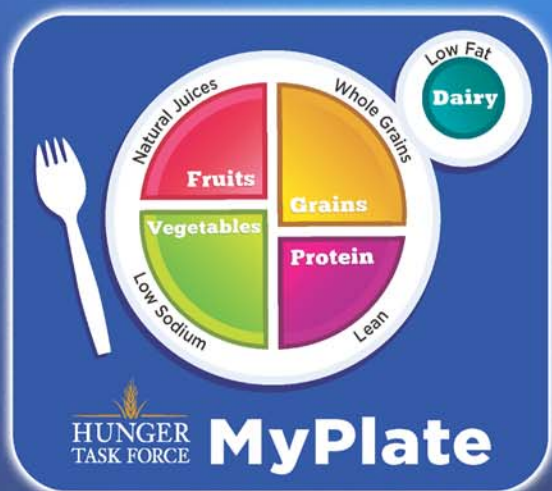




STANDARDS OF EXCELLENCE

OPERATIONAL GUIDE
FOR
EMERGENCY FOOD ORGANIZATIONS

2018



HUNGER TASK FORCE
FREE & LOCAL



STANDARDS OF EXCELLENCE

SIGNATURE PAGE

I have read the entire Hunger Task Force Standards of Excellence agreement.

I understand the responsibilities contained herein and hereby accept and promise to honor and comply with all policies and procedures contained within the Standards of Excellence, including, but not limited to, the careful and timely maintenance of proper records, providing qualified assistance, and the importance of meeting all established criteria.

Adherence to the Standards of Excellence assures that someone in need of emergency food can receive food on the day they need it and in the neighborhood where they live. The supply of emergency food provided will be of nutritional value and will respect household size, diet, religion, culture, personal preference and living circumstances.

This agreement shall become effective as of the date of signing. A copy of this signature page shall be as effective as the original.

Emergency Food Outlet Name: _____

Food Bank Director, Hunger Task Force

Date

Emergency Food Outlet Manager

Date

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Introduction

Hunger Task Force is a nonprofit organization with a mission to end hunger.

Hunger Task Force believes that every person has the right to adequate food obtained with dignity. Hunger Task Force works to prevent hunger and malnutrition by providing healthy and nutritional food to people in need today and by promoting social policies to achieve food security tomorrow.

Locally founded, locally funded and locally run, Hunger Task Force has operated a food bank since 1977. Hunger Task Force is unique because it never charges charities for food. Qualified food pantries, soup kitchens and homeless shelters receive an effective guarantee of a stable supply of healthy and nutritious foods delivered directly to their door. Hunger Task Force requires that these organizations serve all people, provide healthy foods, operate consistently and be accountable. These are our *Standards of Excellence*.

Adherence to these *Standards of Excellence* assures that someone in need of emergency food can receive food on the day that they need it and in the neighborhood where they live. The supply of emergency food given will respect household size, diet, religion, culture, personal preference and living circumstances. The Standards of Excellence also assures uniformity of service throughout the county, from intake interview through receipt of food, and including the quality, nutritional content and quantity of food received. Please refer to Food Security Continuum (Appendix 1)

Hunger Task Force strives to achieve its mission through the goals set forth in the strategic plan which defines and directs our work:

1. To provide nutritious food to people in need through direct service programs.
 2. To serve as an anti-hunger leader in Wisconsin.
 3. To reduce childhood hunger in Milwaukee.
 4. To develop the human, financial and technical resources necessary to support and promote our mission and programs.
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Qualified Local Providers

Hunger Task Force targets distribution of supplies of food to qualified local providers that share our mission of providing free nutritious food to the hungry. These network service points include emergency food pantries, soup kitchens and homeless shelters, which are defined as follows:

Emergency Food Pantry: Service points that provide an ongoing supply of groceries, usually once a month, for people whose income is not sufficient to meet their needs. Included are sites that provide enough food for an entire balanced meal or series of meals and those that provide a supplemental supply of groceries. Some sites deliver food to people whose disabilities or illnesses make it difficult for them to leave home.

Soup Kitchen: Network service points offered by churches, restaurants and other organizations that provide meals in a central location for people who lack the resources needed to buy and prepare food. The food may be distributed to people who line up for the meal or may be served to people seated in a dining hall setting. Participants rarely need to establish eligibility for the service.

Homeless Shelter: Programs usually sponsored by community organizations or coalitions that provide temporary shelter (usually three days to two weeks) for homeless people, generally in dormitory-style facilities with very little privacy. Most community shelters offer support services which may include counseling, advocacy, referrals and help with future plans. Shelters also enforce house rules including curfews and mandatory household chores. Participation in religious activities is either optional or not a part of the meal service.

