



United States  
Department of  
Agriculture



## What is TEFAP?

TEFAP stands for “The Emergency Food Assistance Program” and is a federal food distribution program that helps supplement the diets of low-income Americans, including elderly people, by providing them with emergency food assistance at no cost. Through TEFAP, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) purchases a variety of nutritious, high-quality foods, and makes those items available to State Distributing Agencies, such as food banks. Local organizations, such as food pantries, soup kitchens, and other emergency feeding organizations, distribute USDA foods to eligible recipients for household consumption or to use them to prepare and serve meals in a congregate setting.

State agencies—often state departments of health and human services, agriculture, or education—determine program eligibility rules and allocations of aid to feeding organizations. The amount of food each state receives is based on the number of unemployed persons and the number of people with incomes below the poverty level in the state. TEFAP is administered at the Federal level by Food and Nutrition Services (FNS), an agency of USDA. TEFAP is typically amended and reauthorized through Farm Bills.

## What are the eligibility rules to participate in the TEFAP program?

Under broad federal guidelines, each state sets eligibility rules for individuals and households participating in TEFAP. Eligibility rules differ for organizations distributing commodities directly to households (food pantries) and organizations providing prepared meals (soup kitchens).

For organizations providing prepared meals, there are no set income standards for individuals; however, these organizations must predominantly serve persons in need. For organizations distributing commodities directly to households (food pantries), states must develop income-based standards for households receiving foods directly. States may also create other eligibility rules for households' receipt of TEFAP foods, such as residency requirements within the state.

The state of Oklahoma has implemented these eligibility rules:

- Household incomes at or below 200% of poverty level, which is to be self-declared.
- Residency in Oklahoma (length of residency cannot be a criterion), which is to be self-declared.
- Total number of individuals in household.
- Sign annual TEFAP Intake Form to confirm eligibility for USDA food distribution

## How does my organization apply to distribute USDA Commodities?

- Talk with your Community Connections Manager
- Be a Regional Food Bank partner for a minimum of six months
- Complete a USDA Pre-Award Questionnaire
- Complete a USDA-TEFAP Agreement

## What is required with the TEFAP program?

- Post green "And Justice for All" poster for client visibility (*also required by Regional Food Bank*)
- Post Federal Poverty Income Guidelines for client visibility
- Post Non-Discrimination Statement for client visibility
- Post Written Notice of Beneficiary Rights in a visible location
- Complete annual civil rights training for all volunteers and staff
- Complete annual food safety training for all volunteers and staff (*also required by Regional Food Bank*)
- Maintain Temperature Logs (*also required by Regional Food Bank*)
- Maintain Pest Control Logs (*also required by Regional Food Bank*)
- Label TEFAP-USDA items as "USDA" in both warehouse and on pantry shelves
- Report losses/damaged USDA items back to Regional Food Bank's Customer Service team at 405-600-3152
- Have clients complete USDA intake paperwork (annual application each July and acknowledgement of with each distribution)
- Maintain all paperwork for four years (*also required by Regional Food Bank*)
- Host DHS onsite visit once every four years

## How are USDA caseloads assigned and allocated?

- Caseloads are determined by the both the number of individuals (or meals) served monthly and Feeding America's Service Area target for the County.
- Caseloads are allocated by month and then evenly split amongst the number of deliveries within a month
  - o *For example:* if you receive 8 cases of USDA product each month and have two (2) deliveries per month, you will be able to order 4 cases of any USDA item, per order. (4 cases x 2 deliveries = 8 total cases/month)
- With your USDA case allocation, you are eligible to order that number of cases for ANY/EVERY USDA item available in inventory.
  - o *For example:* if there are 36 individual USDA items in inventory, you can order 4 cases of all 36 USDA items (if you want all 36 items)
- Order USDA items only in amounts that can be used or distributed to households within one month (30 days)



USDA (And Justice for All)



Example of Income Guidelines Posted



Example of Food Label



Example of USDA label in warehouse



Example of USDA label on pantry shelf