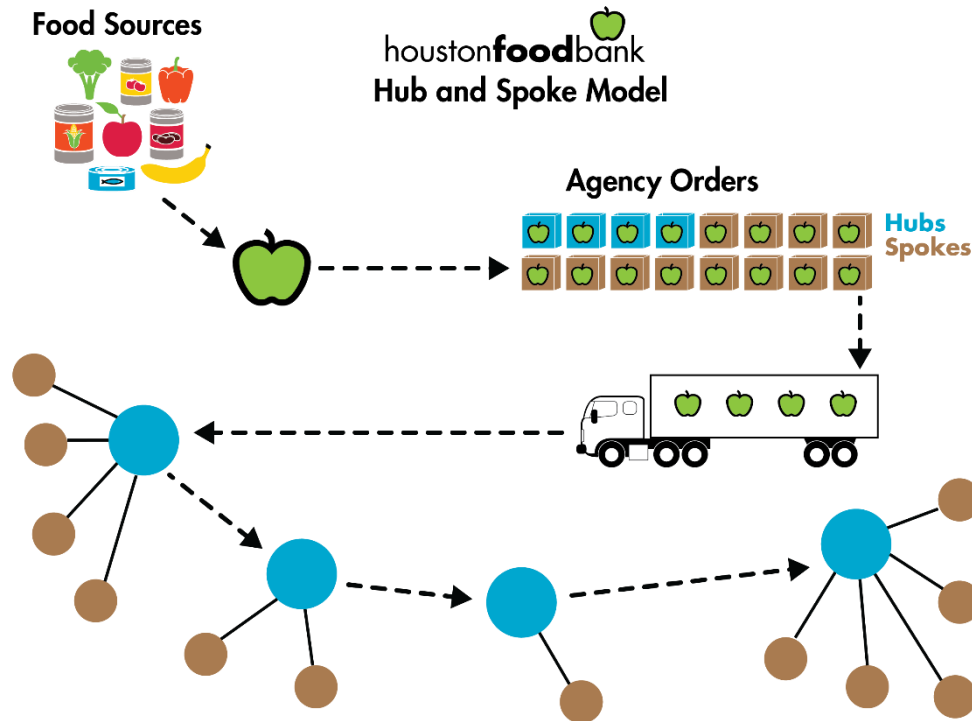
Delivery Systems

HUB AND SPOKE

In 2018, the HFB moved to a **hub and spoke** delivery model to increase effective and efficient distributions to our service area.

Hubs are **larger partner sites** that have been preselected by HFB. Hubs are required to receive spoke orders, facilitate spoke pick up's, store spoke orders within a reasonable amount of time if a spoke can't pick up, and communicate closures or hour changes to the spokes. Hubs must receive **defined orders** and have AE3 privileges.

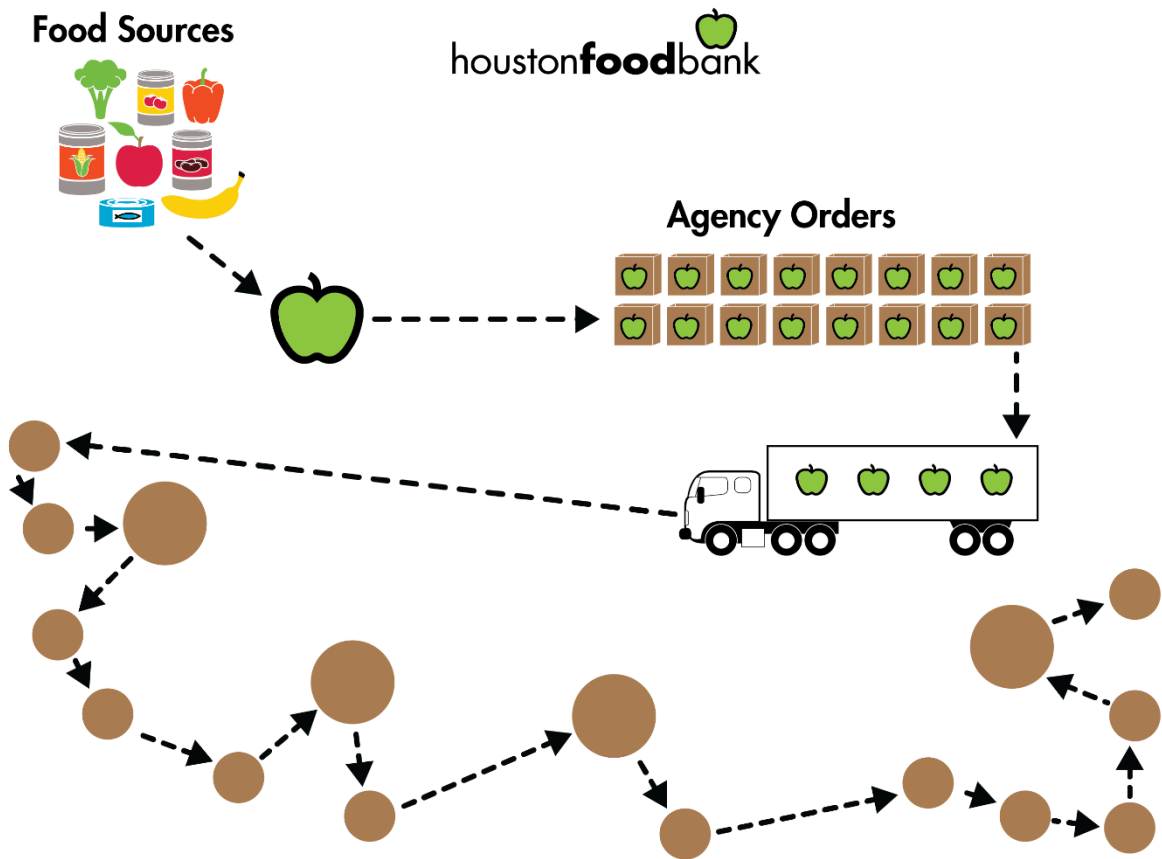
Spokes are partner sites that are unable to order the required minimum poundage amount (4,500 pounds) per order. Spokes places orders in Agency Express, with **no poundage requirements**, or have the option of using the defined order system. Spoke orders will be delivered to their assigned hub. The spoke is required to pick up their order within two hours of the delivery. The spoke partner is required to bring their own equipment and volunteers to pick up orders. Hub assignment is based on proximity to the spoke.



