



# Connecticut Foodshare

Our Community, Our Food Bank

**The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP)  
Eligible Recipient Agency Training – 2023**



**Chat Box** - put your name and the name of your organization

**Q&A Box** – write all questions here – we will have time at the end to answer questions



## Goals for Today

- Review key TEFAP guidance:
  - Agency Eligibility
  - Household Eligibility & Intake Process
  - Food Handling & Storage
  - Recordkeeping & Reporting
- All slides and materials will be posted on our website with a recording of the training.
- If you have questions after the training, contact us. We are here to support your success!

# What is TEFAP and Where Does it Come from:

United States Dept of Agriculture/Food and Nutrition Services



Connecticut Department of Social Services



Connecticut Foodshare



**Pantries/Soup Kitchens/Emergency Shelters ("ERAs")**



Food Insecure Households



# How does Connecticut Foodshare order TEFAP?

- ❖ Awarded a specific amount of funds (*virtual dollars*) to order TEFAP food
- ❖ Orders are placed through USDA online ordering site
- ❖ Preset list of food available to select from
- ❖ Our goal -- get the most product for those virtual dollars

## Difficult decisions: TEFAP credit of \$150,000

This?	OR	This?
1 truckload of Ground Beef		1 truckload Whole Grain Pasta
		1 truckload Dry Pinto Beans
		1 truckload Beef Stew
		1 truckload White Rice

# TEFAP Agency Eligibility

- ❖ USDA defines eligibility criteria
- ❖ DSS must approve all Eligible Recipient Agencies (ERA)

## ERA Eligibility Requirements

- ✓ Is public (municipalities) or
- ✓ Is private, possessing tax exempt status (501c3)
- ✓ Not a penal institution
- ✓ Provides Emergency Food Assistance (most common)
  - Food Pantries
  - Soup Kitchens
  - Emergency Shelters – that serve meals to individuals

# Requirements for all Eligible Recipient Agencies

## All Programs:

- ❖ Annual Civil Rights training – staff and volunteers that interact with clients (including 1-time volunteers)
- ❖ Display the “And Justice for All” poster where all can see – must be 11-inch x 17-inch size

## Religious Organizations:

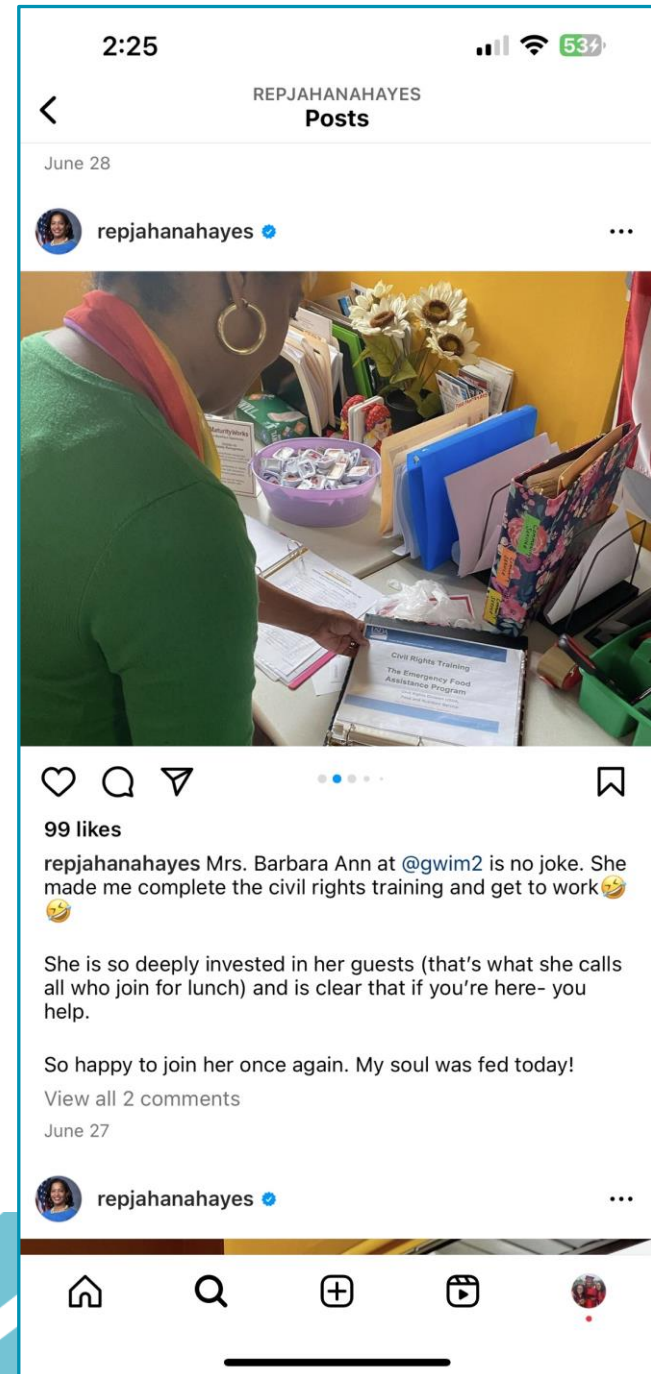
- ❖ Written Notice of Beneficiary Rights – display where all can see
- ❖ Beneficiary Referral Forms

