



# Interested in Becoming a Food Bank Member Agency?

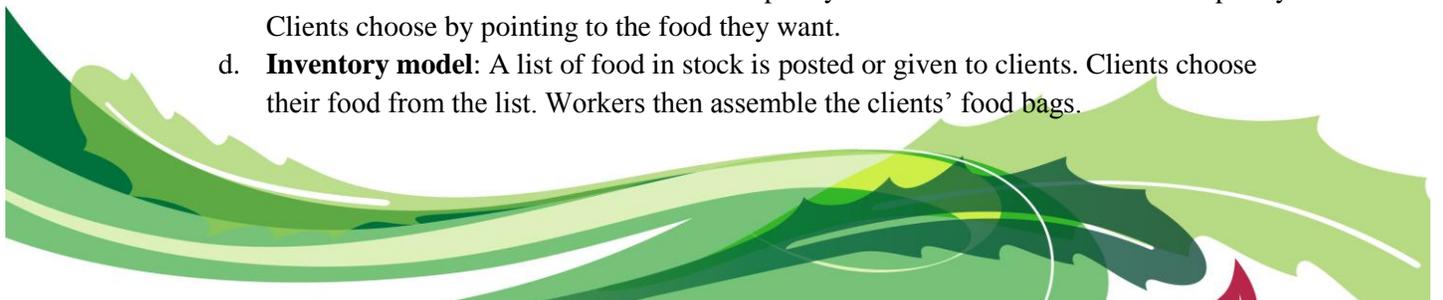
## *New Membership Overview*

There are two basic requirements before your program can be considered for membership:

- ❖ Program must be a non-profit (with current 501(c)3), which serves the ill, infant, or needy in Foodlink's ten-county service area
- ❖ Program must be open to the public for at least six months, registering and logging client visits to the food assistance program

If your agency meets the above criteria, then keep on reading...

1. All agencies must have a formalized Board of Directors or Steering Committee to provide oversight
2. All agencies must have established financial accounting practices
3. All agencies must submit an application with a service plan and agree to abide by the standards for operations outlined by Foodlink and our affiliate governing agencies
4. Members participate in a shared maintenance fee associated with product obtained from Foodlink
5. Based on program type all agencies must operate, at minimum, for the service hours defined below. Please note that weekends and evenings are given consideration and exception to the minimum standard, as they are considered low service times:
  - a. **Food Pantries:** operate a minimum of nine hours, three days a week
  - b. **Soup Kitchens:** operate a minimum of three meals, two days a week
  - c. **Emergency Shelters:** operate 24/7 (excluding seasonal shelters)
6. **FOOD PANTRIES ONLY:** Must operate some form of Client Choice. Listed below are the four most common models of Client Choice. You are not limited to these four models. You may do a combination of these or have a model that works best for your pantry, as long as you are offering all of your clients some form of choice.
  - a. **Supermarket model:** Food is set up by food groups inside the pantry. Clients choose their food as they walk through the pantry. Workers may help guide clients through their choices or check them out when they have finished shopping.
  - b. **Table model:** Clients stand outside the pantry area but can see the food in the pantry. Clients choose by pointing to the food they want.
  - c. **Window model:** Clients stand outside the pantry area but can see the food in the pantry. Clients choose by pointing to the food they want.
  - d. **Inventory model:** A list of food in stock is posted or given to clients. Clients choose their food from the list. Workers then assemble the clients' food bags.





7. Agree to attend annual Food Safety Training according to program type
  - a. For programs where food preparation occurs on site (Soup Kitchens and Emergency Shelters):
    - i. One person (or more) will be on site during food handling, preparation and service who has completed the following:
      1. Annual 2-hour training offered by Foodlink staff:
        - a. OR (L2) training to be renewed every 3 years (per Monroe County health code)
        - b. OR (L1) training to be renewed every 5 years (per Monroe County health code)
      - ii. Training certificates must be displayed at all times and will be checked during monitoring visits
    - b. For Food Pantries
      - i. One person (or more) will be on site during food handling & distribution that has completed the following:
        1. Annual 1-hour Basic Food Safety Training offered by Foodlink Staff
          - a. Bi-annual in-depth monitoring session may fulfill that year's requirement
        2. Training certificates must be displayed at all times and will be checked during monitoring visits
8. All agencies agree to order product from Foodlink at least once every three months and not rely on Foodlink for sole source of food.

### **Enrollment Season**

Foodlink only accepts new member applications during two enrollment seasons:

1. January through second week of March
2. July through second week of September

Nonprofit organizations wishing to become a member of the food bank must first attend a Foodlink 101 class prior to receiving an application.

### **Foodlink 101**

Each organization interested in applying must send a minimum of three people that are either volunteers or staff working directly with the program applying for membership

- Foodlink 101 is held during the New Member Enrollment Season on the first Wednesday in January, February, July, and August. Pre-registration is required and classes are subject to cancellation.
- Class covers history of Foodlink, how Foodlink food distribution system works, the types of support Foodlink provides members, what is expected of member agencies, and a review of the application process.
- Applications are only made available to "Foodlink 101" meeting attendees at the end of the session.





- Submitted applications will be reviewed by the Agency Services team in three weeks or less. Agency Services staff will then contact organization to set up an on-site inspection at which time we will look for:
  - a. Food stored in a safe, secure area
  - b. Food safety training for appropriate programs
  - c. Food is stored 6 inches from the ground and walls in safe, dry space
  - d. All refrigerators & freezers must have working thermometers
  - e. Client intake process to be reviewed and accepted
- The Agency Advisory Council reviews all recommended applications in April and October and strategically consider and review the following criteria
  - a. **Location:** How many other programs are there in the same area?
  - b. **Days, hours, and months of operation:** Does the program meet the minimum service hours?
  - c. **Policies and Service:** How does the program distribute food? How often is a person eligible for food? What intake requirements does the program have?
  - d. Please note that submitting a completed application does not guarantee membership with Foodlink. All membership applications are reviewed for approval by the Agency Advisory Council. Foodlink and The Agency Advisory Council reserve the right not to grant membership to agencies that do not have sufficient service plans and/or those in areas where additional services are not needed according to our network's service area. Partnerships with our existing members will be encouraged for this reason.
- If organization is accepted, program staff and/or volunteers will need to attend a Foodlink orientation class and a Grants and Reporting 101 workshop for Emergency agencies. In addition, programs needing to meet the minimum requirement for Food Safety training will be required to attend a food safety training offered by Foodlink or another approved organization.
- There is an annual membership fee of \$500 per agency (\$300 for emergency agency) and \$50 each additional program, which should be received only after approved for membership.
- Once all basic steps above are completed, a Foodlink account will be established and the agency will receive a program card and may begin shop from Foodlink.

*If the overview outline above fits your agency, please contact Morgan McKenzie in Member Services at (585) 413-4069 for questions.*

