

A GUIDE FOR  
CITIZENS OF  
SNOHOMISH  
COUNTY

Thank you for your efforts in the community to help the 1 out of 6 Washingtonians that struggle with food insecurity. Donating food is good for your neighbors and the environment!

Please find your step-by-step guide for donating excess food to hunger relief organizations.

Snohomish Health District is your resource for food safety and reputable hunger relief organizations.

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# FOOD RESCUE DONATION GUIDE – HOME KITCHENS

## How to Donate

1. Review acceptable foods on the back of this page to ensure what you have to donate can be accepted at your local hunger relief organization.
2. Contact your local hunger relief organization to find out what kinds of food they are accepting right now, and how you can deliver the donation to them.
3. Inspect your goods to ensure they are safe to donate:
  - the original packaging and label should be intact
  - the food and packaging should be clean and in good condition
  - the items are not past their “USE BY” date (if applicable)
  - the food does not require refrigeration for safety.
4. Ensure food is transported safely:
  - in a clean container to prevent cross contamination
  - if the food is frozen, transport in an insulated container to maintain safe temperatures for the entirety of the trip.
6. Prepare to share the following information with the receiving organization:
  - the original source of the food
  - total quantity of items in their original packaging
  - where it was stored and for how long

\*Department of Health Charity Food Donation Guidance available online:

<https://www.doh.wa.gov/CommunityandEnvironment/Food/FoodWorkerandIndustry/CharityFoodDonations>

## How to be a “Good Samaritan”

The Good Samaritan Food Donation Act *Chapter 69.80.031 RCW* is an act that offers food donors protection from criminal and civil liability if the food that they donated is *apparently wholesome*. To ensure the wholesomeness of your food donations, keep good records of food handling and storage conditions including temperatures, times, and locations. Remember to only donate food if you would eat it yourself! Foods should have been purchased and stored by you and your family in a safe place before being donated to those in need.

### Share Food, Not Germs...

Hunger relief organizations cannot accept your home-prepared meals, except for home-baked breads or confections that do not require refrigeration for safety. Please only bring pre-packaged, commercially prepared foods to your food drives and save the soup or casseroles for your friends, family, or home freezer. If you are interested in volunteering a lot of your time, food and perhaps baking skills to a local food bank, consider obtaining a Washington State Food Worker’s Card, which can be found by visiting: [www.foodworkercard.wa.gov](http://www.foodworkercard.wa.gov)

Food Type	Foods are SAFE to Donate If:	Foods are NOT SAFE to Donate If:
<b>Nonperishable, Commercially Packaged Foods</b> (e.g. canned or boxed goods)	They have been stored in a cool, dry and clean area away from pets, pests, flood or fire.	Cans that are rusty, severely damaged, bulging or leaking. Packages that are damaged or opened.
<b>Frozen, Commercially Packaged Foods</b> (eg. Meats, vegetables, frozen meals)	Frozen Solid.	Previously or currently defrosted or refrigerated. Severe freezer burn, and/or packaging that is opened or damaged.
<b>Fresh, Whole Produce</b>	Store-bought or home-grown and stored in a cool, dry and clean area.	Fruits and vegetables showing significant decay or that has been cut already.
<b>Nonperishable Baked Goods</b>	Prepared and handled in accordance with WAC 246-215* and bearing a label with source, ingredients, and common allergens.	Items that have been handled with bare hands, or that are contaminated, moldy or stale.
<b>Ready-to-Eat, Freshly Prepared Meals</b>	Prepared in a commercial or donor kitchen in accordance with WAC 246-215	Anything cooked, prepared, vacuum sealed or canned in a home kitchen.
<b>Baby Food</b>	Stored according to label	Expired infant formula
<b>Domestic Livestock and Game Meats</b>	Must bear appropriate labels according to WAC 246-215 and be approved by the Snohomish Health District. Please see Game Meat & Livestock Donation Guide for further regulations.	Meat that is unlabeled, without a verified source, and anything that has not been approved by the Snohomish Health District.

\*WAC 246-215 is available through the Snohomish Health District or Washington DOH, please call the number on this form for a copy or to request information or approval of donor kitchens and meat donations.