**If you distribute outdoors, posters still must be displayed!**





**Even Congresswoman Jahana Hayes completed Civil Rights training before volunteering for one of our partner programs...way to go Jahana!**



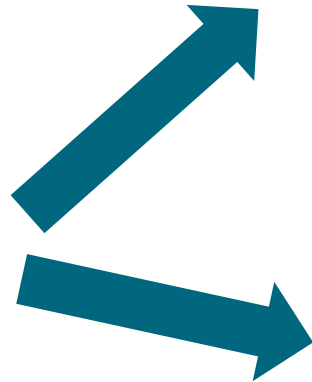


# Religious Organizations

## Reminder:

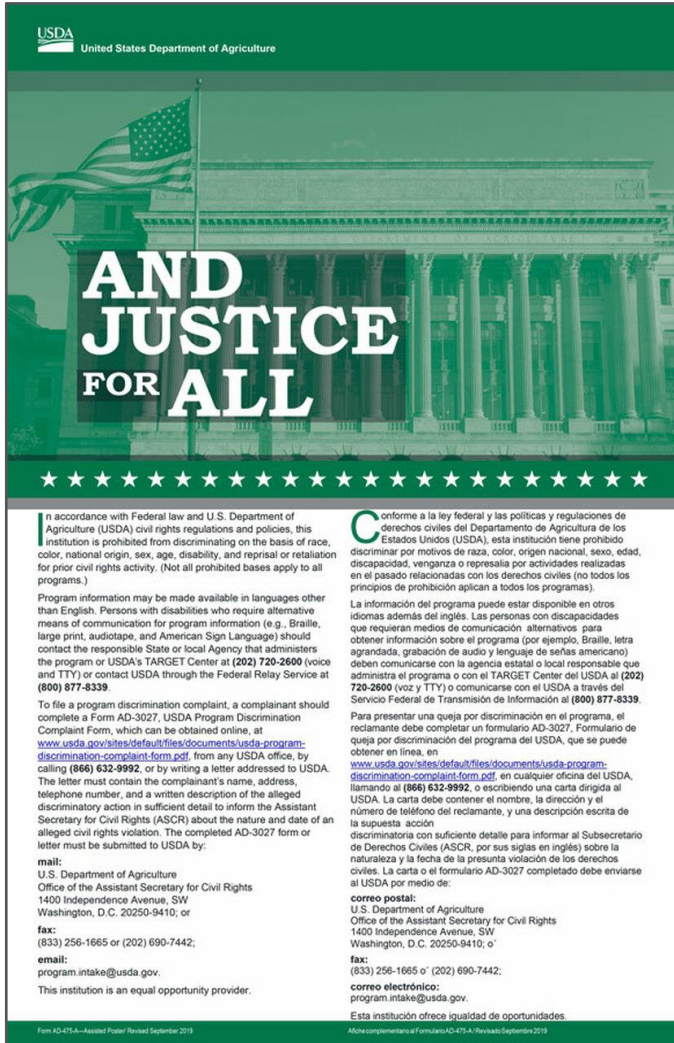
Explicit religious activity cannot take place in the same location or at the time of TEFAP food distribution