Hunger Task Force also serves low-income seniors by supplying Senior Meal sites and Senior Subsidized Permanent Housing with pre-packed commodity boxes called Stockboxes. These service points are defined as follows:

Senior Meal Site: Sites that provide hot meals on a regular basis for elderly, adults with disabilities or other targeted populations who may be at risk for nutritional deficits without assistance and who can profit from an opportunity to socialize with others. Congregate meals are often combined with recreational, educational and social activities.

Subsidized Permanent Housing: Privately owned rental housing that is made available to low-income older adults, people with disabilities and/or special populations at reduced rates based on a contract between HUD or the state housing authority and the property owner. Also included are low-cost or below market rate housing that is operated or sponsored by religious or charitable organizations for the benefit of low-income older adults, people with disabilities and/or other special populations. Included in this definition are housing developments that are owned and managed by local housing authorities and rented to income and program eligible older adults and people with disabilities.

Criteria for Network Membership

Emergency Food Pantries, Soup Kitchens, Homeless Shelters, Senior Meal Sites and Subsidized Permanent Housing programs interested in participating as qualified local providers must meet established criteria.

- Non-Profit Status: All service points must be operated by a not-for-profit organization, preferably one with experience operating an emergency food program. Exceptions include Housing Authorities, units of local government and certain privately owned rental properties providing subsidized housing.
- Free Access to Food: All food must be distributed at no cost. People receiving the food cannot be made to participate in a program of social work, employment or worship. No fees can be charged to a recipient for food. Food cannot be exchanged or bartered, either with service clientele, other eligible outlets or the community at large.

Civil Rights: All service points must comply with Federal and State Civil Rights Compliance Requirements for profit and nonprofit entities. The Civil Rights Compliance Plan Requirements include Affirmative Action, Equal Opportunity and Limited English Proficiency. Notices and complaint procedures must be posted in a public area of the program facility that is frequented by the clientele. Program staff and volunteers must be trained in civil rights topics annually. Please refer to “And Justice For All” Civil Rights Policy Poster in multiple languages (Appendix 16-18).

- Confidentiality: All service points must ensure confidentiality of service. Staff and volunteers must be trained on the confidentiality statement. Confidentiality standards must be reflected in the set-up of interview areas and use of client registers and client files. Please refer to Confidentiality Policy (Appendix 19b).
 - Access: Food must be available when needed. All service points must identify and post service hours, frequency of assistance and a targeted service area. During service hours, food must be made available to walk-in clients with emergency food needs.
 - Relevance: All pantries are responsible for distributing at minimum a 2-3 day supply of emergency food to people eligible for assistance. Food should be relevant to household size, dietary, religious and cultural needs and reflect the nutrients required by Hunger Task Force MyPlate initiative. Homeless Shelters and Soup Kitchens are responsible for offering an adequate and nutritious breakfast, lunch and/or supper. Please refer to HTF MyPlate Nutritional Policy (Appendix 2).
 - Accountability: An agreement of operational requirements will exist between the sites and Hunger Task Force that outlines accountability and reporting measures. All sites are responsible for record keeping, inventory management and required financial reporting.
 - Minimum Weekly Service Requirements: Pantries will be required to operate two separate shifts of two hours each shift per week for a minimum of eight - two hour shifts per month – for a total of sixteen operating hours per month. Soup kitchens will be required to operate to provide a minimum of three meals per week. Days and hours of shifts will be determined in response to community need to increase service levels for the residents of the service area. Holiday closures must be coordinated to maintain service levels to the service area and may require replacement or
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alternative operating hours within the same week as to not reduce weekly minimum hours of service.

Minimum Signage Requirements: Permanent signage containing site name, address, proper entrance identified for service, hours of operations and information to locate services when site is closed (i.e., phone number for 211 Impact) must be posted in multiple languages. The languages requiring posting are determined by population of service area.

- Commercial Grade Equipment for Food Storage and Preparation: Onsite freezers and coolers at pantries, soup kitchens and large-scale homeless shelters must be of commercial grade to provide maximum efficiencies and ensure food safety and quality. Shelving and kitchen supplies utilized must also meet food safety standards. Commercial grade equipment on loan from Hunger Task Force must be insured for its replacement value with proof of said insurance provided annually.
- Publicly Recognize Partnership: Sites and their sponsoring organizations must credit their relationship with Hunger Task Force in brochures, newsletters and annual reports utilizing a Hunger Task Force approved logo. Emergency Food Outlets will mention their relationship with Hunger Task Force as supplier of free food to the hungry. The official Hunger Task Force logo and the words “Supported by” must be included in all websites, printed items and publications. Official Hunger Task Force logos are available from the Food Department staff.
- Succession Plan: A written plan, including cross training to ensure continuation of service during vacations, holiday breaks and in the event of the absence of key personnel and volunteers, must be developed and available to site staff and on file with Hunger Task Force. This plan requires updating as needed with adjusted operational assignments and procedures with revised version submitted to HTF. Please refer to Basic Succession Plan Outline (Appendix 24)

Service Area Rating

Annually, Hunger Task Force conducts an assessment of need for emergency food within Milwaukee County. This assessment includes wide ranging considerations from the location, program type and operating hours of existing Hunger Task Force supported food pantries, soup kitchens, homeless shelters and senior service sites. Additional considerations incorporate numerous items such as annual service ratings, organizational capacity, availability of public transportation, and geographical barriers, among others.