POINT TO POINT

Partners can receive deliveries directly, or **point to point**, from HFB to their site. To qualify for a point to point delivery the partner's orders must be consistently **4,500 pounds** or higher.

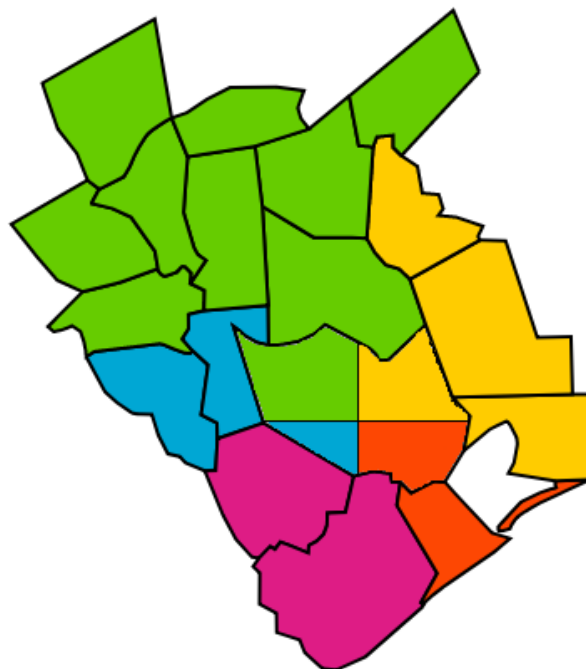
Partners receiving point to point deliveries are subject to review each quarter and are subject to changing to obligatory spoke orders when not in compliance with our poundage requirements.








DELIVERY ZONES

HFB services 18 counties in our distribution area. In order to be more efficient the service areas are divided into **delivery zones**.

The following delivery types are excluded from assigned zone days: Mobile Food Pantries, Food Fairs, National School Lunch Program, Senior Box Program, and Kids Cafe – Keegan Kitchen meal deliveries.



	For questions regarding your delivery zone, please contact your community partner liaison.	Delivery Day
 Zone 1	Brazos Valley FB, Montgomery County FB, Trinity County, Walker County, NW Harris County	Thursday
 Zone 2	Austin County, Waller County, SW Harris County	Tuesday
 Zone 3	Chambers County, Liberty County, San Jacinto County, NE Harris County	Wednesday
 Zone 4	Galveston County, SE Harris County	Friday
 Zone 5	Brazoria County, Fort Bend County	Monday

Harris County has been divided into four zones. Northwest, Southwest, Southeast, and Northeast with I-10 and I-45 creating the borders.

Food Safety: Training, Proper Food Storage & Handling

In an effort to maintain the integrity of the food distributed by HFB, while ensuring it remains healthy and safe for consumption, partners must be trained in proper food storage and safe handling practices. Each partner agrees to observe safe food handling practices in transportation, storage, handling, and distribution of food.



REQUIRED FOOD SAFETY TRAINING

One representative from each partner must undergo food safety training to remain compliant with Feeding America and HFB's food safety policy. This will ensure that proper food safety knowledge and practices are being implemented throughout our network. In the event the representative with food safety training departs from the organization, notify HFB as another representative will need to be trained within 30 days.

Online Food Safety Training

HFB Partners have several options to take food safety training. The least expensive and time consuming is the **Learn2Serve** Food Handler Certificate Program. The link, and enrollment instructions, for Learn2Serve is located on HFB's website on the Partner Resources page under Trainings. Learn2Serve's course is **2 hours** and costs **\$7.00** to complete.

Other options for food safety training include [ServSafe](#) and [Food Managers Certification](#) classes.

If you have any questions, please contact your Community Partner Liaison.

PROPER FOOD STORAGE & HANDLING

Proper storage and handling of food distributed by HFB is expected of our partners.

This section provides a general list of the food bank’s guidelines only. These guidelines do not replace, supersede, or in any way exempt partners from compliance guidelines established by other authorities regulating or governing the activities of the partner.


STORAGE

- Food should be stored in an area which will prevent the entry and

HFB does not allow shared spaces, such as a part of a church kitchen, for partner pantries.

harboring of pests. Seal or repair any possible entry points for pests.

- Your food pantry must be locked, and clearly marked for the food program.
- Store food properly, keeping all food, including bulk bags, off floors.

