

PARTNERING TO END HUNGER



Good Shepherd

FOOD BANK OF MAINE

Food Safety Training Manual and Workbook

Updated: May 2021

Welcome and Thank You

Hello and welcome to Good Shepherd Food Bank of Maine's partner agency food safety training course. As Maine's largest hunger-relief organization, we partner with a network of more than 500 agencies throughout the state to ensure our neighbors who are facing hunger have access to the nutritious foods they need to thrive.

In close partnership with food pantries, meal sites, schools, and healthcare centers across the state, we have grown our annual food distribution by 160 percent over the last decade. Together with community partners, elected officials, and dedicated supporters, we are making meaningful progress in ending hunger and improving the lives of thousands of Mainers. Without your support and willingness to do what it takes, our work would not be possible.

Thank you for being the frontline, thank you for the work that you do day-in and day-out. We could not do our work without you!



Kristen Miale

President of Good Shepherd Food Bank

In this Manual...

- Overview
- Understanding the Importance of Food Safety and the Role We Play
- Transporting and Receiving Products
- Inspecting Products and Food Safety Recalls
- How to Store Food Safely

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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 enable our work to remain focused on the health and safety of the people served by our programs.

Partner Agency Requirements

Agencies should refer to Good Shepherd Food Bank's Agency Contract, Partnership Manual, and Community Resources staff members for operational food safety requirements. In regards to food safety training, "The Agency agrees to undergo training and maintain certification in food safety as required by Good Shepherd Food Bank and in keeping with recommended best practices. Food safety training curriculum not endorsed by Good Shepherd Food Bank requires prior written approval from the Food Bank to be permissible as a substitute training." - Section 2(c)

Meeting the Requirements

Good Shepherd Food Bank of Maine's partner agency food safety training certificate is good for two years. Once you have watched the training videos, you will need to take a knowledge assessment. Upon successful completion of the assessment (70%), a certificate is emailed to the trainee and a copy is retained on file by the Food Bank.

Partner agency food safety training requirements are as follows:

- At least one representative per food pantry must be certified in food safety.
- All transportation drivers must be certified in food safety. This includes volunteers and/or staff making home deliveries and/or transporting food to and from the agency.
- If your agency operates satellite distributions, at least one representative must be certified in food safety and present during the entire distribution.

Meal programs, such as soup kitchens and shelters, require additional training more specific to food preparation and must submit documentation to Good Shepherd Food Bank 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 requirement.

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Food Safety Training Program Overview (cont.)

Meeting the Requirements (cont.)

Partner agencies remain in compliance with the food safety training requirement until their food safety training certificate expires or when there are no individuals actively involved with the partner agency who have documented completion of food safety training on file with the Food Bank (due to staff and volunteer turnover or role changes). Occasionally, earlier refresher course completion may be required in the case of safe food handling non-compliance 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 strongly encouraged that all staff and volunteers participate in Good Shepherd Food Bank's partner agency online food safety training, but it is not required.

Video Links

- Introduction - <https://youtu.be/r87J5itXyf0>
- Understanding the Importance of Food Safety and the Role We Play - <https://youtu.be/DPFKs6BWJ9A>
- Transporting and Receiving Product - https://youtu.be/d_2N4fLJNZ4
- Inspecting Products and Food Safety Recalls - https://youtu.be/KbXKUub_NBko
- How to Store Food Safely - <https://youtu.be/ka0ZjQiB34U>

Knowledge Assessment

Once you have completed this Food Safety Training, you will need to take a knowledge assessment. A score of 70% or better must be achieved in order to receive a valid certificate of completion.

Your food safety certificate will be emailed to you using the email address you entered on the assessment.

Online Food Safety Training Program

Frequently Asked Questions

Why did Good Shepherd Food Bank switch from individualized and group training 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 Food Bank 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?

Altogether, the five online videos take about 20-25 minutes to watch. The assessment takes about 15 minutes to complete.

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.

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 training with additional agency volunteers. For staff and or 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.

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?

Contact your Community Resource Representative.

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Online Food Safety Training Program Frequently Asked Questions (cont.)

Do I need to send a copy of my certificate of completion to the Food Bank?

No, a copy of the certificate will be sent directly to us when you complete the assessment. Keep a copy in your records for future reference.

Have questions not answered through the online training?

All of Good Shepherd Food Bank's Community Resource Representatives are trained in food safety. Please reach out with any questions.

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Video One: Understanding the Importance of Food Safety and the Role We Play

Food safety is extremely important in the role we play as hunger-fighting organizations, helping our neighbors in need. Many times, visitors fall into the high-risk and vulnerable population. This includes infants, children, the elderly, pregnant women, and individuals who are malnourished, physically disabled, or have compromised immune systems.

