



## Food Safety Training Program Overview

Good Shepherd Food Bank and its partner agencies are responsible for following standards of practice that ensure the safe and proper handling of donated food. Regular training of staff and volunteers and physical inspection of food handling practices enables our work to remain focused on the health and safety of the people served by our programs.

### **Agency Requirements**

Agencies should refer to Good Shepherd Food Bank's Agency Contract and to Agency Services staff members for operational food safety requirements. In regards to food safety training, *"The Agency must have at least one staff member or regular volunteer designated as responsible for the safe storage, handling, and preparation of food and certified in food safety by either Good Shepherd Food Bank's Food Safety Program or provide proof of certification from a qualified, professional food safety training agency."* – 2014 Good Shepherd Food Bank of Maine Agency Contract, Section 2(d)

### **Meeting the Requirements**

Good Shepherd Food Bank (GSFB) developed an online training and assessment for **food pantry programs** in 2018. Successful completion of the assessment by at least one program staff or regular volunteer fulfills the Agency Contract training requirement. Upon completion of the assessment, a certificate is emailed to the trainee and a copy is retained on file by GSFB.

**Meal programs**, such as soup kitchens and shelters, require training more specific to food preparation and must submit documentation to GSFB of training by a qualified, professional food safety training organization. Currently approved training programs include the University of Maine Cooperative Extension's [Cooking for Crowds](#) program or ServSafe's [Manager Training](#). Two meal program personnel must complete Cooking for Crowds or one person must complete ServSafe Manager to fulfill the GSFB requirement.

Partner agencies remain in compliance with the food safety training requirement until their food safety training certificate expires (meal programs) or when there are no individuals actively involved with the partner agency who have documented completion of food safety training on file with GSFB (due to staff and volunteer turnover or role changes). The pantry training and assessment content will be updated by GSFB every several years, at which time partner agencies will be required to complete a "refresher" course. Occasionally, earlier refresher course completion may be required in the case of safe food handling noncompliance discovered during agency monitoring.

### **Best Practice**

Agencies are responsible for ensuring that their program staff and volunteers are trained properly in personal hygiene and safe handling of food. It is recommended that in addition to meeting the requirement of having one staff person or volunteer trained, access to GSFB's online food safety training be provided to all staff or volunteers involved with transporting, storing, and distributing donated food on behalf of the program.



# Good Shepherd

FOOD BANK OF MAINE

## New Online Food Safety Training Program - Frequently Asked Questions

**FAQs:** ***Why did GSFb switch from individualized and group trainings to an online format?*** The online format allows for easier access to important information. Rather than coordinating with many partner agencies to meet at a specific location and time every few years, each interested person at each agency will have the flexibility to learn at their own pace without needing to travel. The online training also allows new staff/volunteers to get up to speed quickly without having to schedule a visit by GSFb staff. Additionally, the online assessment allows for instant results, easy retaking of the assessment, automatic certificate generation, and electronic recordkeeping.

***How long does the Food Safety Training (FST) take to complete?*** All together, the five online videos take about an hour to watch. The assessment takes about 15 minutes to complete.

***What should I do if a volunteer doesn't learn or test well through online media?*** The expectation is that each partner agency will be able to find **one** staff or volunteer that can go through the training and take the assessment online. A staff/volunteer who is comfortable with computers can facilitate individual or small group trainings with additional agency volunteers. For staff/volunteers with limited English proficiency in reading and writing, it is recommended that assessment questions be read and discussed aloud to promote understanding and completed together as a small group for successful completion.

***What if one of my staff/volunteers doesn't have an email address for taking the FST assessment?*** Have your staff/volunteer enter your organizational email or the email of someone else associated with the pantry. Their certificate of completion will be sent to the email address provided.

***How can I get certificates for all the staff/volunteers at my agency who completed the assessment?*** Have your staff/volunteers forward you the email containing their certificate.

***When taking the assessment, what should I do if I can't find my organization's name on the list of partner agencies?*** Call GSFb's Agency Services Coordinator at (207) 782-3554 x1120.

***Do I need to send a copy of my certificate of completion to GSFb?*** No, a copy of the certificate should be sent directly to GSFb when you complete the assessment. Keep a copy in your records for future reference.

***What should I do if my staff and volunteers have questions that are not answered through the online food safety training?*** All GSFb Agency Services field staff are trained in food safety. Please reach out to your Agency Services Field Representative or Community Resource Representative with any questions.