 *Tip: Use pallets to store food if they can be easily moved for cleaning and inspection. Note: USDA requires rice to be stored in a refrigerated system from May-October.*

Store Food At Least 6" Off The Floor	Store Food At Least 4" From The Walls	Store Food At Least 18" From The Ceiling
Date Each Case With Month and Year It Was Received	Full Stock Should Be Rotated Every 3 Months to Avoid Expired Product	Store Non-Food Items Separately From Food
Clean Floors, Pallets, and Shelving Regularly	Keep Doors, Windows, and Roofs Well Sealed	Maintain a Pest Control System
Maintain Equipment Regularly	Maintain Temperature and Pest Control Logs for ALL Storage Areas	Follow Basic Rules for Stacking Product
MAINTAIN PROPER TEMPERATURE IN ALL STORAGE AREAS		
Refrigerated Units	Freezer Units	Dry Storage Areas
33° - 40° F	0° F or below	50°- 70° F

- **Check** food stock regularly for **quality**. Check incoming food to make sure it is free from spoilage or contamination. Rotate stock: **first expired, first out**. While checking food stock, discard any bloated or rusty cans, containers without a label, open

containers, out of date baby food or formula, and containers which show signs of tampering.

Tip: Leave room on the shelves so that food can be easily moved around for inspection of stock and shelves.

- **Discard** anything you have **doubts** about. Please uses HFB's **80-20** rule for produce.
- Store **unsorted** product **separately** from food that is ready for distribution.
- Store **non-food items** (soap, cleaning supplies) **separately** from food. Never store non-food items above or directly with food.
- Refer to the Sorting 101 handbook for more information about HFB's internal and external sorting policies and guidelines.

CLEAN STORAGE AREAS REGULARLY

- Keep food storage areas clean.
- Trash containers must be covered, isolated, and emptied daily.
- All food storage areas should be checked and cleaned at least once per week, including refrigerators, freezers, and floors.
 - 🍏 *Tip: Use a rotating schedule for your volunteers clean up chores*
 - 🍏 *Tip: While cleaning, check for soundness of food (open containers or packages), leaks, and signs of pests.*
- Sanitize the pantry with a solution of one tablespoon bleach to one gallon of water.

Refer to the
Sorting Handbook
for more
information

CHECK THE DATE & INSPECT THE PRODUCT

Some foods may last beyond the “sell by” or “best by” date. The quality and freshness may be compromised, but they are still **considered safe to eat**.

Discard foods that are bottled or jarred past the expiration date or if liquids appear cloudy or discolored. Always inspect your product upon receiving.

WHEN IN DOUBT, THROW IT OUT!


HFB's policy is to discard bulging, rusted, or severely dented cans with metal touching metal, opened or leaking packages, and broken seals. If you notice items with these flaws when you unpack them at your facility, do not distribute them or cook with them.

KEEP COLD FOODS COLD AND HOT FOODS HOT

Frozen and refrigerated product should be maintained in cold temperatures during transport, if possible. It should also be delivered and stored as quickly as possible. Food that is exposed to the temperature danger zone between 40-140 degrees Fahrenheit for more than 4 hours may become unsafe to eat.

TEMPERATURE CONTROL

Be sure to monitor your coolers and freezers for maintaining the proper and safe temperatures. Functional thermometers must be present and visible in all storage areas. Temperature logs can show discrepancies in climate over a period. Fluctuating temperatures may mean your refrigerator or freezer needs to be replaced. Refer to the temperature log in the back of the guidebook.

 *Tip: Have an interested volunteer that can't commit long hours? Ask them to check your temps!*

Storage Area	Proper Temperature
Refrigerators	33°F – 40°F
Freezers	0°F or below
Dry Storage	50°F – 75°F

ANNUAL FEES

In 2018, HFB conducted partner roundtables to discuss a proposal for an Annual fee that replaced our prior fee system. Annual fees are an ongoing initiative to be less transactional with our partners and accurately predict the operating budgeting for the partner location.

Annual fees allow each partner to order without operational budget constraints.

Annual fees **do not cover** items included in the **Pantry Staple Program**. If you see a fee listed in the Unit Price section on AE3, the partner will be invoiced the fee incurred with selecting that item. Please see the Ordering section for more information on Unit Price.

New pantry and meal site partners (enrollment past January 2019) have a minimum annual fee payment of \$3,000.00 per year. New mobile partners have a minimum annual fee payment of \$1,200.00 per year.

Established partner's Annual fees were based on your past spending with HFB within our 2017 fiscal year. The 2017 fiscal year (July 2016-June 2017) is the last fiscal year with our former fee system. Annual fees will be reassessed every year.

Effective July 2019, HFB is no longer accepting cash payments

INVOICES

Invoices are generated for every order showing each product ordered, the corresponding weight, and possible costs (Pantry Staple Program) associated with each item. The partner will be emailed a copy of their invoice prior to their delivery. It is the partner's responsibility to see that the appropriate paperwork is directed to the individual in the organization paying the bills. The invoice can be emailed to two contacts. It is the partner's responsibility to keep HFB updated with this information.

Ship Via		Regular Delivery	Parent Agency ID	11111
Ship Date	2/29/2019		Agency ID	11111
Appt. Time			Your Reference No.	PO11111111
Due Date	3/22/2019		Order Date	2/14/2019
Terms	Net 30 Days		Sales/Person	Kristen