## Examples



<i>It is acceptable to...</i>	<i>It is unacceptable to...</i>
Have a cross hanging on a wall at the food distribution facility.	Require beneficiaries to stand by the cross and recite a prayer prior to receiving USDA Foods.
Have a menorah on a table at the USDA Foods distribution facility during the holiday season.	Refuse USDA Foods to beneficiaries who do not practice the Jewish faith.
Have a display stand at the front/back of the USDA Foods distribution facility that contains faith-based pamphlets for anyone interested.	Insert faith-based pamphlets in bags or boxes when distributing USDA Foods.
Have a pastor or other religious official assist with the distribution of USDA Foods.	Require or encourage beneficiaries to have a religious conversation with the pastor or official prior to receiving USDA Foods.
Have a prayer service on the second level of a church building while the distribution of USDA Foods is happening on the lower level.	Have a prayer service in the same room and at the same time as the distribution of USDA Foods.
Invite beneficiaries to participate in a voluntary prayer before, and clearly separate from, the distribution of USDA Foods.	Lead beneficiaries in a prayer at the beginning of the distribution of USDA Foods.

# Posters and Beneficiary Forms



## The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP) – Written Notice of Beneficiary Rights

Name of Organization: [Insert Name of Your Organization]  
Contact Information for Program Staff: Name [Insert Primary Program Contact]  
Phone Number [insert site phone #]  
Email Address [insert contact email]

Because TEFAP is supported in whole or in part by financial assistance from the Federal Government, we are required to let you know that—

- We may not discriminate against you on the basis of religion or religious belief, a refusal to hold a religious belief, or a refusal to attend or participate in a religious practice;
- We may not require you to attend or participate in any explicitly religious activities that are offered by us, and any participation by you in these activities must be purely voluntary;
- We must separate in time or location any privately funded explicitly religious activities from activities supported with USDA direct assistance;
- If you object to the religious character of our organization, we must make reasonable efforts to identify and refer you to an alternate provider to which you have no objection. We cannot guarantee, however, that in every instance, an alternate provider will be available; and
- You may report violations of these protections (including denials of services or benefits) by an organization to the State agency (<http://www.fns.usda.gov/fdd/food-distribution-contacts>). The State agency will respond to the complaint and report the alleged violations to their respective USDA FNS Regional Office (<http://www.fns.usda.gov/fns-regional-offices>).

We must provide you with this written notice before you enroll in TEFAP or receive services from TEFAP, as required by 7 CFR part 16.

### Alternate Service Location(s) or State Agency Contact Information:

Department of Social Services  
SNAP Division  
(860) 424-4992

## The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP) Beneficiary Referral Request

(Before copying, add contact information and copy)

Name of Organization: Insert your organization's name

Contact information for program staff (name, phone number, and email address, if appropriate):

[Insert Organization's Primary Contact Information]

If you object to receiving services from us based on the religious character of our organization, please complete this form and return it to the program contact identified above. Your use of this form is voluntary.

If you object to the religious character of our organization, we must make reasonable efforts to identify and refer you to an alternate provider to which you have no objection. We cannot guarantee, however, that in every instance, an alternate provider will be available.

Please check if you want to be referred to another service provider.

