

# TEFAP Handbook



NORTHEAST IOWA  
**FOOD BANK**

## Purpose Of This Document

This document explains TEFAP/USDA and Civil Rights. It is meant to support partner agencies regarding TEFAP and Civil Rights regulations set forth by HHS. This document does not replace annual trainings.

## TEFAP Overview

TEFAP is a federal program that helps supplement the diets of low-income recipients by providing them with emergency food and nutrition assistance at no cost. Through TEFAP, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) purchases a variety of nutritious, high-quality USDA Foods, and makes those foods available to state distributing agencies. States provide the food to their local agency partners such as food banks, which in turn distribute the food directly to the public or local organizations such as food pantries and community meals.

The amount of food each state receives out of the total amount of food provided is based on the number of unemployed persons and the number of people with incomes below the poverty level in the state. Households that meet State-defined eligibility criteria may receive food for home use through TEFAP forms. Recipients of prepared meals, such as those served at a community meal, are considered to be low income and are not subject to the TEFAP form. For further information on TEFAP please visit <https://www.usda.gov>



# Table of Contents

Site Visits Conducted by the State.....	4
TEFAP Form Guidelines .....	5
TEFAP Form Guidelines Continued.....	6
TEFAP Form Guidelines Cont.....	7
Food Ordering Procedures.....	8
Storage Practices and Requirements.....	9
Civil Rights.....	10
Complaints of Discrimination.....	11
And Justice for All Poster.....	12
USDA Nondiscrimination Statement.....	13
Long or Short Version.....	14
Contact Information.....	15

## Site Visits Conducted by the State

HHS must monitor the operation of the TEFAP program to ensure that it is being administered in accordance with Federal and State requirements. HHS will choose at random 2-3 partner agencies to evaluate each Fiscal Year. Each review must include:

1. Eligibility determinations
2. Food ordering procedures
3. Storage and warehouse practices
4. Inventory controls
5. Approval of distribution sites
6. Reporting and recordkeeping requirements
7. Civil Rights

A site review report will be issued to the Northeast Iowa Food Bank after all reviews have been conducted in the area. It is NEIFB responsibility to notify the agency the results of the review. If there are any findings the NEIFB will provide guidance on how to make corrections to meet HHS standards.

Corrective action is due 60 days from the receipt of the report. NEIFB may request corrective action to be due within 30 days to give NEIFB staff sufficient time to report back to HHS. If HHS requests further evidence this will allow requirements to be met within the due date.

If there are findings it is up to the agency to follow through on how they want to establish corrections and provide evidence of the corrections to NEIFB. It is best to be thorough with the corrections so further evidence is not requested. If corrections are not completed within the 30 day notice the agency will be unable to order and distribute TEFAP commodities. HHS will be notified of the removal until further action has been taken.

If there are no findings or corrections meet HHS standards NEIFB will notify the agency that the review has been approved and the case is closed.

# TEFAP Form Guidelines

TEFAP forms are an official HHS form: 450-5313. Forms are valid for the State Fiscal Year (SFY) from July 1– June 30. NEIFB will notify you when forms are available. Agencies must follow the guidelines set forth by HHS so that both the NEIFB and agency sites are in good standing.

1. Current TEFAP Form is being used.
  - a. NEIFB recommends using single colored paper per year to distinguish between SFY.
2. Both sides of the form must be made available to clients at the time it is signed as the backside contains the USDA nondiscrimination act.
3. The form cannot be modified. Additional client information must be optional to receive TEFAP food, obtained after determining eligibility for TEFAP food, and recorded on a separate document.
  - a. No notes of any can be written on the form. (sticky notes can be used)
  - b. No age
  - c. No birthdates
  - d. No ethnicities
4. Pantries must allow participants to self-attest to TEFAP.
  - a. A resident of Iowa **and** one of the below:
    - b. At or below 185% of poverty, or
    - c. A SNAP or free/reduced lunch recipient
5. Pantries cannot require additional information for participants to receive TEFAP foods. If the pantry does request additional information after completion of the TEFAP form, they must make it clear this will have no impact on clients ability to receive TEFAP commodities. Examples include:
  - a. ID
  - b. Verification of income
  - c. Verification of address
  - d. Age requirements
6. Participants should only be asked to complete the form once per year.
  - a. Agencies should have participants sign the updated eligibility form at the first visit on or after July 1.
  - b. If a client visits other pantries or mobile distributions a separate TEFAP form must be signed.
7. If an individual comes out of your service area you must serve them TEFAP commodities once per month.

## TEFAP Form Guidelines Continued

8. For subsequent visits to the pantry, the household or agency must document the household received TEFAP foods. The agency may choose the method that works best for them. Some examples include:

- a. Signing the back of their TEFAP form
- b. Index cards where pantry visits are documented
- c. Sign in sheet where pantry visits are documented
- d. Electronic documentation of each time the pantry is accessed

9. All TEFAP forms must be kept on file for 3 state fiscal years plus the current SFY.

- a. NEIFB recommends keeping separate binders at the end of each SFY to stay organized.

10. Must have in all languages that are provided by NEIFB, available upon request by client.

- a. Can be found on our website under *Agency Resources*

11. Meal Sites must not use the TEFAP form.

- a. The site needs to demonstrate to the food bank on annual basis that they are serving a predominately needy population (51% or more).
- b. Needy is defined as receipt of food assistance or income at or below 185% of poverty.

HHS does not define how an agency demonstrates predominantly needy. Some examples include:

- a. The socioeconomic data of the area where the organization is located, or from which it draws its participants.
- b. Talk to your food bank representative to learn more.

12. Proxy notes are required for individuals that are unable to visit a pantry (homebound, disabled, etc.).

- a. The person that is unable to visit the pantry must provide written documentation stating that another individual can pick up on their behalf
- b. The individual must meet guidelines on the TEFAP form and must sign it as normal protocol.
- c. Only need one note per year as long as the individual makes it clear on the note
- d. Anyone who lives in the same household does not need a proxy

13. If a child is homeless or lives on their own they can sign TEFAP form but if an adult lives in the household that adult must sign on their behalf.



# Food Ordering Procedures

There are several ways to identify TEFAP commodities that are ordered from the Northeast Iowa Food Bank.

1. When ordering online, TEFAP items can be identified by the following letters:

- a. US
- b. BON
- c. ENT
- d. CCC

2. The emailed invoice will include the following information under **Product Reference**:

Donated (ex: 21126DN, 88024DN)

Purchased (ex: Hansens-P)

**USDA (ex: 72523BON)**

Product Reference	Description	Storage	Quantity	---Weight---		Shared Maintenance		Purchased Cost	
				Unit	Total	/Lb	Total	Unit	Total
Donated									
21126DN	Cottage Cheese (gt	REF	51	13.00	663.00	\$0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
21126DN	Cottage Cheese (gt	REF	50	13.00	650.00	\$0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
88024DN	Formula- 1-6 month (gt	DRY	58	12.00	696.00	\$0.19	132.24	0.00	0.00
25294DN	Almond Milk-Chocolate	DRY	131	11.00	1441.00	\$0.19	273.79	0.00	0.00
MRPC-POT	MRPC - Potatoes 10-	REF	13	50.00	650.00	\$0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
			303.00		4100.00		\$406.03		\$0.00
Purchased									
HANSENS-P	Hansens Assorted Milk	REF	4	38.00	152.00	\$0.00	0.00	5.00	20.00
HANSENS-P	Hansens Assorted Milk	REF	45	38.00	1710.00	\$0.00	0.00	5.00	225.00
			49.00		1862.00		\$0.00		\$245.00
USDA									
72523BON	Fresh Plums(BULK)-	REF	4	30.00	120.00	\$0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
72523BON	Fresh Plums(BULK)-	REF	76	30.00	2280.00	\$0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00

Agencies should only order TEFAP foods that they have the ability to distribute within 6 months of receiving. An agency should not be seen stock-piling or hoarding items. The First in, First out (FIFO) or First Expired, First Out (FEFO) concept must be utilized; whichever comes first.

No USDA items can be distributed beyond the expiration date. If an agency has any USDA food losses they are required to notify the NEIFB of the loss and provide pictures of the items. Before the agency is able to dispose of the loss the agency must get approval from NEIFB so it can be documented with HHS.



# Storage Practices and Requirements

Proper food safety regulations must be followed to ensure food quality and safe consumption. USDA foods must be stored in safe and secure locations. It is priority that food is monitored on a regular basis to ensure requirements are being met. Below are TEFAP requirements:

1. Must store USDA foods separately from other foods, clearly marked as USDA.
  - a. Can write directly on the product "USDA".
  - b. Can add magnets/stickers on shelving units.
  - c. Have a separate shelving unit.
2. Refrigerator foods must be stored between 35-40° F.
  - a. Temperatures should never be outside this range.
3. Frozen foods must be stored at 0- -10° F.
4. Dry storage optimal temperatures are 50-70° F.
  - a. Temperatures may never fall below 32° F. and rarely exceed 70° F. to preserve food quality.
5. All units and dry storage area must have a thermometer at all times.
  - a. Sharing a thermometer between two appliances is not allowed.
6. Temperature logs should be maintained
7. The "first expired, first out" concept must be utilized to ensure foods are consumed prior to the manufacturer use by dates.
8. Non-food items must be stored separately from food.
9. Food must be at least 4 inches away from walls, 6 inches off the floor and 2 feet from the ceiling.
10. Storage areas should be kept clean.
11. A pest control system must be in place.
  - a. Can be done internally but must be recorded on pest control log.
  - b. Provided through a pest control company.
12. Must follow Best If Used By/Best If Used Before (BIUB) to ensure recipients have opportunity to consume before product end dates have passed
13. All agencies must receive food safety training
  - a. At least one member of the agency must be food safe certified
14. Pantries and Meal Sites must display operating days and hours for visibility and awareness.
  - a. Posted operating hours must include "this institution is an equal opportunity provider"

# Civil Rights

The Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibits discrimination based on race, color, national origin, sex, age and/or disability in federally funded programs. TEFAP is funded by the federal government and must comply with all civil rights and non-discrimination laws. Immediately notify the NEIFB if your site receives a verbal or written civil rights complaint.

Civil Rights Laws	Protected Classes
Title VI- Civil Rights Act of 1964 Civil Rights Restoration Act of 1987: Clarifies the Scope of the Civil Rights Act of 1964	✓ Race ✓ Color ✓ National Origin
Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 ADA Amendments Act of 2008	✓ Disability
Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972	✓ Sex (gender identity and sexual orientation)
Age Discrimination Act of 1975	✓ Age

Civil Rights training is required annually for people involved in all levels of the administration of TEFAP. This includes volunteers who interact with applicants or handle personal applicant information. Any volunteers that do not interact in any way with applicants and do not handle personal information do not need to complete civil rights training.

Documentation of the completed training must be sent into the NEIFB by the requested deadline. New employees and volunteers must receive Civil Rights training before participating in Program activities. As staff and volunteers come and go it is not required to send to the food bank each time but to keep on file for the next site visit. The training log must be kept on file for 3 years plus current fiscal year. If you run out of room on the initial form and need another copy it can be found on our website under *Agency Resources* or contact a food bank representative.

# Complaints of Discrimination

Everyone has the right to file a complaint of discrimination. Never discourage someone from filing a complaint or voicing their concerns. It is important that each agency has a process in place and educates other staff and volunteers in case of a complaint. Always attempt to resolve the complaint at the lowest level and if this is not feasible the complaint must be taken to the State or Federal office. The maximum time to process the complaint is 180 days. Complaints be may filled for race, color, national origin, age, sex (including gender identity and sexual orientation), disability, or reprisal or retaliation. Notify the food bank of any civil rights complaints you receive. Do not discuss any civil rights complaints with others for confidential reasons. Complaints should include the following information:

## 1. Contact Information

### 2. Name

### 3. Address

### 4. Phone number, or

### 5. Other means of contacting the person alleging the discrimination

### 6. The location and name of the organization or office that is accused of discriminatory practices.

### 7. The nature of the incident or action

### 8. The Name(s), Title(s), and business address of persons who may have knowledge of the discriminatory action.

### 9. The date(s) during which the alleged discriminatory actions occurred. The basis for the alleged discrimination

## And Justice for All Poster

Printed copies should not be made and no previous versions should be posted. Agencies can obtain free copies of this poster by contacting NEIFB. It is not required that an agency have multiple posters displayed in one facility. The NEIFB will notify you if and when new posters are available.



# USDA Nondiscrimination Statement

All printed materials (including websites and social media) used to market the program must have the USDA nondiscrimination statement included.

“In accordance with federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex (including gender identity and sexual orientation), disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity.

Program information may be made available in languages other than English. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication to obtain program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language), should contact the responsible state or local agency that administers the program or USDA’s TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339.

To file a program discrimination complaint, a Complainant should complete a Form AD-3027, USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form which can be obtained online at: <https://www.usda.gov/sites/default/files/documents/USDA-OASCR%20P-Complaint-Form-0508-0002-508-11-28-17Fax2Mail.pdf>, from any USDA office, by calling (866) 632-9992, or by writing a letter addressed to USDA. The letter must contain the complainant’s name, address, telephone number, and a written description of the alleged discriminatory action in sufficient detail to inform the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights (ASCR) about the nature and date of an alleged civil rights violation. The completed AD-3027 form or letter must be submitted to USDA by:

1. mail:

U.S. Department of Agriculture  
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights  
1400 Independence Avenue, SW  
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; or

2. fax:

(833) 256-1665 or (202) 690-7442; or

3. email:

[program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov)

**This institution is an equal opportunity provider.** “

## Long or Short Version

The statement provides contact information for anyone to file a complaint of discrimination directly with USDA. Depending on your publication you may use the full version or short version. If the partner agency uses the full version the font size may be smaller than the rest of the publication, but it must be readable. Please note the use of the full nondiscrimination statement is preferred. The full version is available on the FNS website: <https://www.fns.usda.gov/civil-rights/usda-nondiscrimination-statement-other-fns-programs>. While the statement or link does not need to be on each page of the website or social media, it must be included on the home page of the program information.

After the site has given significant effort to ensure the full statement is used and the material is too small, the following statement may be used instead, “**This institution is an equal opportunity provider**”. The short version must be in a font size no smaller than the font size used in the publication. The short version may not be used in place of the long statement on client rights documents (such as an application).

NEIFB website example:



# Contact Information

For further questions on TEFAP/USDA and Civil Rights regulations please contact your food bank representative. If you need current FY TEFAP forms or Civil Rights training please find these at <https://www.neifb.org/agency-resources>

For Food Pantries, Mobile Food Pantries and Community Meals contact the following representatives:

- [Lainey Bahe \[Lbahe@neifb.org\]](mailto:Lbahe@neifb.org)  
Community Programs Coordinator
- [Tia Gutierrez \[Tgutierrez@neifb.org\]](mailto:Tgutierrez@neifb.org)  
Community Programs Manager

For School Pantries contact the following representatives:

- [Alex Olson \[Aolson@neifb.org\]](mailto:Aolson@neifb.org)  
Childrens Programs Coordinator
- [Katelyn Steen \[Ksteen@neifb.org\]](mailto:Ksteen@neifb.org)  
Childrens Programs Manager