

Agency Partnerships

Types of Programs Eligible for Agency Partnership with Brazos Valley Food Bank to Receive Food

Food Pantry

A food distribution program providing groceries via bags and/or boxes on a regular schedule to people in need of food. Food is consumed by client off-site.

Shelter

An agency providing on-site cooked meals in addition to emergency housing and/or other services.

Recreation Programs

A program that provides services to school age children (tutoring and other enrichment programs) after school hours, during the summer and on weekends.

Soup Kitchen/Community Café

An agency serving emergency meals to clients on-site and on regularly scheduled days and hours.

Group Home/Rehabilitation Facility

On-site programs specializing in a specific area in regard to client needs. Examples are substance abuse recovery houses, homes for people with mental disabilities, and facilities for troubled youth. Clients live on-site and food is cooked and consumed on-site.

Elderly Nutrition

Any program that provides services on-site for the elderly where meals and/or snacks are served. This includes councils on aging, senior day centers, and congregated meal sites.

Other

These agencies do not fall into the above categories. Whether or not these agencies may become BVFB partners will be handled on a case-by-case basis according to the guidelines set forth by Feeding America and the BVFB.

Note:

The Brazos Valley Food Bank does not serve foster parent associations, child care centers, private schools, or religious academies.

Minimum Standards Required to Become a Partner Agency

Brazos Valley Food Bank (BVFB) welcomes non-profit organizations, churches, and other groups that want to help in the cause of alleviating hunger in this community.

Please know that the commitment, time, and resources needed to run an effective food pantry or feeding program are great.

All agencies that wish to become partner agencies of BVFB, as a way to acquire food to distribute, have to meet certain standards as well as agree to abide by certain terms and conditions.

Even if an agency meets the standards and agrees to abide by terms and conditions, BVFB still has the right to refuse partnership based on the following:

- Demand for food assistance in the community to be served;
- Volume of food assistance programs already in the community;
- BVFB resources required to service the agency and manage contract compliance;
- Other factors deemed relevant by BVFB's staff and/or Board of Directors.

Specific Standards

The agency must have qualified under Section 501(c)3 of the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) Code as a tax exempt organization

or

Be a church or other religious organization as described in Section 170(c)2 of the IRS Code to which deductible contributions may be made.

To demonstrate this, the potential partner agency must present one of the following:

- Determination letter from the IRS. A determination from the IRS that is an "advance ruling" will only be acceptable during the period before a final ruling must be issued.
- IRS listing – an agency's listing in the current edition of the IRS Cumulative List of Organizations.
- Group exemptions – An agency which is a subsidiary of a larger 501(c)3 status must submit a copy of the larger organization's status (i.e., St. Somebody's Catholic Church may submit the national Catholic exemption letter).
- Unincorporated church – Any applicant organization which is a church and does not have 501(c)3 status must submit a Church Qualifier Application completed and signed by the Chief Executive Officer affirming that the organization is in fact a church and has not applied to the IRS for 501(c)3 status and been denied, has not had its 501(c)3 status revoked by the IRS, and essentially meets the criteria employed by the IRS in defining a church.

In addition to meeting the criteria of being a tax-exempt organization or church, partner agencies must:

- Feed the needy, the ill, and/or children (defined as all children under the age of 18)
- Supply food directly to clients in the form of meals (regularly and at least once a month) or food bags and/or boxes (at regularly scheduled hours). The schedule must be made and displayed publicly so the community is aware of the program.
- Strictly adhere to eligibility criteria for distribution of food that is part of state and/or federal programs. Products must be distributed without adding to, reducing, or otherwise modifying the eligibility criteria.
- Distribute all BVFB product to all persons who qualify for agency assistance and not discriminate against any person based on one's race, creed, national origin, religious affiliation or lack thereof, sex or sexual orientation, or disability.
- Have the capacity to receive, store, and distribute food safely and efficiently according to BVFB standards.
- Serve a minimum of 50% low income clients if providing recreational services for which tuition or fees are charged. Primary service must be to individuals in need.
- Conform to the Agency Agreement and Liability Release standard as set forth by the Board of Directors of the BVFB to maintain membership status.
- Be a member of and receive services from only one Food Bank.
- Agree to support the BVFB with per pound Shared Maintenance* contribution.
 - * Collecting, sorting, packaging, handling, and storing donated food costs money. Partner agencies agree to help off-set a portion of these costs through a Shared Maintenance fee that is assessed on product received. The current fee is up to 15 cents (15¢) per pound. There is no Shared Maintenance fee on perishable product (breads and produce). Additional costs may be incurred by partner agencies who select products acquired through purchase.
- Be licensed or certified by health authorities, if required by the County.
- Allow monitoring by BVFB representatives (staff or volunteers) as requested.
- Limit food requested to an amount that can be distributed or consumed within a period of 30 days.
- Agree to contact BVFB before soliciting food from major donors – manufacturers, processors, distributors, brokers, wholesalers, etc.
- Keep records on clients (food pantries) and on food distribution and make those records available to a BVFB representative as requested.
- Use BVFB product only in a manner related to its exempt purpose and solely for the feeding of people in need stated by the Agency Agreement.
- Notify the BVFB of any changes in programs, personnel, addresses, contact phone numbers, and e-mail addresses.
- Agree NOT to sell food received from BVFB.
- Agree NOT to exchange food received from the BVFB for good, services, or donations.
- Agree NOT to charge for meals served or food bags and/or boxes distributed.
- Complete Food Safety Certification, and maintain certification by at least one staff/volunteer while agency is a Partner Agency.
- Attend Annual Training.
- Conduct annual Civil Rights Training with your staff/volunteers.
- Maintain temperature logs on any refrigerators/freezers at your site.
- Maintain pest control of your site with supporting documentation.