Please provide the following information:

Your name:

Best way to reach you (phone/address/email):

### FOR STAFF USE ONLY

1. Date of objection: \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_

2. Referral (check one):

Individual was referred to (name of alternate provider and contact information):

Individual was given State agency-provided referral information (i.e. a website, hotline, or list of other service providers funded by the State agency)

Individual left without a referral

No alternate service provider is available—summarize below what efforts you made to identify an alternate provider (including reaching out to State agency or local or eligible recipient agency):

**Guidance for Intake**  
**Verbal Attestation Process**  
**Monthly Reporting**  
**Storage**



# TEFAP Household Eligibility

Each state sets standards for *determining eligibility of households* to receive TEFAP foods

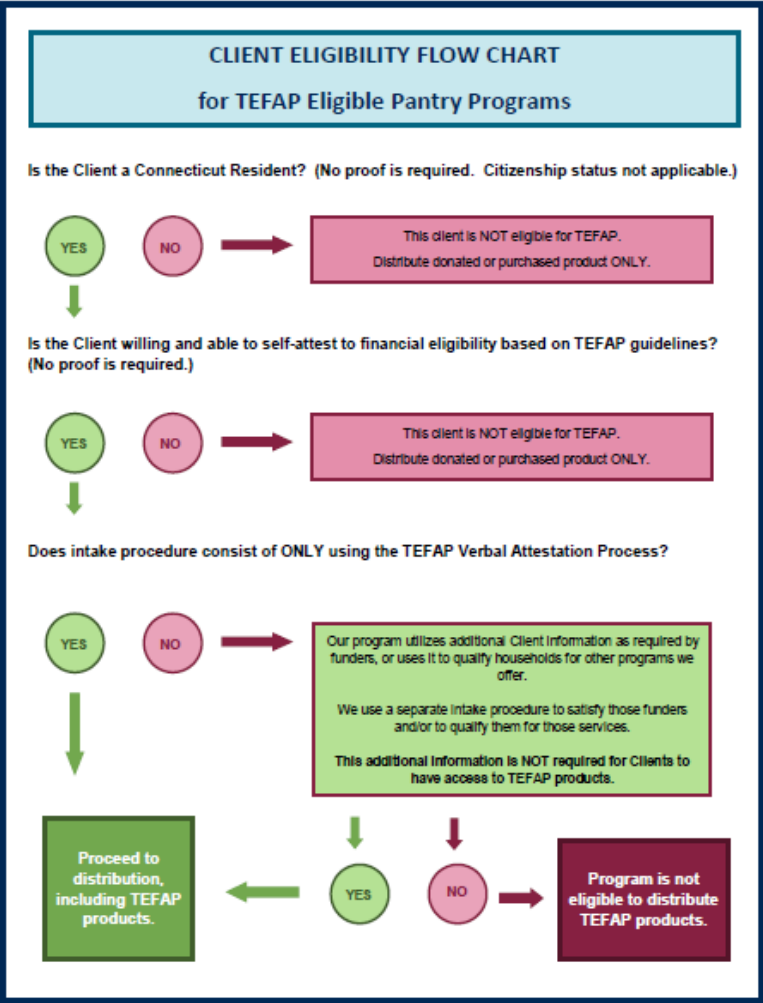
## In Connecticut the household must:

- ❖ Live in the state, length of residency cannot be considered
- ❖ Food pantry recipients must verbally attest to meeting income guidelines (**300% of FPL**) and provide name, address and number in household
- ❖ Recipients of prepared meals are considered low-income and are not subject to a means test, nor do they have to provide information by household





# Food Pantry Intake



Eligible Recipient Agencies cannot impose restrictions on TEFAP food that conflict with DSS requirements

All CT residents that attest to the income guidelines must receive a selection of available TEFAP food from a program

One of the goals of TEFAP is to give CT Residents *increased access* to nutritious foods at no cost

**To receive TEFAP food from your Program a client needs to:**

- be a Connecticut resident
- verbally attest to eligibility based on TEFAP income guidelines
- provide an address and the number of persons in the household

