

Operations during COVID-19: Questions and Answers
The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP)

Q: Must we use “no contact” distribution methods?

Yes. This means that you should not hand-transfer ANY objects (pens, paper, ID, grocery bags) directly with the households you are serving. If you can't do that, call your regional TEFAP representative (EFO) immediately. This applies to soup kitchens too!

Q: Must we see identification?

Yes. But only from the person picking up food. The one-time documentation of household members is suspended at this time.

Q: Must we record each household distribution?

Yes. But switch your recordkeeping to the NEW, simple, one-page record to capture multiple households. Use as many of those sheets as you need for a single day, and keep your records BY DATE rather than by household during COVID-19. You won't need to transfer this information later; just store sheets for four years.

Q: How do we get the new data collection form that we'll use instead of the usual TEFAP form?

Your regional TEFAP representative (EFO), will email it to you. Print it on a home printer on regular paper. Use a clipboard for gathering information. The document is called “WisTEFAPCOVIDnewTOOL.” One side is the income-eligibility levels with weekly income added; the other side is your data collection tool to replace individual household forms. You can print two-sided or as two separate documents. Two-sided will be easier for volunteers talking to folks through car windows – less paper to shuffle.

Q: Are we changing the income-levels to qualify for TEFAP?

A: No. But we can offer a household food if their WEEKLY income suddenly falls to the eligibility level. New household can join during job or income loss. All TEFAP recipients must **self-declare their income-eligibility each time** so you should show them the income sheet when you collect their data. You are likely to begin serving households you've never served before. People can get TEFAP for a few weeks or months – until things improve.

Q: How do I intake a new household?

Nearly the same as a returning household. Begin by showing the eligibility guidelines and ask if they qualify. If no, you may choose to serve them anyway with non-TEFAP foods. If yes, then they are qualified. Ask to see their ID – you can prefer photo ID but be flexible. (Don't handle it.) Ask first and last name; address; number in household; and whether they are New (N) or Returning (R). Do this for all households. Record the information they give you on one line. Use a single sheet for multiple households.

Q: Can we deliver to homebound individuals?

Yes. You can arrange for deliveries on a case-by-case basis, based on your capacity.

Q: Does home delivery pose civil rights concerns if we are only delivering to “high-risk” or sick households?

No. If your policy is to deliver to high-risk households, including anyone with an underlying health condition; elderly, disabled or a combination, then your pantry or volunteer group is providing an added public service. There is a difference between prioritizing need and differentially serving people because of their membership in a protected class. This is not discrimination; it is prioritizing need. Civic organizations may have members willing to make deliveries. Sign a confidentiality agreement, and instruct them precisely on what “no contact” delivery means. They should not enter a home. If a volunteer attempts to make a delivery and believes the recipient may be in distress, they should call 9-1-1.

Q: Will our food supply continue?

Yes. USDA assures us that trucks will continue to arrive (as they did during the government shutdown last year). Congress has also appropriated additional funds and we will soon be learning what resources that may add.

Q: If we are scheduled to pick up food at Walmart, Kwik Trip or other locations, should we still do that?

Yes. But if you can't, let your food bank AND TEFAP regional rep (EFO) know ASAP so this important job can be reassigned.