

The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP)

TEFAP is **The Emergency Food Assistance Program**, a federal program of the **USDA** (U. S. Department of Agriculture) administered by **FNS** (Food and Nutrition Service). TEFAP helps to supplement the diets of low-income community members by providing 100% American-grown foods and administrative funds to participating states.

Here in Rhode Island, the state *Department of Human Services* oversees this program and works with the *Rhode Island Community Food Bank* to distribute food to its member agencies. Food pantries and community meal sites must be members of the Food Bank to receive TEFAP food.

As a member of the Food Bank, your agency has access to a large variety of nutritious food for your program guests, including TEFAP foods. TEFAP has become an important commodity in helping the Food Bank balance out our inventory and keep our shopping list well stocked with healthy food offerings.

Agencies, and their guests, get the most benefit from their Food Bank membership when participating in TEFAP. Because it is a state-run program, TEFAP has special protocols which we have broken down into easy steps for agencies. It is our goal to keep program participation in TEFAP simple, and the staff at the Food Bank will help set your agency up for success!

1. **FILE** - **TEFAP Addendum to the Basic Agreement** - Review, sign, and return to the Food Bank yearly.
2. **KEEP ON FILE** - **Application/Self-Declaration of Eligibility Forms** - **Food Pantries only** - TEFAP is a *SELF-DECLARATION* program; your program participants do not need to show proof to participate. They only need to fill out and sign the form. Keep signed forms on file for 3 years before shredding.
3. **POST** - ***And Justice for All* poster** - Post in an area where guests can see it.
4. **POST** - **Written Notice of Beneficiary Rights** – Fill in agency info & post the document where guests can view it.
5. **KEEP ON FILE** - **USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Forms** - Keep a copy on file at your agency in case you ever need to give one to a program participant who has a discrimination complaint.
6. **KEEP ON FILE** - **Donated Food Complaint Form** - Keep a copy on file at your agency, in case your agency has a TEFAP food-related complaint that you want to pass on to the *RI Department of Human Services*. Please inform RICFB first so we can rectify the situation.
7. **Only in-state households** (RI residents) may receive TEFAP foods, per regulations.
8. **Arrange your storage area & shopping area** to be able to easily identify which foods are TEFAP. Label the cardboard trays with “TEFAP” or put signs on the shelves holding TEFAP foods for DHS inspection.

Check out our **Agency Portal** for TEFAP documents listed above (available to download & print) and our video tutorial: <https://rifoodbank.org/agency-resources/agency-portal/> **Questions?** Contact: Kadir Carcamo, Federal Programs Manager, 401-230-1708 or kcarcamo@rifoodbank.org.