**Individuals cannot be asked to:**

- show ID
- prove CT residency or US citizenship
- prove income or report income amounts
- prove whether they receive other benefits or report amount of benefits received
- prove residency in a certain town/city, provide mail showing their residence
- prove residency in a certain zip code or neighborhood, provide mail showing their residence
- prove number of persons in a household, provide birth dates or show birth certificates
- provide social security number for themselves or anyone in their family

**For Multi Service Programs**

If your program provides additional services (e.g., SNAP, WIC, Energy Assistance, Rental, Summer Camp tuition, etc.) that require individuals to prove residency, income, and/or number of persons in household:

- 1) **Complete verbal attestation for TEFAP food first** so individual clearly understands that is all they need to do to receive TEFAP food.
- 2) If an individual does not wish to apply for additional services, they are still eligible to receive at least TEFAP food.
- 3) If your program has to report additional race/ethnicity or gender information to funders, individual needs to understand that your program isn't collecting data for TEFAP.



# Verbal Attestation Procedure

- ❖ **Income Guidelines**
  - updated annually, expect new forms at the end of June
- ❖ **Always have copies of the current Self-Declaration Receipt in all languages available**
  - Give the Self-Declaration Receipt to individuals to keep
  - Complete TEFAP Participation Log for household
- ❖ **Renew eligibility for all individuals beginning July 1**
- ❖ **At each visit, ask all returning clients if anything has changed**
  - Make sure current income guidelines are available.



# Verbal Attestation Procedure: No Computer

- ❖ Pantries that do not use a computer to record client information must have guests attest every time they receive food and complete the TEFAP Participation Log
- ❖ Save dated logs for each distribution for 3 years





# Verbal Attestation: Spreadsheet or Database

- ❖ Pantries with access to a computer on site and/or can print guest lists for each distribution
  - Connecticut Foodshare's approved Excel spreadsheet
- ❖ Pantries that use their own spreadsheet or database
  - Must get approval from Connecticut Foodshare to ensure all required data is being documented

Be prepared to demonstrate your recordkeeping procedures!



# Verbal Attestation: Home Deliveries

- ❖ Verbal attestation with self-declaration receipt is required for all food pantries, including home delivery programs (like DoorDash)
- ❖ Ideas include:
  - ❖ Phone call in advance or online registration form to collect attestation information
  - ❖ Self-declaration receipt should always be included in home delivery grocery bags
- ❖ To learn more about how to incorporate this to your home delivery program, contact your Network Relations Representative



# Self-Declaration Receipt and TEFAP Participation Log

Self-Declaration Receipt for The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP) Participant  
(Rev. 7/23)

You are verbally confirming that the following information is true:

1. You are a resident of the State of Connecticut.
2. You are at or below the (yearly) gross income limit for the number of people in your household below:

The table below shows a yearly gross income for each family size. If your household income is at or below the income listed for the number of people in your household, you are eligible to receive TEFAP commodities.

Household Size	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8*
Annual Income	43,740	59,160	74,580	90,000	105,420	120,840	136,260	151,680

- For each additional person add \$15,420
- Income guidelines reflect 300% of the federal poverty limit, last updated on 7/1/2023

You are also eligible to receive TEFAP commodities if your household participates in any of the following programs: Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program (SNAP), Women, Infants and Children (WIC), Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF or TFA), Energy Assistance, HUSKY Health/Medicaid, Section 8 Rental Assistance Program, State Administered General Assistance (SAGA), and Supplemental Security Income (SSI).

3. You will report any household or income changes prior to the next visit.

#### USDA Nondiscrimination Statement

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 information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language), should contact the responsible state or local agency that administers the program or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339.

