

Welcome to the Matsu Food Bank

Thank you for volunteering your time.

The Food Pantry of Wasilla was founded in 1989 as a ministry of Good Shepherd Lutheran Church in Wasilla to meet the need for emergency food for people within the community. In 1992, The Food Pantry of Wasilla became a member of the Valley Christian Conference and organized under the guidance of a board of directors. On March 24, 1994, the Food Pantry of Wasilla became registered as a nonprofit 501 (c) (3) organization.

In October 2005, we added The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP) to our distribution. Therefore, there were two food distributions handled by the Food Pantry of Wasilla: a community based donation program and the federal TEFAP program.

In May 2006, the Food Pantry of Wasilla expanded once again and opened a second location on the Palmer-Wasilla Hwy., located with Food Bank of Alaska. The second location was part of the Food Pantry of Wasilla dba, Valley Food Pantry.

Due to the loss of a lease, the second location closed in October 2007. The Food Pantry of Wasilla hours changed to our current hours of operation, Monday through Friday, 10:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Food Pantry of Wasilla is: “To provide persons who reside in the Matanuska Susitna Valley with needed supplemental food supplies. Food Pantry of Wasilla distributes goods to its clients in a manner which gives dignity to all.”

All distributions made by the Food Pantry of Wasilla shall be made notwithstanding any person’s race, color, sex, age, handicap, religious affiliation, or national origin.

VOLUNTEERING

Everyone who helps the Matsu Food Bank is a volunteer, with the exception of the small staff. A volunteer should never work alone. If you cannot make your scheduled time, call the office as soon as possible. Please do not wait until after the pantry is open.

In order to successfully fulfill our mission, we all need to be actively engaged. Our first obligations are to our clients; but during the slow times, please look around you and address those jobs that need to be done. These include but are not limited to: stocking shelves, breaking down boxes, sweeping/mopping floors, and general clean up. Remember, what we do not clean up each time is left for the next day’s volunteers.

See also essential duties below.

The Food Pantry of Wasilla is a 501(c) (3) nonprofit organization; your donation is tax deductible to the extent allowed by federal law. We certify that no goods or services were provided in exchange for this donation. Our EIN # is 92-0150918

TEFAP

The **Emergency Food Assistance Program**, (TEFAP) is issued from the government mandated guidelines. Please do not take any TEFAP food and place it on the shelves for the Food Pantry of Wasilla distribution. The TEFAP food is given out only to those clients who meet the income requirements set by the USDA.

Master copies of forms and applications are available in the managers office. Please return any masters to your Team Captain for filing. The computer in the reception area holds all the client information. All client information is private and is not to be shared with anyone outside our organization. (See your confidentiality agreement.) There is also a paper copy kept in the binders behind the desk. The paper copy is the official record. Do not destroy or allow clients to review binders. If you are not trained on the computer please ask manager for help.

Please lock your personal items in your vehicle, or arrange with office to secure. **The bathroom is NOT open to the public.**

CLIENTS

Serve with confidentiality, respect, and efficiency. Keep client forms away from public view. Criteria for using the Food Pantry of Wasilla are met by clients having proof of I.D. and of residency in the Mat-Su Borough and indicating they are in need. Clients are encouraged to receive food from the Pantry only once. Criteria for receiving TEFAP commodities are met by clients stating under perjury that they meet the income requirements by signing the required form. Clients may receive food only once a month from TEFAP. Our clients come from all levels of need, so remember to serve without judgment. Most clients come only once or twice a year. Clients should never be allowed in the warehouse area or in the kitchen area. An exception is wheelchair access through the garage door in the warehouse with escort. Clients may pick up food for other clients if they have a written note to that effect signed by the recipient client. Clients may write permission on the back of the application form, and a notation is made in the computer. Many clients have a caregiver who picks up their food for them. Be sure to verify I.D. of those picking up for the client.

CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT POLICY-PROCEDURE AGREEMENT

Each volunteer/employee is required to sign a confidentiality agreement with the Matsu Food Bank. This agreement requires the volunteer/employee to protect confidential information. A copy of this agreement will be on file with the volunteer's information, including a signed Volunteer Guideline package, the initial Volunteer Form and Background/Security Check release along with any other pertinent information as may be required.

