FOOD RESCUE

DONATION RECEIVING GUIDE FOR HUNGER RELIEF ORGANIZATIONS

Safe Receiving Practices

- ✓ Visually inspect all items and discard anything with damaged packaging, or that shows signs of spoilage.
- ✓ Ensure that the source, condition and types of food in this donation is documented on a receiving log.
- ✓ Check temperatures of all Temperature Control for Safety ("TCS") foods to ensure they are below 41 or above 135 degrees Fahrenheit.
- ✓ Verify that any TCS foods that are between 41 or 135 degrees have only been out of temperature control for less than 2 hours (i.e. during preparation or transit to your facility).
- ✓ Check labels on baby formula and infant food to ensure it is not expired.

Safe Storage Practices

- ✓ All food must be stored at least 6 inches off the ground and away from walls, vents and cleaning supplies or chemicals.
- ✓ Dry, non-perishable goods are best stored between 50-70 degrees F, out of direct sunlight and in airtight containers if they are not in an original package.
- ✓ Refrigerated foods must be kept below 41 degrees F, ensuring raw meats are separate from any ready-to-eat foods.
- ✓ Frozen foods should be kept in original packaging, making sure not to crowd the freezer and allow for air circulation.
- ✓ Monitor foods for freshness and quality using the FIFO Method: "First In, First Out".

Food Type	Foods are SAFE to offer if:	Foods must be REJECTED If:
Prepared Food (e.g. soups, casseroles)	Properly cooled* and stored at 41 degrees F or below, or frozen solid	Any food stored between 41 and 135 degrees or food that has been improperly cooled*.
Chilled Perishable, Prepackaged food	Stored at 41 degrees or below, or frozen solid	Any food stored between 41 and 135 degrees or food with damaged or bulging packaging.
Meat, Poultry, Fish	Stored at 41 degrees F or below, or frozen solid	Foods stored between 41 and 135 degrees.
Fresh Whole Produce	Stored in a cool, dry and clean area.	Significant decay is evident.
Fresh Cut Produce	Stored at 41 degrees F or below.	Food stored between 41 and 135 degrees after being cut, or if significant decay is evident.
Nonperishable Baked Goods	Stored in a cool, dry and clean area.	Moldy or stale products.
Nonperishable, Prepackaged Food	Stored in a cool, dry and clean area.	Home-canned foods, and cans/packaging that are rusty, severely damaged, bulging or leaking.
Baby Food	Stored according to label	Expired infant formula.

*For information on what is considered properly or improperly cooled, refer to WAC 246-215 or discuss with your notified agency.

Repackaging Bulk Food at Food Banks

Foods bought or received in bulk at a food bank are a cost-effective way to offer staple items to customers in a manageable portion, however special care should be taken in your facility to ensure the food remains safe throughout the process of repackaging and storing these foods. Remember that ONLY dry, non-perishable foods can be repackaged into smaller portions as they are received. Do not mix different ingredients from different sources or bulk packages into new packs for clients. Another practice to avoid is thawing frozen food to repackage or utilizing a vacuum sealer (i.e. Foodsaver) for any ready-to-eat or potentially hazardous foods. The repackaging process should take place separately from other food preparation activities and away from clients' shopping areas on cleaned and freshly sanitized surfaces. Food handlers should wash hands, then put on single-use gloves and begin handling food carefully in their clean and sanitary workspace. Once everything is in its new package, label each package with the name of the item and the original sell-by/use-by date from the bulk supply.