Development of new or expanded service point is considered based upon the level of poverty in a neighborhood and the capacity of existing programs to meet localized need. Significant effort is made to build upon existing, established infrastructure and to avoid duplication of services and resulting in resource waste. Hunger Task Force teaches “best practices” for site operation to staff and volunteers, awards grant funds and equipment in order to help meet the Standards of Excellence.

Hunger Task Force MyPlate Initiative

MyPlate was first developed by the United State Department of Agriculture. MyPlate depicts the proportions of foods needed for a healthy diet. It helps individuals find their personal healthy eating style. Hunger Task Force MyPlate was adapted for use within food pantries.

Hunger Task Force MyPlate teaches individuals to build balanced meals including all five food groups; fruits, vegetables, grains, protein and dairy. Hunger Task Force MyPlate encourages individuals to use the MyPlate design as a template for choosing foods to build healthy meals inside food pantries. Our goal is to encourage individuals to optimize healthy eating practices.

In addition to identifying the five main food groups, there are several key teaching points:

- Within each food group emphasize food choices that are low in added fat, sodium and sugar, and include whole grains whenever possible.
- Half of the plate should be filled with fruits and vegetables.
- Dairy includes milk, cheese and yogurt.
- All five food groups are equally important. MyPlate depicts proportions and some food groups require more servings to meet daily nutrient needs

Specifics on food groups:

Fruits: *Make half your plate fruits & vegetables at all meals.*

Fruits are a good source of essential nutrients like vitamin C, fiber and potassium. Hunger Task Force MyPlate emphasize fruits canned in 100% natural juices, fruit juice that is labeled 100% fruit juice on the bottle or canned fruits labeled no sugar added or unsweetened.

Vegetables: *Make half your plate fruits & vegetables at all meals*

Vegetables have the essential vitamins, minerals and dietary fiber needed to help regulate our blood cholesterol, maintain healthy blood sugar levels and feel full for a longer period of time. The Hunger Task Force MyPlate emphasizes canned vegetables, bottled vegetable juice and jars of spaghetti sauce labeled no salt added and low or no sugar added.

Grains: *Make half your grains whole grains.*

Whole grains include the grain's bran, or outer shell. The bran provides extra B vitamin, minerals and fiber. These added nutrients help maintain a healthy digestive system and reduce our risk of heart disease. The Hunger Task Force MyPlate emphasizes breakfast grains like cereal, oatmeal and breakfast bars labeled with no sugar added, whole wheat, whole grain or multigrain on the packaging. Brown rice, wild rice and whole wheat or whole grain pasta are encouraged.

Protein: *Choose a mix of animal- & plant-based protein.*

There are two different categories of protein, animal- and plant-based. These proteins are important for muscle growth, integrity and repair. Hunger Task Force MyPlate emphasizes animal-based protein foods such as canned or frozen chicken, tuna or other meats that are lean and low in sodium. Hunger Task

Force MyPlate also emphasizes plant-based protein foods such as peanut butter, nut butters, lentils and canned/dried beans that are lean and low in sodium as well.

Dairy: *Choose low fat & fat free dairy foods*

Dairy foods are a good source of calcium, vitamin D and protein needed to maintain healthy bones. The Hunger Task Force MyPlate emphasizes low fat or fat free dairy foods such as fresh or UHT boxed milk, yogurt and cheese.

Condiments:

Add flavor to meals and snacks. Salsa, mustard, spices and salt-free seasonings are encouraged by the Hunger Task Force MyPlate.

Hunger Task Force MyPlate excludes convenience foods and snack foods that contain unhealthy fat, sodium and sugar.

Food Allocation (Pack-A-Bag-Strategy)

Hunger Task Force MyPlate Pack-A-Bag strategy aligns with the 2015-2020 Dietary Guidelines for Americans (DGAs). Our goal was to ensure that households of 1 to 8 members would be offered adequate servings (cups, ounces and/or ounce-equivalents) required from each food group for a 3 day period.

Outreach & Education

The Hunger Task Force MyPlate provides unique opportunities for nutrition education with both donors and recipients of food.