In this video, you'll learn hazards that make food unsafe. You play a specific role in keeping food safe by cleaning and sanitizing and preventing cross-contamination.

People who receive support from food banks or agencies trust you to keep them safe. Food-borne illnesses are a major concern for many agencies and are classified as a disease transmitted to people through food. Many hazards can make food unsafe and food-borne illnesses. These illnesses are almost always preventable, as long as precautionary steps are taken.

Environmental Food Hazards

- Chemical Hazards
 - Cleaners, sanitizers, and pesticides
- Physical Hazards
 - Usually occur when objects fall into foods, such as plastics, glass, metal, and bandages.
- Biological Hazards
 - Known as pathogens, such as bacteria, viruses, fungi, and parasites. You cannot see, smell, or taste these pathogens.

One of the easiest ways to maintain food safety is good personal hygiene.

- Use proper handwashing techniques and be sure to post handwashing instructions at your agency near sinks, including in the bathrooms.
- Be sure to use the proper handwashing sink. And, if you don't know the location of the correct sink, please ask.
- Bad personal hygiene is the number one cause of food-borne illness outbreaks.
- Now more than ever, it is extremely important to stay home if you're feeling sick.

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Video One: Understanding the Importance of Food Safety and the Role We Play (cont.)

- Always wear clean clothing and aprons.
- Please visit the Center for Disease Control website for illness signs and symptoms, as well as guidelines and instructions on what to do if you're feeling ill.

Always wash your hands after the following:

- Arriving for your shift
- Using the bathroom
- Touching your hair, face, or clothing
- Sneezing, coughing, or blowing your nose
- Smoking
- Eating or drinking
- Taking out the trash
- Using chemicals
- Touching anything that may contaminate your hands
- Handling raw meat

Cleaning and Sanitizing

Cleaning and sanitizing are some of the best ways to combat unsafe conditions.

- Cleaning removes food and dirt from surfaces.
- Sanitizing reduces pathogens on a surface to safe levels.
- Always follow sanitization packaging directions.
- Keep everything clean.
- Be sure to clean and sanitize anything that comes into contact with food.
- Always allow surfaces to air dry.

Video One:

Understanding the Importance of Food Safety and the Role We Play (cont.)

- Regularly inspect for rodents and insects by checking for nests, droppings, and/or damage to products and packaging.
 - Keep an inspection log.
 - Ensure all potential access points for pests are sealed.
 - If you find evidence of mice or insects, contact a local pest control company.
- Always remove the garbage, recycling, and cardboard as quickly as possible
- Ensure garbage receptacles, both indoors and outdoors, have lids and are always covered

Cross Contamination and Food Allergens

Cross-contamination can occur between foods, equipment, or people.

- Food to food contamination can cause serious illnesses. To avoid food to food contamination:
 - Always store ready to eat foods above raw food in the refrigerator.
 - Never store raw food in the same box as ready to eat food.
 - Store raw food in containers to avoid leakage or spillage.
- Equipment to food contamination may occur when any surface is not clean or sanitized. Avoid this type of contamination by:
 - Regularly cleaning and sanitizing food storage areas.
 - Remember that any item that touches raw meat can contaminate other foods.
 - Never use a box that contained raw meat for distribution.
 - Always allow sanitized areas to air dry.
- People to food contaminations were addressed in the good hygiene portion of this training. Remember, always wash your hands!

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Video One:

Understanding the Importance of Food Safety and the Role We Play (cont.)

Food Allergies and Cross Contact

- Allergens are proteins that cause allergic reactions. Food allergies can be deadly for some.
- Here are eight of the most common food allergies people suffer from:
 - Peanuts
 - Tree Nuts (almonds, walnuts, pecans, etc.)
 - Wheat
 - Milk
 - Soy
 - Eggs
 - Crustacean shellfish (lobster, crabs, shrimp, etc.)
 - Fish

Preventing Cross Contact

- Always be sure to clean and sanitize any surfaces that came into contact with one of the stated allergens.
- If possible, store food with allergens separately to avoid the chance of cross-contact.
- Wash your hands after handling food that contains allergens.
- Clean up any spilled allergens right away.
 - Inspect surrounding area to ensure other products have not been contaminated.
 - If other contaminated product packaging cannot be safely cleaned and sanitized, dispose of product.

Time and Temperature Control

The temperature danger zone is between 41 degrees and 135 degrees Fahrenheit. This is the range when pathogens can grow the fastest on food and creates unsafe food conditions.

Keeping food safely at correct temperatures is imperative for food safety.

- Always ensure food is being held at correct temperatures to avoid the growth of pathogens.
- Do not leave refrigerated or frozen product at room temperature.

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Video One:

Understanding the Importance of Food Safety and the Role We Play (cont.)