Item No.	Description	Unit	Gross Weight	Qty.	Unit Fee	Cubic Feet	Total Price
11391	Fish, Salmon 5 ct	Case	10	2			
10210	Franks, Assorted 40 x 5 lb	Case	10	1			
30205	Frozen Retail Meat (Miscellaneous)	Case	60	2			
P11120	Detergent, Liquid Dishwashing	Case	110	5		4	
30127	Cereal, Assorted Cocoa Krispies 6 x	Case	14	1			
ST1117	Cheese, Process Regular-Usda 6 x	Case	120	4			
10945	Chicken Breast, Strip-Breaded 12 x	Case					
P1335	Chicken, Canned Harvey Purchase	Case					
S1047	Chicken, Leg Quarters-Usda 8 x 5 lb	Case					
S1086	Chicken, Thighs-Usda 8 x 5 lb	Case					
S1094	Chicken, Whole Bagged-Usda	Case	40	1			
21222	Cleaner, Clorox Bleach 12 x 16 oz	Case	32	2			
32005	Com. Canned (Soup/Bowl Of	Case	65	5			
51881	Deli Meat, Assorted Tyson 12 lb	Each	36	3			
P1921	Fruit, Mixed Harvey Purchase 24 x	Case	108	4			
S9999	Fruit, Mixed-Usda 24 x 14.5-15 oz	Case	45	2		2	
ST1090	Ham, Usda 12 x 3 lb	Case					
32445	Ice Cream, Assorted 6 x 3 ct x 9 oz	Case	20	4			
28629	Ice Cream, Assorted Bars 6 x 3 ct x 9	Case	15	3			
31496	Jelly, Assorted 12 x 11 oz	Case					
60212	Bratwurst, Assorted 2 x 5 lb	Case	30	3			
S1006	Beans, Refined-Usda 24 x 15.25 oz	Case					

Subtotal:	16.27
Grant Credit:	0.00
Total Gross Weight:	2,001.00
Total \$:	16.27

Grant Summary

Up to 20% of each pallet of produce you receive may need to be discarded by your agency. If your order has a higher percentage of unacceptable quality the Food Bank will refund or replace it. Quantity and quality differences must be reported on delivery. Ask your driver for Over, Short and Damage form. You have 30 days from the invoice date to dispute price discrepancy. For questions, call 832-369-9390.

STATEMENTS

At the end of each month, HFB emails a statement to the partner. The statement lists the dates and amount due for each invoice on the account. The statement reflects current month activity as well as any invoice balances still open from prior months. Statements are provided as a means for the partner to reconcile the activity on the account with the invoices received at pick up. Statements are emailed to partners. It is the partner's responsibility to keep HFB updated with any changes in mailing address or addressee.

Houston Food Bank
535 Portwall
Houston, TX 77029

713-223-3700
www.houstonfoodbank.org

Partner XYZ
Jane Smith
Confidential Address
Richmond, TX 77406

713-223-3700

www.houstonfoodbank.org

STATEMENT
Statement Date: 5/31/2019
Agency ID: 20705
Page: 1

Amount Remitted

Document	Date	Description	Transaction	Debits	Credits	Balance
AI-0878	3/31/2019	Invoice AI-0878	Invoice	250.00		250.00
AI-01265	4/30/2019	Invoice AI-01265	Invoice	250.00		500.00
AI-01590	5/31/2019	Invoice AI-01590	Invoice	250.00		750.00
Statement Balance				750.00	0.00	750.00

Please remit payment to:
Houston Food Bank
535 Portwall St.
Houston, TX 77072
713-647-8666

FEE PAYMENT

The Houston Food Bank payment terms are **30 days** from invoice date.

Annual Fees may be paid with two options:

- **Monthly**- partner's total Annual Fee / 12 months, **paid each month**
- **Annually**- partner's total Annual Fee paid one time a year, **paid each July**

Payments may be mailed to:

Houston Food Bank

Attn: Accounting Department

535 Portwall Street Houston, Tx 77029

Note: please put your partner number and invoice number in your check's memo section

Effective July 2019, cash payments will not be accepted.

OVERDUE BALANCE

A partner with an outstanding invoice of **more than 30** days past due will be contacted by the Accounting Department at HFB to resolve the outstanding balance. If an outstanding balance reaches 90 days, the partner's account may be placed on hold, meaning that no orders can be placed. Once on hold for nonpayment, the Accounting Department, in cooperation with the Partner Services Department, may take one or more of the following actions:

- Require all outstanding invoices be paid before more orders are permitted
- Partner account may be made inactive

Section
7

Reporting

As part of the Partnership Agreement, partner agencies are required to report statistical data on how many clients are being served each month. This information is compiled by HFB and reported to Feeding Texas, TDA, and Feeding America. These statistics are used to help determine program efficiency and allocation of resources. Inaccurate or late statistics from a partner can result in the suspension of your account.

New HFB Partner's (onboarded after January 2019) are required to use Link2Feed. Partner's enrolled prior to January 2019 are encouraged to attend a Link2Feed training session, contact your Community Partner Liaison, and partake in the Link2Feed training website.

Effective July 2021, all HFB Partners will be expected to be collecting intake data via Link2Feed or a similar web-based intake program that can export data and be shared through an importing feature in Link2Feed.

Please see our website for more details regarding Link2Feed trainings.

LINK2FEED

In 2018, HFB partnered with Link2Feed to replace the hard copy intake system. Link2Feed is a web-based intake application that makes intake, program tracking, case management, and compliance very simple and user friendly. Link2Feed is paperless and does away with the antiquated and time-consuming monthly reporting paperwork.



Clients will have to complete a one time full application to receive service from any of our partners



It provides real-time information about your agency.



Easy intake process, even with limited computer experience



Tracking and certifying clients without all that paper & filing!!



Generate custom graphic reporting for your organization



Multi-Program Tracking from financial assistance to clothing

MONTHLY REPORTS

HFB will accept Monthly Reports (MR) from our grandfathered partners (onboarded pre-January 2019) until **June 2021**. Monthly reports should be completed each month even if the program didn't distribute product obtained from HFB or if clients were not served. MR are due by the 5th of each month. Please email your MR's to partners@houstonfoodbank.org

If an MR isn't turned in before the month is over, the partner's account will be placed on hold. Ordering privileges won't be enabled back to the partner until the missing and accurate report is sent.

