

Connecticut Food Bank is concerned for the health and safety of all volunteers and employees, as well as in protecting the health of our network partners and the people we serve. We are monitoring the current situation regarding Coronavirus and are in communication with our partners at Feeding America to be sure we are implementing proper plans and procedures to maintain the safety and continuity of our services.

As the frontline resource for people in need, it is important for Connecticut Food Bank Partner Agencies to follow good safety and health practices.

Connecticut Food Bank safe food handling practices that are already required for partner agencies will help protect against spread of illness.

- Workers are required to wear gloves while handling food.
- Surfaces where foods are placed, sorted, and prepared must be sanitized before and after use.
- Workers **MUST** wash hands before leaving a bathroom and returning to work. It's also good practice to wash your hands or use hand sanitizer when you're changing tasks or have handled different equipment.
- Follow recommendations on covering your cough or sneeze. Post the materials about covering coughs and cleaning hands that accompany this message in visible places around your facility.
- **Politely** remind volunteers and colleagues of our procedures if you notice that they are not wearing gloves or are coughing and sneezing without properly covering.
- If you see a colleague who doesn't look like they are feeling well (coughing, sneezing, shortness of breath), check on them and suggest that they might be better off not volunteering until they're healthy. Remember that we are not medical professionals; concern for colleagues is always good practice. **IT IS NOT APPROPRIATE TO TURN AWAY ANY CLIENT FOR SUSPECTED ILLNESS.**

Working with clients:

Current public health guidance indicates that social distancing – maintaining more space between individuals – is helpful to preventing spread of germs. Other important steps to take:

- Regularly sanitize door handles, door frames where hands commonly touch, tables and other frequently touched surfaces. Use sanitizing wipes or a cloth dampened with disinfecting solution.
- Do not engage in casual contact. Wave, smile, bump elbows. Don't hug or shake hands.
- Remember that workers should **ALWAYS** wear gloves when handling food.
- Whenever gloves are torn or are removed for a break, wash hands before replacing gloves.

The most important consideration is whenever possible to assure clients can receive food.

- Where possible, consider opening for longer hours or more days to spread out client visits and reduce crowds.
- Consider temporarily prepackaging foods to “grab and go” will reduce handling and exposure for both your workers and for clients.
- Avoid restricting numbers of people so much that it creates significant hardship for them. **Client dignity is a cornerstone of our mission.**

Thank You for Your Partnership!