- Transport cold products in as little time as possible.
- If transportation of cold storage products is longer than 30 minutes, active cooling should be used.
- Use coolers and thermal blankets to help keep cold products cold during transport.
- Put cold products into cold storage immediately upon returning to the agency.
- Use coolers and thermal blankets to help keep food cold during distribution if it cannot be distributed directly from a refrigerator or freezer.
- Remember it is important to reduce cumulative time product spends in the temperature danger zone: transport to your agency, distribution and handling time, and transportation to patron's home.

Calibrating Thermometers

- Ensure thermometers in all cold storage units are accurate and calibrated regularly.
- Thermometers may lose accuracy over time and/or if they are dropped.
- If you cannot calibrate the thermometer used in a cold storage unit, cross-check it regularly using a bimetallic stem thermometer by placing the stem thermometer in the cold storage unit.
- Be sure to calibrate bimetallic stem thermometers monthly, or, if they are dropped.

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Video Two:

Transporting and Receiving Products

In this segment, we'll be talking about safe ways to transport and receive products from the Food Bank, retailers, and individual donations.

Transporting Product

- Transport food in as little time as possible to ensure proper time-temperature control.
- Use coolers and thermal blankets to keep cold products cold (do not leave refrigerated or frozen products at room temperature).
- The frozen product should remain frozen.
- Do not store raw food over ready-to-eat food during transport.
- Do not store food containing allergens over other product during transport.
- Ensure vehicle is clean, odor-free, and insect-free.
- Clean all transportation vehicles regularly.
- Do not use a vehicle that was used to transport garbage.
- Do not leave product outside or unsupervised.
- Keep chemicals separate from food.

Receiving Product

Be sure to inspect all deliveries and donations. Only use safe food sources.

- Inspect overall condition of delivery vehicles.
- Check for signs of insects or pests.
- Inspect the condition of the product.
- Check temperatures of cold product.
 - Refrigerated product should be received at 41 degrees Fahrenheit or lower.
 - Frozen product should be received frozen solid; zero degrees Fahrenheit or lower.
 - Cut produce or lettuce should be received at 41 degrees Fahrenheit or lower.
- Do not accept or distribute homemade products as you do not know the conditions in which they were prepared.

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Video Two: Transporting and Receiving Products (cont.)

First Expired, First Out (FEFO)

Implementation of a food inventory system is one of the easiest ways to combat food safety issues.

- Check all code dates (see the section on Inspecting Product for more information on code dates) as the product is received and ensure that your inventory is organized in a way that allows product expiring first to be given out first.
- Date and label all cased product during receiving/inspecting to help easily identify when the product should be distributed by.
- Regularly go through inventory to ensure the product is not distributed past an acceptable safe date. Refer to the Food Keeper Guide for more information on how long the product is good for beyond their code dates.

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Video Three:

Inspecting Product and Food Safety Recalls

In this segment, we'll be talking about safe ways to inspect products and what you should do if there's a food safety recall.

Code Dates

There are three common types of code dates on food products and most products are still safe to eat past these dates. Refer to the Food Keeper Guide for more information on how long food is good beyond the printed dates (code dates).

Some products also have a packing or manufacturing date that is used by manufacturers for tracking and recalls. It is important to note, baby food and infant formula cannot be distributed beyond their printed code date.

- Sell-by Date: tells a store how long to display the product for sale.
- Use by: the last date recommended for the product while at peak quality.
- Best-by or best if used by: recommended for best flavor or quality.

Inspecting Product

Inspecting any product, whether from the Food Bank, retailers, or individual donations, is imperative to food safety.

Below are a few examples of when to dispose of product that you may have in your agency.

When to dispose of canned product:

- Severe dents in the seams, top rim, or bottom rim
- Deep dents in the sides that do not allow cans to be stacked
- Bulging or swollen cans
- Rust or soil that cannot be wiped off
- Cans without labels or labels that are unreadable
- Holes in can
- Visible signs of leakage
- Mold or watermarks
- Dates past the acceptable safe date

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Video Three: Inspecting Product and Food Safety Recalls (cont.)

When to dispose of boxed and bagged product:

- Signs of insects or pests, such as droppings, gnaw marks, eggs, or holes
- Boxes and bags that are not sealed
- Inner packaging ripped, torn, or not sealed
- Missing labels or unreadable labels
- Mold or watermarks
- Dates past the acceptable safe date

When to dispose of jarred and bottle product:

- Lids/caps that are broken, swollen, dented, rusted, or not sealed (products with an unbroken inner seal are ok)
- Signs of leakage
- Broken jars or bottles
- Missing labels or unreadable labels
- Mold or watermarks
- Dates past the acceptable safe date
- Foreign objects or mold inside the container
- Mold or dirt under the lid
- Signs of insects or pests, such as droppings, gnaw marks, eggs, or holes
- Discoloration of product
- Unusual separation of product

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Video Three: Inspecting Product and Food Safety Recalls (cont.)