Monitoring and Inspection Procedures

ANNUAL SITE VISIT

Every partner in the network is required to comply with an annual site visit by a **Community Partner Liaison (CPL)**. These site visits are required under The Federal Food, Drug and Cosmetics Act and must be completed to remain an active partner of the network.

A CPL from HFB will contact the partner to schedule the site visit each fiscal year. Staff will work with partner agencies to find a mutually convenient day and time. Because this is a detailed review of the program, it is very important that the main contact and/or program director be present and prepared.

WHAT TO EXPECT AT THE SITE VISIT

Annual Site Visits, or Monitoring Visits, are HFB and the CPL's way to fully understand the partner's needs, update about HFB processes, and assess for compliance. The visits can take approximately 1.5 hours; however, they can go over that timeframe. Please do not agree to a visit time that will be a busy day for the partner's meeting attendants.

During the visit, the following will occur:

- A review to confirm, and update details about the program including hours, contact information, etc.
- Discuss the status, direction, and needs of the program.
- Conduct a visual visit of the facility including all dry storage areas, refrigeration units, food preparation areas, and anything else deemed necessary by the Houston Food Bank representative.

ACPL will also conduct a review of all records used to manage the partner's account with HFB.

Documents that must be on site and retained for 3 years + 90 days:

- Paper intake forms
- Temperature logs (maintained weekly at partner)
- Monthly reports (submitted monthly by partner)
- HFB invoices
- Completed civil rights checklists for all volunteers and/or staff (completed annually)
- Pest control logs and/or invoices from pest control company

ESSENTIAL CERTIFICATES AND PERMITS

The following items will be **checked** for **expiration date**. If the certificates or permits are expired, the Partner's account will be placed on hold until new training or permit completed or obtained.

- Civil Rights Training- All staff and volunteers who come into direct contact with clients must complete this training. A copy of your training completion certificate must be accessible to view. Training must be completed once a year.
- Food Safety Training- One staff member or volunteer must take this training. A copy of your training completion certificate must be accessible to view. Training must be completed every 3 years.
- Food Dealer's Permit- if not required by your county, please have a copy of the letter from your local Public Health Department stating your site is not required to have a Food Dealer's Permit
- Food Handler's Permit- required to repack food. HFB does not require this permit unless you are repacking food and have obtained a permit from the city or county to ensure you're allowed to do so.
- Inspection Report- required if you are a residential or a meal site
- Occupancy Permit- required if you are a residential site

If perishable products are added to your distribution, you must obtain a food dealer's permit if you are in the City of Houston or Harris County. If your site is outside of those boundaries, you must contact your local health department to see if a permit is necessary. Failure to do so can lead to being placed on hold.

USDA COMPLIANCE

Every Partner receiving USDA products **must comply** with the following list. The forms and signage must be **provided** to or **viewable** to your clients.

- TEFAP Guidelines- paper version if using paper intake, information is included in Link2Feed
- Non-Discrimination Statement- this disclaimer should be printed on your paper intake forms, information is included in Link2Feed
- Civil Rights Poster- the poster must be hanging in a clearly visible location to the clients
- TEFAP Written Notice of Beneficiary Rights- hang next to your Civil Rights Poster
- TEFAP Participant Agreement, Rights, Obligations, and Fair Hearing Request- one copy must be provided to the clients each year

After the visit is complete, partners will be asked to sign the Partner Agreement and Compliance forms via **DocuSign**. Copies of all the completed paperwork will be automatically sent to the main contact once all e-signatures are captured via DocuSign. Failure to sign all forms within 30 days may result in your account being placed on hold.

PARTNER COMPLIANCE

CLIENT CERTIFICATION

- The Partner must keep accurate records and screen clients annually to assure that eligibility requirements are met.
- Client information must be current and confidential. Paper records should be stored in a locked cabinet. If the partner is using Link2Feed, physical space storage isn't required.
- Client must meet TEFAP income guidelines, which are 185% below the federal poverty level. This guideline is to be used by all staff/volunteers that conduct the intake process. This guideline is updated annually by the state of Texas.
- If the client does not meet the income eligibility guidelines, he/she can be served on an emergency basis. The Partner is required to record the reason for the client's emergency.

ACCEPTABLE PRACTICES

- Place signs and pamphlets of a religious or secular nature in **clear view** of clients.
- Restrict a client who is abusive or disruptive to your program or volunteers. You should document all these occurrences.
- Distribute food received from other sources, if it is treated exactly like food received from HFB.

UNACCEPTABLE PRACTICES

- **Discriminate** against a client in any way in accordance with the Civil Rights of the client.
- Require a client to provide a **social security card** or any other documentation related to citizenship to receive food from your site.
- Have a separate standard for handling, storing, or distributing HFB product from food product procured from other sources.
- **Sell or barter** HFB products for goods and services from a third party.
- Take any HFB products for **personal use**.
- **Share** any items received from HFB (from Agency Express, Food Fair's, Mobile's, Red Barrel or the Retail Program) with another organizations
- Require clients to participate in a **religious activity** (i.e. pray, read, listen, etc.) as a **precondition** to receive food.
- Be inconsistent with your days and hours of operation.
- Operate other feeding programs **involving cost** at the same time or place as HFB distribution.
- Accept monetary donations at the time of distribution.
- Charge a **client a fee** for any food service.
- Use donated products for fundraising. Ex: spaghetti dinners and bake sales.

