

Massachusetts Emergency Food Assistance Program

MEFAP is a state funded program that The Greater Boston Food Bank uses to purchase foods that are distributed free to all eligible emergency food providers on an "agency choice" basis and to sponsor nutrition education initiatives. The MEFAP program is a supplementary food assistance program in nature and is not intended to cover all needs of an agency.

Eligibility Requirements to Receive MEFAP

- Agency must be a member in good standing with The Greater Boston Food Bank
- Agency must be an Emergency Food Program falling into one of the following categories:

A. EMERGENCY FOOD PANTRY:

- Defined as an agency or program that distributes groceries on a monthly basis to those in need of a one time emergency or occasional food assistance AND;
- Does not charge a fee, goods, or services from participant in exchange for food.
- Participants must have a self-declared need or other verification of need such as DTA Card, Medicaid card, etc.
- Pantry conducts public outreach including, but not limited to, registration with a food resource referral service or a listing in a social service directory.

B. SOUP KITCHEN:

- Defined as an agency or program that prepares and serves on site meals regularly to those in need AND:
- Does not charge a fee or require service from participants in exchange for food.
- Conducts public outreach including, but not limited to, registration with an emergency food referral service or a listing in a social service directory.

C. SHELTER:

- Regularly provides shelter where those who are otherwise homeless are temporarily housed AND:
- Does not charge a fee or require service from participants in exchange for food.
- Length of residency is no longer than 6 months.
- Conducts public outreach including, but not limited to, registration with an emergency food referral service or a listing in a social service directory.

Responsibilities of the Agency

- The agency must have at least one person in the pantry that has been certified in a food safety class or ServSafe® certified if a meals program.
- The Agency shall maintain all required state and local health department certifications and shall make proof of same available upon request to The Food Bank.
- The Agency shall provide temporary nutrition assistance to relieve situations of emergency and distress for needy persons.

- The Agency shall not discriminate in the distribution of MEFAP on account of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, or handicap.
- The Agency shall serve any and all persons who qualify to receive foods through MEFAP.
- The Agency shall not charge any client for MEFAP foods.
- The Agency shall not sell, exchange, or otherwise dispose of MEFAP foods.
- The Agency shall not diminish its normal expenditures for food on account of its participation in MEFAP.
- The Agency shall maintain leased, owned, or donated facilities adequate to store all MEFAP foods that the Agency agrees to receive.
- The Agency shall properly safeguard all MEFAP foods that it agrees to receive against theft, spoilage, and other loss, and shall maintain dry, frozen, and refrigerated foods in accordance with standard sanitary practices.
- The Agency shall furnish adequate personnel and proper facilities to receive, handle, store, and distribute all MEFAP foods.
- The Agency shall establish an inventory management system that ensures that foods placed in inventory first are distributed first.
- The Agency shall report any and all inventory losses to The Food Bank in a timely manner.
- The Agency shall allow representatives of The Food Bank to inspect the Agency's facilities and records and to audit and/or copy such records at any reasonable time, upon reasonable notice to the Agency.