To file a program discrimination complaint, a Complainant should complete a Form AD-3027, USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form which can be obtained online at: [USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form](#), from any USDA office, by calling (866) 632-9992, or by writing a letter addressed to USDA. The letter must contain the complainant's name, address, telephone number, and a written description of the alleged discriminatory action in sufficient detail to inform the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights (ASCR) about the nature and date of an alleged civil rights violation. The completed AD-3027 form or letter must be submitted to USDA by:

1. mail:  
U.S. Department of Agriculture  
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights  
1400 Independence Avenue, SW  
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; or
2. fax:  
(833) 256-1665 or (202) 690-7442; or
3. email:  
[program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov)

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

This document has been provided in connection with the receipt of Federal Assistance from The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP). Program officials may verify what has been self-attested on this document. You have been provided this documentation as validation of your statement of eligibility. False certification may result in having to pay the State Agency for the value of the food improperly issued to you, and may result in civil or criminal prosecution under state or Federal Law.

## TEFAP Participation Log Revised 7/1/2023

Household Size	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8*
Annual Income	43,740	59,160	74,580	90,000	105,420	120,840	136,260	151,680

- For each additional person add \$15,420

Income guidelines reflect 300% of the federal poverty limit

Distribution Date:

Households	Date Self Attestation Form Given to Participant	Client Self Attested/ Confirmando Annual Income/ Ingreso Anual (Y or N)	Participant's Name/Nombre	Participant's Address/Direccion de casa	CT Resident/ Vivir en CT (Y or N)	Number in Household/No. de personas en el hogar
1						
2						
3						
4						
5						

# Monthly Reporting

- ✓ Due by the 15<sup>th</sup> of every month for the previous month
- ✓ Data required
  - Total number of unduplicated individuals served
  - Total number of unduplicated households served

## Pantries

- Use a spreadsheet or database to track individuals

*Not able to use a computer...?*

- Use data from the TEFAP Participation Log for highest day of the month

## Meal Programs (Soup Kitchens & Emergency Shelters)

- Provide highest people count or average # of people for the month



# Sample Connecticut Foodshare Client Spreadsheet

The table below shows a yearly gross income for each family size. If your household income is at or below the income listed for the number of people in your household, you are eligible to receive TEFAP commodities.

Household Size	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8*
Annual Income	43,740	59,160	74,580	90,000	105,420	120,840	136,260	151,680

- For each additional person add \$15,420

Income guidelines reflect 300% of the federal poverty limit, last updated on 7/1/2023

Number of Attested Households: 3

Required by Department of Social Services

Apellido	Nombre	Call	Calle	Piso #	Cuidad	Codigo	CT Resident (Yes or No)	Telefono	Confirmando Ingreso Anual	Date 2023 Self-Attestation Receipt Given to Client	# of Persons in Household	JULY 2023					
												Self Attested Annual income (Y or N)	July WK 1	July WK 2	July WK 3	July WK 4	July WK 5
Last Name	First Name	Street #	Street	Apt #	City	Zip		Phone (Optional)									
Baker	John	10	Rush Rd.		Wallingford	06492	YES	(111) 222-3333	Y	7/6/2023	4	1					
Grant	Sherry	15	Beckett Place		Wallingford	06492	YES	(111) 111-2222	Y	7/8/2023	2	1	1	1	1		
White	Ann	5	Tom St.		Wallingford	06492	YES	(111) 333-4444	Y	7/10/2023	1	1			1		



# Sample Meal Program Data Collection

Most soup kitchens use a calendar to track daily head or meal counts

✓ 1 meal = 1 person

ABC Community Meal Program  
May 2023

Highest People Total: 160  
1 meal = 1 person

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1 100	2 100	3 100	4 100	5 100	6 Closed
7 Closed	8 100	9 100	10 78	11 100	12 100	13 Closed
14 Closed	15 100	16 98	17 80	18 100	19 100	20 Closed
21 Closed	22 120	23 100	24 120	25 80	26 100	27 Closed
28 Closed	29 Holiday- Closed	30 100	31 160			

# TEFAP Food Storage Practices – All Agencies

- ✓ Must be stored ONLY at an approved location
  - ✓ Stored 6 inches off the floor and at least 4 inches from a wall for easier cleaning and pest detection
  - ✓ Must be in a secured area to prevent accidental misuse/loss of food
  - ✓ Avoid shared storage areas and freezers/refrigerators
  - ✓ Maintain temperature logs for all freezer and refrigerators
    - Take action when temps fall below safe-holding!
  - ✓ Routine pest control and cleaning must be documented
- 
- ❖ Redistribution of TEFAP Food – STOP!:
    - First contact your Network Relations Representative for guidance