There is one **exception** to a partner using HFB or donated product to support its program needs. Partners may use non-food items, such as **soap or cleaning supplies**, to reduce operational expenses.

ADDITIONAL PARTNER STANDARDS

- Client volunteers should not receive special treatment; they should go through the intake process, should not receive more food than non-volunteers, should not serve themselves before distribution, and should not serve themselves. Volunteers must be eligible to receive food by meeting the TEFAP income guidelines and not shown favoritism
- Partners do not “buy” food from the Houston Food Bank but pay a handling fee. Internal Revenue Service (IRS) regulations prohibit the re-selling of donated food. While IRS regulations prohibit the re-selling of donated food, they specifically permit food banks (and only food banks) to charge a small fee to help offset the costs associated with handling donated food. These fees are the partner's Annual fee.

RIGHT TO REFUSE SERVICE

To maintain a high standard of service and provide a safe work environment for your employees, volunteers, and client families, HFB Partners have the right to refuse or discontinue service to unruly clients. Services may only be denied to a client who acts inappropriately by disrupting the normal provisions of services, or if a client's behavior or environment threatens the safety of the partner's employees, volunteers, or clients.

If your site refuses any services, document all parties involved and describe the incident with dates and as much detail as you can provide. Please contact your Community Partner Liaison after the incident.

Inappropriate behavior includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Unreasonable demands for services
- Threatening or erratic behavior
- Misrepresentation for the need of services
- Threatening or offensive language

🍏 *Tip: Please post the Client's Rights and Responsibility document to help enforce your right to refuse service. Please see the [Partner Resources](#) page on HFB's website for this document.*

Compliance Violation Procedures

HFB is a certified partner of Feeding America, the nation's largest domestic hunger-relief organization. As part of this national network, the HFB must uphold the highest standards in food storage, processing and distribution. In turn, partners within HFB's network will be held to the standards and policies set forth in the **Partnership Agreement** and the **Compliance Agreements**. In addition, depending on the type of program operated by the partner partner, they may be required to abide by other agreements such as the **USDA & TDA Commodities Agreement**.

COMPLIANCE

Partners of HFB that follow the standards and policies set forth in the Partnership & Liability Agreement and any additional agreements as required by HFB are categorized as "active". Active agencies are in good standing and are eligible for all HFB programs and grant opportunities.

NON-COMPLIANCE

If a partner does not comply with the Partnership Agreement and the Compliance Agreements and other applicable agreements, HFB may suspend the partner or inactivate the partner's account. HFB recognizes these consequences may adversely impact clients. HFB's goal is to ensure clients have access to the food they need; however, we must maintain the safety and integrity of programs to ensure the best results for clients and their families.

RESOLUTION OF NON-COMPLIANCE ISSUES


Depending on the nature or severity of the issue or non-compliance, a partner will face advisement, suspension, and/or end of partnership based on the judgment of the Houston Food Bank (HFB). HFB reserves the right to suspend or inactivate a partner without first being advised. All partners will be notified in writing of changes in account status.

Advisement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HFB staff meets with the partner • Corrective action plan is created to outline steps and actions that will be taken by the partner to correct the non-compliance • Partner will be allowed to order and receive deliveries from HFB. In addition, the partner will be expected to abide by all other required policies and procedures. • Partner will have up to 90 days to submit and/or comply with the corrective action plan. • If issue is not resolved, the partner will face suspension and/or end of partnership.
Suspension	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Written notification sent to the partner explaining the details of the suspension. • Partners will NOT be able to order or receive deliveries for any food or other necessities from the HFB and will not be eligible for retail pick up, red barrel, or grants. • Partner will still be responsible for submitting monthly reports, any requested documentation and allow for follow-up site visits. • Suspension periods will last until the issue has been resolved or six months, at which time (if there is no resolution) the account will be inactivated by the HFB.
Termination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HFB reserves the right to inactivate the account of any partner without notice for issues related to the Partnership Agreement, Compliance Agreements, or USDA & TDA Agreement • If a partner account has been non-voluntarily inactivated by the HFB, the partner will be prohibited partnership for a period of no less than 12 months

POSSIBLE NON-COMPLIANCE EXAMPLES

Issues or compliance issues typically fall within three classifications (see above table) and may include, but are not limited to, the following:

Advisement	Suspension	Termination	Examples
Yellow	Orange		Partner requires additional paperwork or intake criteria that violate HFB and TDA policies
Yellow	Orange		Partner is not maintaining paperwork as required by HFB
	Orange	Purple	Partner is not serving low-income individuals
Yellow	Orange	Purple	Partner is compromising the safety of the food during storage or distribution
Yellow	Orange		Partner fails to pass site visit and/or follow-up visit
Yellow	Orange	Purple	Partner treats volunteers differently than other clients and/or provides volunteers with additional food
		Purple	Partner is selling or bartering items
Yellow	Orange	Purple	Partner fails to make payment on account after attempts have been made to resolve the situation
	Orange	Purple	Partner has suggested “donation” for food, requires clients to volunteer, and/or requires clients to participate in activities in order to receive food Requires clients to attend religious services, counseling or seminars
		Purple	Partner uses product for fundraisers or other unsanctioned activity
Yellow	Orange		Partner shares product with organizations not affiliated with HFB
	Orange	Purple	Partner fails to remain in compliance after corrective action has been taken
Yellow	Orange	Purple	Partner is rude or inappropriate with HFB staff

 *Tip: Non-compliance issues will be examined on a case by case basis*

The chart above is to provide examples and is not inclusive of all possible non-compliance issues.