Process to Become a BVFB Partner Agency



- A. **Meet Minimum Standards:** Carefully review the Minimum Standards outlined in the “Minimum Standards Required to Become a Partner Agency” section of this manual. If your feeding program can adhere to these minimum standards, proceed to step 2.
- B. **Complete BVFB Application:** Contact the Agency Relations/Mobile Pantry Coordinator at BVFB. Learn how to obtain a Partner Agency Application. Complete fully the partner agency application, make copies of all required documentation outlined in the application and return all paperwork to the BVFB Agency Relations/Mobile Pantry Coordinator.
 - If the feeding program will occur at a church, the pastor of the church must sign off on the application, giving permission for use of the church (and/or its associated buildings).
 - If a partner agency wishes to utilize BVFB product for more than one feeding program, a separate application must be submitted for each program.
- C. **Pass a Site Inspection by a BVFB Representative**
 1. The Partner Agency must have adequate, clean, dry storage for all products received from the BVFB at any one time.
 - a. Product must be:
 - Stored in a secure room that will prevent entry of bugs and rodents.
 - Stored on non-porous surfaces (no bare wood, rusty metal, or shelf-liner). Paint wood/metal with light-colored, oil-based enamel paint.
 - Stored properly. No repackaging of products, except for rice and beans.
 - Kept, whether in bags or boxes, off the floor. Storage on pallets or shelves four inches of clearance from the floor and walls and two feet of clearance from the ceiling.
 - Stored safely. The Agency guarantees that non-food items are stored separately from food. Non-food items should not be stored above or mingled with food. Do not store near steam or heat.
 - Kept in a clean and orderly area. Refrigerators and freezers should be wiped down as soon as spills occur.
 2. The Agency must keep the temperature of the pantry at a level that maintains the integrity of the food and product being stored there. Proper ventilation is important.
 3. If the Agency receives perishable food from BVFB (produce, frozen items, etc.), it guarantees that it has adequate cooler and freezer space to store, transport, and deliver it safely.
 4. The Agency must store all perishable items at safe temperatures.
 - a. Average safe temperature for refrigerators is 34°F to 40°F.
 - b. Average safe temperature for freezers is -15°F to 0°F.

5. The Agency agrees to maintain temperature logs, recorded every 48 hours. All refrigerators and freezers are required to have thermometers. See Temperature Log (page 80).
6. The Agency must have visually displayed state licensed pesticide application.
7. The Agency must have reasonable fire protection measures in place (i.e., fire extinguishers).
8. If the Agency distributes USDA Commodities, the Agency:
 - Must refrigerate all USDA grain products (flour, corn meal, rice, etc.) from May to September to deter contamination by pest invasion.
 - Must store USDA Commodities in one area of the pantry, cooler, and/or freezer and non-USDA Commodities in another part of the storage area or unit.

Once these three steps have been completed, the Brazos Valley Food Bank will evaluate the information and make a decision. The information contained in your application, the outcome of your site visit, and your demonstrated ability to adhere to all standards are taken into consideration.

Please ensure the application is legible, thoroughly completed, and clearly describes your program (or intended program).

Once an agency is approved and notified of this decision, the agency is required to register their program with 211 – First Call for Help. This can be done by calling the local United Way at (979) 696-4483 and asking to speak to the Director of I&R Services.

Commonly Asked Questions

How soon can I order food?

Your agency can begin ordering food as soon as you have registered with 211.

How do I place an order?

A link to the online ordering website can be found on the bottom right corner of the BVFB web-page. Your agency will receive login info upon acceptance.

Can we pick up our order or have it delivered?

Either option is available for all partner agencies. See Accessing Product for more details.

How often can we order food?

Your agency may order food as often as your agency needs and is able to support.