# Best Practices for Food Storage



# TEFAP Check List

## Connecticut Foodshare TEFAP Overview & Check List for Partners

### What is TEFAP?

The [Emergency Food Assistance Program \(TEFAP\)](#) is a federal program that helps supplement the diets of low-income Americans by providing them with emergency food assistance at no cost. In Connecticut, the Department of Social Services (DSS) contracts with Connecticut Foodshare to administer TEFAP. Connecticut Foodshare distributes TEFAP to eligible food assistance programs that directly serve the public.

### What food assistance programs are eligible to receive TEFAP?

Based on USDA and DSS guidance, programs eligible to receive TEFAP include food pantries, emergency shelters, and soup kitchens that are operated by public entities (municipalities) or private 501c3 organizations.

### What foods are available through TEFAP?

Products vary but include canned, frozen, dried, and fresh fruits and vegetables, eggs, meat, poultry, fish, nuts, milk, cheese, and whole-grain and enriched grain products including rice, cereal, and pasta.

### Who is eligible for TEFAP in Connecticut?

- **At food pantries:** any individual who verbally attests to being a Connecticut resident with a household income at or below 300% of the federal poverty level is eligible for TEFAP, regardless of town residency and with no identification or proof [required](#)
- **At meal programs:** any individual receiving prepared meals at an emergency shelter or soup kitchen is considered to be low-income and eligible for TEFAP, with no means test or proof [required](#)

### How should pantries track client information at intake?

Your Connecticut Foodshare Network Relations Representative is available to help you find a TEFAP intake process that will work best for your program and the people you serve.

- **Pantries with no computer using paper logs** should have guests attest [every time](#) they receive food and complete the TEFAP Participation Log at every [distribution](#)
- **Pantries with a computer on site and/or the ability to print guest lists for each distribution** should track households served at each distribution using Connecticut Foodshare's approved Excel Spreadsheet. Pantries using their own databases or spreadsheets must get approval from Connecticut Foodshare to ensure all required data is being documented.

### What information is required in monthly statistics reporting?

By the 15<sup>th</sup> of every month TEFAP partners are required to submit statistics for the previous month to Connecticut Foodshare using an online form.

- **Food pantries** report total unduplicated households served, and total unduplicated individuals in those households. Pantries can use a spreadsheet or database to track households served. If using a paper log, pantries can report data from the TEFAP Participation Log for the highest day of the month.
- **Meal programs (soup kitchens and emergency shelters)** report total unduplicated individuals served (not households). Meal programs may calculate this number by reporting the meal with highest attendance in that month or by averaging the meal attendance in that month.

### Are there additional requirements for programs that distribute TEFAP?

Because TEFAP is a federally regulated program, participating partners must follow specific guidelines for handling and distributing TEFAP food. Each year, DSS will randomly select a [number of TEFAP partners](#) to visit and monitor for compliance. **The following checklist will help you meet the key areas of TEFAP compliance.** Please contact your Connecticut Foodshare Network Relations Representative with questions. We are here to help.