GUIDANCE FOR RELIGIOUS ORGANIZATIONS

Partner agencies distributing **USDA/TDA** products are required to **observe additional guidelines** from the USDA ensuring religious activity is kept entirely separate from food distribution.

RESOLUTION OF CIVIL RIGHTS ISSUES

When a client makes a **civil rights complaint** against a partner, the complaint is filed with HFB and TDA. Once the complaint has been made, an investigation is opened and the implicated partner will be contacted for input. Written documentation of the reported issue may be requested from the partner. Partner's found in violation of civil rights policies will be advised with a corrective action plan. A verified report or discovery of a second issue will result in USDA and TDA Commodities being removed from the partner account for no less than **six** months. This removal may become permanent. The partner will receive written documentation of the removal and a copy of this documentation will be placed in the partner's file.

After six months, the partner may make a request in writing to the Partner Services Department to have the federal and state-funded products reinstated. These requests will be decided on a case-by-case basis. Additional verified issues could result in the non-voluntary inactivation of the partner account.

CORRECTIVE ACTION PLANS

A corrective action plan **documents** the **non-compliance** and outlines steps that have been taken or will be taken to **resolve issues**. For some issues, the HFB will provide the partner with a standard corrective action plan that must be signed and submitted to HFB when completed.

For other issues, HFB may request a detailed corrective action plan from the offending partner. These plans must include:

- A statement of understanding that explains the issue and demonstrates the leadership of the partner understands the issue
- Detailed actions and projected completion dates
- Names and titles of partner representatives that will be responsible
- Explanation as to how these actions will prevent recurrence of the issue
- Attachments of training tools, documents or other related materials that were used or will be used as a part of the corrective action plan

MINIMUM ACCOUNT ACTIVITY

Partner accounts that are **not used** on a regular basis will become **inactive**. To keep an account active, the partner must order from the menu at least **twice a year**. HFB will notify partners in writing once the account is inactivated. If the account is inactivated due to lack of activity, the partner may reapply for partnership.

VOLUNTARY INACTIVATION OF ACCOUNT

At any time, a partner in good standing may **voluntarily** inactivate their account for a variety of reasons. Voluntarily inactivated accounts may be reactivated within six months without a need to reapply. Partners wishing to inactivate their account should have their main contact send an inactivation request in writing to their Community Partner Liaison. Any processes or guidelines that change in the time of inactivation must be adhered to once the partner reactivates their account.

INVOLUNTARY INACTIVATION OF ACCOUNT

Partner accounts that become involuntarily inactive due to lack of ordering (every 6 months for pantries, 2 times a month for mobile only sites) will become involuntarily inactive.

REACTIVATION OF ACCOUNT

Voluntarily inactivated accounts will not be required to complete the full partnership approval process unless the time of the inactivation is **longer** than six months.

All **non-voluntarily** inactivated accounts must complete the **full** partnership approval process and are not guaranteed partnership.

Before the account is reactivated, an HFB representative will need to inspect the facility where product will be stored, and partner representative will be required to attend a Partner Onboarding meeting at HFB. Also, the partner must not have any outstanding bills or debts with HFB. Other requirements may need to be completed depending on the situation. This will be determined on a case-by-case basis.

GRIEVANCE PROCESS

It is the Houston Food Bank intention to treat all partners and their representatives justly. The following outlines the process by which a partner can report a grievance and resolve issues with HFB.

<p>STEP 1: Written Notification to Director, Network Partners and Programs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If a partner feels that it has been treated unfairly by HFB, the partner should notify the Director of Partner Services in writing immediately. • The Director of Partner Services will coordinate a resolution to the grievance. • A written report will be issued and will include details of the grievance and the actions taken to resolve the grievance. • The report will be signed by appropriate representatives of both HFB and the partner.
<p>STEP 2: Meeting Request with the Partner Services Director</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If the partner is not satisfied, the partner can request a meeting with the Director of Partner Services. • The meeting request should include details of the grievance and reasons for not accepting the written resolution. • A written report will be issued and will include details of the meeting and the actions taken to resolve the grievance. • The report will be signed by appropriate representatives of both the partner and HFB.
<p>STEP 3: Appeals Process with the Senior Director</p>	<p>If the first two steps do not resolve the issue, a partner can request input from the Senior Director of Partner Services.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The request should be sent to the Director of Partner Services within 30 days. • The Director of Partner Services will coordinate the process with Senior Director to determine how to come to a final resolution to the grievance. • A final report will be issued and will be signed by appropriate representatives of both the partner and HFB. • This decision is final, and the grievance process is complete.

TERMINATION PROCESS

The following shows the steps for the process of termination.

<p>Step 1: Termination notification</p>	<p>The decision to terminate a partnership will be based on HFB Staff and the Partner Services Director.</p> <p>A letter is sent to the partner explaining the specific reasons for termination and the appeals procedure.</p>
<p>Step 2: Appeal</p>	<p>A partner may appeal the decision to the HFB Partner Services Committee by submitting a letter requesting an appeal hearing within 10 working days of the date of the notice of termination. If a letter is not received during this time, an appeal hearing will not be held, and termination decision is final.</p> <p>The Partner Services Committee will schedule a time to hear the appeal. The partner will be notified in writing of when to appear.</p>
<p>Step 3: Board of Directors & Partners Appeal</p>	<p>A partner may appeal the decision by the Partner Services Committee to appear before HFB’s Board of Directors and two partner representatives, selected by HFB.</p> <p>The appeal must be sent in writing and within 10 working days of the date of their Partner Services Committee appeal meeting.</p> <p>HFB staff will notify the partner of the date of the appeal.</p> <p>All decisions made by the Board of Directors & Partners is final.</p> <p>A letter stating will be sent to the appealing partner within seven working days of the decision.</p>

Additional Information

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES



The Houston Food Bank's **website** is a source for both the public and our partners to act as an information tool regarding HFB's hunger-relief mission. The Partner Resources section of the website is continually growing and developing to meet the needs of our network. Currently, the following resources are available on houstonfoodbank.org under [Partner Resources](#):

- Monthly Report Information
- Ordering
 - [Agency Express](#)
 - [Appointment Plus](#)
- [Food Safety](#) and [Civil Rights Training Materials](#)
- Hunger Facts, Hunger-Related News, Downloadable Information
- Link2Feed Information

For an explanation of our **different partners** please visit our website.