When to dispose of produce:

- Severely bruised
- Mold, rot, or bad odors
- Skin not intact
- Cut produce and cut lettuce above 41 degrees Fahrenheit
- Signs of insects or pests, such as droppings, eggs, or insect bodies

When to dispose of frozen meat:

- Punctured or torn packaging
- Bad odors
- A green tinge to meat
- Dates past the acceptable safe date for frozen meat (see Food Keeper Guide for more information)

Food Safety Recalls

- Check the USDA and FDA websites regularly for product recalls.
 - USDA Food Safety and Inspection Service - <https://www.fsis.usda.gov/recalls>
 - FDA Recalls, Market Withdrawals, and Safety Alerts - <https://www.fda.gov/safety/recalls-market-withdrawals-safety-alerts>
- Check your inventory to see if the recalled product was or is in stock.
- If you have recalled a product in your inventory, follow disposal and reporting guidelines associated with the recall.
 - Contact patrons to advise of recall.
- Keep all recalls on file for at least six months to assist with donations and food drive inspections.

Video Four: Storing Food Safely

In this video, we'll be covering how to store food safely. This includes dry food storage and cold food storage general guidelines.

Dry Storage General Guidelines

To ensure food is being handled safely, best practices are listed below.

- Always store food in areas designated for food.
- Only use containers that are meant for food storage.
- Store food 6 inches off the floor and away from the walls.
- Store food in a cool, dry location that is protected from freezing.
- Store grains and cereals, etc. in such a way to protect against rodents or insects.
- Regularly check for signs of pests or insects and keep a log.
- Regularly clean storage areas.
- Use a dehumidifier if there is a musty smell or condensation.
- Always store chemicals away from food and never on shelving above food.
- Do not store food near heat-producing devices, non-insulated water pipes, water heaters, ovens, forced air vents, furnaces, etc.
- Do not store food in direct sunlight.
- Ensure food storage areas have locked or limited access to approved volunteers and staff only.
- Regularly check the product for signs of spoilage or damage.
- Always rotate inventory first expired, first-out (FEFO).
- Never store the product at a residential location.
- All storage locations must be pre-approved and monitored by Good Shepherd Food Bank prior to food being stored at that location.

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Video Four: Storing Food Safely (cont.)

Cold Storage General Guidelines

To ensure food is being handled safely, best practices are listed below.

- Store refrigerated product at 41 degrees Fahrenheit or lower (this includes cut produce or cut lettuce).
- Do not allow cold product to sit in the Temperature Danger Zone between 41 degrees and 135 degrees Fahrenheit.
- Keep frozen food frozen solid; zero degrees Fahrenheit or lower.
- Do not thaw frozen meat, as patrons may refreeze not knowing it was previously thawed.
- Keep a thermometer in every cold storage unit.
- Record temperatures using a temperature log as often as you are at the agency and retain temperature logs for at least two years.
- Clean, sanitize, and defrost cold storage units regularly.
- Always store ready-to-eat food above raw food in the refrigerator.
- Always store allergens below ready-to-eat foods in the refrigerator.
- Use coolers and thermal blankets during distribution for items needing cold storage if you cannot distribute directly from a refrigerator or freezer.
- Be sure to allow for proper ventilation in refrigerators and freezers. Do not block vents or overfill units.
- Maintain inventory control in all cold storage units to ensure first expired product is the first product distributed (FEFO).
- Never store product at a residential location.
- All storage locations must be pre-approved and monitored by Good Shepherd Food Bank prior to food being stored at that location.

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Conclusion

In addition to this food safety training, be sure to meet any applicable local, state, and federal health and safety requirements regarding the safe and proper handling of donated products and foods.

Thank you for watching all four videos in Good Shepherd Food Bank of Maine's Food Safety training course.

You will now take a knowledge assessment quiz and must get a score of 70 percent or above in order to receive your certificate of completion. This certificate will be emailed to you using the email address you enter on the assessment.

Thank you, again, for your attention and commitment to food safety!

Contact Information

Visit our website to find your Community Resource Representative's contact information.

www.gsfb.org/partner-agency/#contact-staff

AUBURN DISTRIBUTION CENTER

3121 Hotel Road

P.O. Box 1807

Auburn, ME 04211

T: (207) 782-3554

F: (207) 782-9893

HAMPDEN DISTRIBUTION CENTER

11 Penobscot Meadow Dr.

Hampden, ME 04444

WWW.FEEDINGMAINE.ORG

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