TEFAP Requirements	ALL Programs	ALL Programs run by Faith-based organizations	ALL Food Pantries, including home delivery	ALL Community Meal Programs-Soup Kitchens
Meet Connecticut Foodshare food safety guidelines	✓			
Sign a Connecticut Foodshare TEFAP Agreement, with signature from a current Authorized Representative from your organization	✓			
Keep a copy of the signed TEFAP Agreement on file at your program	✓			
Save Connecticut Foodshare order invoices for 3 years, either in electronic or paper files	✓			
Store TEFAP product in a secure location that has been approved by Connecticut Foodshare	✓			
Distribute TEFAP only in Connecticut	✓			
Ensure that TEFAP is made available to any eligible household seeking food assistance	✓			
Ensure that TEFAP is not shared with or redistributed to other organizations	✓			
Report any lost or damaged TEFAP to Connecticut Foodshare	✓			
Display a TEFAP "And Justice For All" poster in a location visible to program guests	✓			
Provide a link to USDA non-discrimination statement on your website.	✓			
As of July 1, ensure that all guest-facing staff and volunteers have renewed their Annual Civil Rights training, either online or using a paper log at your location	✓			
By the 15 <sup>th</sup> of every month for the previous month, submit statistics on the number of unduplicated households and individuals served to Connecticut Foodshare	✓			
Display a TEFAP "Written Notice of Beneficiary Rights" poster in a location visible to guests		✓		
Keep copies of Beneficiary Referral Forms available on site, and be prepared to make a referral to 2-1-1 or another nearby by food assistance program if a guest requests a referral		✓		
Ensure that religious activity does not take place in the same location or at the time of TEFAP food distribution		✓		
Ensure that TEFAP product is only utilized in prepared meals, and not distributed as grocery items for individuals to take home				✓
Ensure that TEFAP product is made available to any individual who self-attests to eligibility			✓	
Ask guests to self-attest to eligibility using the current TEFAP Self-Declaration Receipt, which is available in multiple languages and revised every July with latest income guidelines			✓	
Ensure that intake forms, procedures and any promotional materials do not require guests to provide more information than is required for TEFAP. See <a href="#">Eligibility Flow Chart</a> .			✓	
Every July, start using the new income guidelines provided by Connecticut Foodshare and renew eligibility for all households and provide them with a Self-Declaration Receipt to keep			✓	
At each visit, ask all returning clients if anything has changed and make sure current income guidelines are available			✓	
Use a TEFAP Participation Log to capture basic information from people served: name, address, number of people in household, and date they verbally attested to eligibility			✓	
Maintain TEFAP Participation Logs for 3 years, either in electronic or paper files			✓	

All TEFAP documents and instructional materials can be found here on our [website](#)

Or

Scan the QR Code

Interested in receiving TEFAP?

To start the process, contact your Network Relations Representative.

# Next Steps:

## Review for compliance and update as needed:

- Intake procedures
- Data collection and reporting procedures
- Copies of current forms available
- Check all promotional materials for compliance
  - signage
  - website
  - 211 profile – more on next slide
  - flyers
  - outgoing voice messages





# Next steps (continued):

## ❖ Review for compliance and update as needed:

- Required posters are displayed
- All staff/volunteers have completed Civil Rights training
- Three years of documents on file
  - Invoices
  - TEFAP Participation Logs and Client Tracking spreadsheets
  - Civil Rights training documentation

Share this guidance with all staff/volunteers!



# Next steps (continued):

❖ **An example of an ideal 211 entry, one of our partner programs**

## DESCRIPTION

Faith based food pantry provides food to residents of Connecticut on the 2nd and 4th Friday of the month, from 4-6pm.

## ELIGIBILITY

Connecticut residents in need of food



# Next steps (continued):

## ❖ Sample 211 Template

**Pantries that are town centric or limit to a specific service area**

### **Description:**

Neighbors in need may visit our food pantry [insert frequency (e.g., weekly, once per month) and days and hours]. [Insert whether your services are walk-in or by appointment]. We will ask you to provide your name, address, phone number (optional) and number of people per household.

### **Eligibility:**

All CT residents that meet current Federal income guidelines are eligible to receive TEFAP food; quantity and variety of food varies based on availability.

Additional pantry services are available to residents of [service area] who provide proof of residency such as [insert acceptable proof here].



# Have Questions? Need Further Assistance?

- ❖ Questions about this presentation, contact:  
Sherry Grant, Network and Program Support Manager  
(203) 741-9213  
[sgrant@ctfoodshare.org](mailto:sgrant@ctfoodshare.org)
- ❖ Need further assistance please contact your Network Relations Representative