Upon release or termination, all confidential information, keys or other property of the Matsu Food Bank held by the volunteer/employee will be collected and returned to the Food Pantry of Wasilla. This includes electronic and print versions. Volunteers/employees should be reminded of their legal obligations under the agreement to protect confidential information.

Confidential information should only be distributed to personnel who require this information to perform their job/duties. Board members, and the Executive Director have an obligation to ensure that this information is not widely distributed or publicly circulated.

Any application must include a signed confidentiality agreement.

FOOD DISTRIBUTION POLICIES

The Matsu Food Bank is responsible for ensuring that food is distributed to the ill, the needy or infants. We answer to our community, to our donors, the IRS and other government agencies. Accordingly, Food Bank of Alaska insists that partner agencies abide by the following policies. (We are a partner Agency).

Free of charge. Partner agencies must distribute food...directly to persons in need at no charge.

Only to people in need. Food from the Food Bank of Alaska must be distributed only to individuals in need.

At no time and under any conditions can donated product received from the Food Bank of Alaska be: sold, traded or bartered for product or services, used for personal use by staff or volunteers.

May not be used as refreshments for committee, agency, board or other meetings or for fund raising functions.

Clients are encouraged to come only once for Pantry. A client may receive TFAP commodities once a month. However, if someone is in need, he or she may receive a second bag of food. Never send a person away hungry. If a client comes more than once a month and is in need, offer resources at **"211 the United Way Help line"**. Cards from United Way Partnership are provided at the front desk.

Volunteers may also be clients and receive food in the same manner as all clients. It is suggested that you get your distribution before or after your volunteer time, or come on a separate day. As client/volunteer you will follow the same food distribution policies as all clients. **You must be escorted**, just as any client.

Do not “graze” during your volunteer time. Taking items from the shelves and placing in your bag or in the kitchen for your distribution during your volunteer time is not allowed. During distribution times, items for consumption by the volunteers need to be pre- approved by the Executive Director if taken from the Pantry shelves. No exceptions.

Always remember: We are not to judge our clients based on our observations or how things appear. A few extra cans of food someone may collect will not bring us to the brink of ruin.

ESSENTIAL INFORMATION

1. Be at the Pantry at least **15 minutes prior** to opening and plan for **15 minutes after** closing.
2. Check in with the staff for any changes in distributions or other news as it relates to the day’s operation or if you are unsure of your assigned duties.
3. Check and record temperature on all refrigerators and freezers or assure that it has been done.
4. Check what is available for the day. Keep in mind we serve 5 days a week, not just your day.
5. Stock shelves with planned product before distribution. This is why the early arrival.
6. Those volunteers assigned to work in the reception area computer need to retrieve sign-in sheets, total clients served, TEFAP and Food Pantry applications and file accordingly.
7. Do not place or play any games on this computer. We have had virus attacks in the past.
8. Check the bulletin board in the hallway at the beginning of your shift for any news or changes that may affect you or the distributions.

VOLUNTEER DUTIES - INCLUDE BUT ARE NOT LIMITED TO DAILY:

1. Reception and data entry at the computer, must be trained by staff.
2. Distribution of food with clients.
3. Breaking down large quantities of food in the kitchen.
4. Moving freight and stocking shelves.
5. Receiving donations, weighing and recording the donation and issuing a receipt. Please try to capture the name and address of the donor so we may thank them at a later date.
6. Vacuuming floors, cleaning kitchen to include washing dishes, wiping counters / tables with a Clorox solution (¼ cup bleach to a gallon of water, and container MUST state: Clorox Cleaning Solution) and cleaning the bathroom.
7. Trash cans emptied and re-bagged.
8. Please check if you are the last out that all doors and windows are locked, lights off except for porch lights in the winter, and freezer/refrigerator doors are closed.
9. Assure outside walks are clear and safe.

RECEPTION AND DATA ENTRY AT THE COMPUTER

Each client is to present ID to volunteer at the reception desk. Volunteer looks up the client's name on the computer. If they are a returning client, insert a "1" in the column for TEFAP, and insert a "1" in the column for Food Pantry. If a client does not qualify for TEFAP, insert a "0" in the TEFAP column and a "1" in the Food Pantry column. If a person only picks up either TEFAP or Food Pantry, place a "0" in the opposite column. At the end of the month, these columns are totaled for a count of how many we served that month.