How to build capacity

Community capacity building is defined as the “process of developing and strengthening the skills, instincts, abilities, processes, and resources that organizations and communities need to survive, adapt, and thrive in the fast-changing world.” Partners can build their capacity by making changes to social services offered, hours of operation, or their distribution model.

OFFER SNAP, MEDICAID, CHILDREN’S MEDICAID

Houston Food Bank’s Client Assistance Program (CAP) is focused on raising awareness in the service area of available social services and provides **application and technical assistance** for state-funded social and health services. Please visit [CAP’s](#) page on HFB’s website for more information.

EXPAND HOURS OF OPERATION

Expanded hours of operation help assist your **working clients**. Many working clients find themselves in need of food assistance but must go without help due to work constraints. Adapting the following can make a big difference in your working client’s lives:

- Be open evening hours or weekends
- Offer serving hours when surrounding social service organizations are typically not available

Distribution on Sundays, unless given special permission, is prohibited

GO CLIENT CHOICE

The client choice food pantry model allows people to seek food assistance by choosing the products they’d like to receive for themselves. Many HFB partners have made the switch to client choice and find positive outcomes. They order less, they get to know their client’s needs better, their volunteers feel better about volunteering their time, and their clients feel more empowered and uplifted.

Please see the Client Choice Handbook for more information.

OFFER PROGRAMS

Visit HFB's website and click on [Our Programs](#) to see other opportunities for services you can provide your clients.

ADDITIONAL SITES

Partners interested in adding separate sites are encouraged to do so. Additional sites are not required to complete a new application but are required to provide their Community Partner Liaison with the same required documents as their original site. They will be subject to a separate annual fee for their added location. In addition, the partner must pay their current balance to HFB prior to the new location being processed.

The following forms can be found on our [website](#).

SPONSORSHIP FORM FOR MOBILES

This form is to be used when a partner is sponsoring another organization's mobile distribution. All mobile guidelines apply to sponsored distributions with additional guidelines concerning sponsorship. The Sponsorship Form must be submitted to your Community Partner Liaison at least 60 days prior to the intended distribution.

- 🍏 *Saturday distributions book very far in advance. If you're planning to sponsor a mobile on a Saturday, please turn in your sponsorship form at least 120 days before the event.*

Sponsorship doesn't guarantee a spot will be available. Please keep in mind mobiles book up quickly.

PANTRY BILL OF RIGHTS

Please display this sign in your partner location (English and Spanish provided) for your clients to view. This form is intended to notify your clients to what is considered unacceptable behavior and support the partner if client is asked to leave your distribution.

CLIENT BILL OF RIGHTS

Please display the Client Bill of Rights (English and Spanish provided) for your clients to view. This form is intended to show your clients what is considered unacceptable behavior from the partner and allows full transparency if a client has a complaint about a partner.

TEFAP PARTICIPANT AGREEMENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Hard copies of this form need to be provided to your clients once a year.

TEFAP WRITTEN NOTICE OF BENEFICIARY RIGHTS

Please display the TEFAP Written Notice of Beneficiary Rights next to your Civil Rights Poster (And Justice for All). Please fill it out accordingly:

Name of Organization: (Your Organization's Name)

Name of TEFAP Staff Contact: Nicole Browning

Phone Number: 832-369-9218

Email: nbrowning@houstonfoodbank.org

ANNUAL INVENTORY OF TDA

This document is due in June of every year. Please list the inventory of TDA products you have in stock when you fill out this list. It is not intended for the entire years' worth of product the partner has received.

TEMPERATURE LOG

Please use this temperature log to track your refrigeration and freezer's efficiency. Keeping accurate records of that information is vital for a food safe pantry.

The U.S Department of Agriculture prohibits discrimination against its customers, employees, and applicants for employment on the bases of race, color, national origin, age, disability, sex, gender identity, religion, reprisal, and where applicable, political beliefs, marital status, familial or parental status, sexual orientation, or all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program, or protected genetic information in employment or in any program or activity conducted or funded by the Department. (Not all prohibited bases will apply to all programs and/or employment activities.)

If you wish to file a Civil Rights program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, found online at www.ascr.usdagov/complaint_filing_cust.html, or at any USDA office, or call (866) 632-9992 to request the form. You may also write a letter containing all of the information requested in the form. Send your completed complaint form or letter to us by mail at U.S. Department of Agriculture, Director, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, by fax (202) 690-7442 or email at program.intake@usda.gov. Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339; or (800) 845-6136 (Spanish). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Account Details

PARTNER NAME:

PARTNER NUMBER:

COMMUNITY PARTNER LIAISON

Name:

Email:

Phone:

AGENCY EXPRESS LOGIN

User Name:

Password:

Program Code:

APPOINTMENT PLUS LOGIN

User Name:

Password: