

FOOD PANTRY STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES

Included here are many ideas on what to include in your written standard operating procedures.

Take what you need from the document and add your pantry specifics as needed.

Name of pantry manager

Pantry address

Phone number

Signature of pantry manager, with date

General information about the pantry:

- Pantry mission
- Pantry activities: food bags, backpack program, shelter
- Dates of operation: 1st Monday after the 1st Thursday, 10am-1230pm
- Emergency assistance: case-by-case basis under special circumstances (recently left shelter, house fire, lost job)

How the pantry is organized:

- 501(c)3 status: as an independent organization or under an umbrella organization (like a church)
- Expectation for volunteers and any managerial positions
- Clients must live in xx county. A client (or client household) may only receive services every 30 days.
- Description of what each client will receive:
 - Same for all clients
 - Based on family size (descriptions of 1-2, 3-4, 5+ individuals)

Volunteer education:

- How often and how you update the volunteers on new information
- New volunteer information
- Sign-in sheet (with location)
- Date and location of meetings
- How the pantry operates (pre-pack items, pack as you go, client choice—with full explanations of what the clients receive)
- How to stock (back to front, bottom to top)

Volunteer health and hygiene rules and regulations:

- Do not volunteer if you are sick.
- Here's who to contact if you are sick: name, phone, email
- No food or drink should be open in the pantry.
- Everyone must wash hands at the beginning their volunteer shift, when they change tasks, and after using the bathroom, smoking, and eating.

Recall program:

- How you learn about recalls: from the food bank, from the FDA recall list
- Checking the products: who is responsible, how is the recall carried out
- What happens to them after they have been pulled—where and how to discard

Transportation:

- How food gets from here to there (vehicles, coolers)

Program Participation:

- Food Bank: name of food bank, location, how often the pantry visits, what kinds of foods they get, how the food gets from the food bank to the pantry

- TEFAP: explanation of program, how it works
- SNAP: explanation of program, how it works

Documentation and record keeping

- Weights of donations: how to keep track and where
- Criteria for donation: list of foods to donate, where it comes from
- Traceability: if there is a recall, how to tell the appropriate folks (volunteers, clients)

Pantry operations

It might be good to have a checklist for each section below. Some examples:

1. Preparation for opening the pantry: unlock doors, turn on lights, prepare paperwork, sort food
2. Client check-in: list of information required for clients to receive food (ID, name and address, phone number, signature)
3. Closing pantry: lock pantry doors, fold tables, filing/storage of paperwork, clean/refill bathrooms, sweep floors, break down boxes, clean and sanitize food surfaces (tables, cutting boards), clean/throw out linens/used paper towels, turn up/down AC/heat
4. Donations: when and how to receive donations (which days, who picks up/receives, coolers/freezer blankets, which doors to use, how to check and store each kind of product—meat, dairy, bread, canned items), weighing of food