NEW CLIENTS

1. Ask clients if they receive food from anywhere else in the Valley. If they receive a Senior Box (CFSP), they still can qualify for TEFAP. However, TEFAP can only be picked up from one location. If they pick up TEFAP at another location, they may only get a Food Pantry issue from our location.
2. If they do not pick up TEFAP from anywhere else, have them fill in the TEFAP application. Do they meet the income requirements as shown on the form? If they do have them fill out the form and sign at the bottom. Volunteer also signs at the bottom and the form is legible.
3. We are not required to verify income and we do not verify income. However, we need to capture ALL income for the household. Each person residing in that house that earns a taxable wage must be combined into a total amount for the household. This is a self-certifying application. Client is stating "under perjury of law" that the information of the application is true. Ask how many children are in the family (birth – 18), how many adults (19-59; seniors, (60+). Make notation of how many in each category (C, A, S) at the top of the form.
4. If clients do not qualify for TEFAP or they pick up TEFAP at another location, have them fill out the Food Pantry of Wasilla form. The Food Pantry of Wasilla form asks for names and ages. There are three age groups: Children, birth to 18, 19-59; seniors, 60+.
5. Have the client put list ages next to each person in the household. The computer volunteer will update and enter application information in the computer. File new applications into correct alphabetical binder. The paper file is critical. This is the official record of service, not the computer.
6. Have clients sign and print clearly on the TEFAP Sign-in Sheet and give them a card stating the number people in their family. Send them to the next volunteer for food distribution.
7. If the client is a Food Pantry only client then he or she signs the FOOD PANTRY ONLY sign-in sheet. Give a card with FOOD PANTRY ONLY.

Note: Unless a person is a Food Pantry Only client, he or she will receive both TEFAP and Food Pantry distribution. **FOOD PANTRY ONLY** clients receive only Food Pantry distribution.

DISTRIBUTION OF FOOD

1. TEFAP – Hand out food according to TEFAP chart listing distribution per number in family. If items or quantities change, the Manager and or the Executive Director will advise.
2. FOOD PANTRY – The shelves have cards instructing you as to how much of the item there should be given.
3. If there are any changes on the distribution list. You should be looking for notes on the bulletin board also. If you have a question check with the staff. Daily meetings will advise.

BREAKING DOWN AND SORTING FOOD

1. Students from the Next Step Program come in Monday to Thursday to break down bulk food. Volunteers can help with that process. This includes sorting potatoes, re-bagging bagels, washing produce we can salvage, dividing eggs, breaking down flour, sugar, rice, and beans from large bags into smaller zip-lock bags -- generally 1Lb sizes. Check with Staff for the amounts to put into each bag if you are unsure. When handling food, be sure to wash your hands and wear plastic gloves. Tables should be cleaned with a solution of ¼ cup bleach to a gallon of water before starting the break down each day and at the end of the shift. This is a **MUST** it is a requirement of the Health Department.
2. Look at the examples of dented canned goods posted on the bulletin board. If you are questioning whether the produce is safe to eat, be guided by “If in doubt, throw it out.” If you would not eat it, throw it out. As a volunteer you are encouraged to attend food handling classes that are offered periodically. Do not automatically throw out “out dated” foods. If we do that, we have no food to give. Ask if you are unsure.

FREIGHT MOVING

1. The back store room (near the bathroom) is TEFAP storage.
2. Watch for dates. There is a difference between “best used by” and “use by” dates. Most of our food is outdated food, **but** that does not necessarily mean that it is bad! Refer to signs posted on walls for information.
3. Baby food is a “use by” date. This is the only food we cannot serve if the date has passed. **ALWAYS** check with with staff if in doubt.

END OF DAY DUTIES

At the end of the day, lock doors, put perishables away, and place bread back in cooler. Sweep floors, wash dishes, clean sinks, counters and bathroom. Use a Clorox® solution. Break down boxes and empty any garbage before leaving for the day. **Be sure that all appliances are turned off, and that all doors, windows and lights are closed, locked, or turned off.**