MyPlate Monthly

MyPlate Monthly highlights one food group in order to develop awareness of a specific Hunger Task Force MyPlate food category each month. For food donors MyPlate Monthly identifies high need food items. For recipients of food MyPlate Monthly informs individuals about the health benefits associated with the MyPlate specific foods, providing people with easy recipes. Samplings of food items corresponding to each MyPlate Monthly occur at pantry sites each month and allow for one-on-one exchanges of nutritional information.

A Preferred Food Items list is based on the Hunger Task Force MyPlate food model. The public is encouraged to donate items low in fat, sodium and added sugar. (Please refer to Hunger Task Force MyPlate Preferred Food Items Appendix 3) The following is a list of preferred nonperishable items to donate:

- Fruits canned in own juice or 100% fruit juice, including peaches or pears
 - Vegetables canned in low sodium, including green beans and corn
 - Whole Grains, including brown rice, oatmeal and no sugar-added breakfast cereal
 - Protein including canned chicken, peanut butter or beans
-

- Dairy that is low-fat, including 1% boxed milk and almond milk
- Snacks including granola, breakfast bars or nuts
- Condiments including salsa, spices and salt-free seasonings

Nutritious Foods That Help

Hunger Task Force supplies qualified local providers with a combination of government commodities, donated and purchased food. Foods are allocated to each site based upon classification, the number of people served in the prior month and federal nutritional and MyPlate guidelines. Food pantries are required to provide a 2-3 day supply of emergency food according to the recommended food allocation or “How to Pack a Bag” strategy. Soup kitchens and homeless shelters provide emergency assistance by serving a healthy breakfast, lunch and/or supper. Senior service sites provide a supplemental box of commodity foods once monthly.

USDA commodities are healthy canned, staple, frozen and at times fresh foods of top quality. These foods are generally abundant in supply, assuring a fairly consistent supply of food. Recipient organizations must meet stringent requirements for fair program administration and safe food handling.

Donated food is collected through food drives and corporate contributions. Foods are primarily canned and staple and vary seasonally in terms of amount, type and quality. Donated food is sorted at Hunger Task Force by volunteers and must be sorted and inspected again at the service point level to ensure quality control.

Purchased foods are foods that Hunger Task Force buys to further assure stability and consistency in the food supply. Hunger Task Force purchases food with money donated by contributors. Infant formula, breakfast cereal, milk and fruits are often purchased when commodities or donated foods are in short supply.

Infant formula is provided in constant supply by Hunger Task Force to Infant Needs pantries. Approximately one third of partner pantry sites are designated as Infant Needs Pantries. These sites are strategically located throughout the county so this special service can be provided nearby to families in need. Many other partner pantries stock their own supplies of infant formula and food. Infant food donated to Hunger Task Force is distributed as well.

Fresh and perishable foods are available through the government commodity programs, donor relationships and through the Hunger Task Force Farm on a seasonal basis. A partner site’s receipt of fresh and perishable foods is predicated upon-compliance with all the *Standards of Excellence*.

Handling Food Safely

Food Ordering

Site Managers at individual pantries, soup kitchens or shelters are responsible for coordinating food selection and delivery with Hunger Task Force. Site Managers order food on a routine basis through an online menu system and are free to choose foods that complement current supplies or client needs. Sites receive an allocation of food in each category based on their prior month's service statistics. Emergency food orders can be filled if supplies run low due to increased community need.

Stockboxes are delivered monthly at Senior Meal sites and Subsidized Permanent Housing sites.

Food Delivery and Receipt

Hunger Task Force delivers food directly to partner sites free of charge. Hunger Task Force coordinate the frequency and timing of these deliveries to match storage limitations at individual sites and the availability of their volunteers to off load supplies.

Site Managers are expected to do the following:

- meet delivery vehicles.
- ensure access to buildings.
- organize and supervise staff or volunteers to offload and store food in a secure manner.
- attest to the accuracy of the delivery by signing a receipt.
- ensure delivery areas are free of any obstacle that may hinder a safe delivery, particularly snow and ice at the time of a scheduled delivery.

Food Storage

Once food is delivered, Site Managers are responsible for storage and inventory management. Areas where food is stored must be clean, free of pests and toxins and secure (locked when not in use). Food must be stored off the floor and away from walls. Perishable or frozen foods must be kept refrigerated or frozen at proper temperatures until distributed. Thermometers must be placed inside all refrigerators, freezers and dry storage areas to ensure appropriate temperatures of all food in storage. Please refer to Food Safety Log (Appendix 5) and Food Safety At A Glance (Appendix 4).

Inventory Control and Product Monitoring

Partner sites must complete cleaning schedules, product inspection logs, pest control service and temperature logs weekly and must maintain these records on file. To reduce waste and ensure access to food community-wide, Hunger Task Force requires that each site report on its inventory status every month. No food product may be kept in stock more than six months. Sites should implement a stock rotation method such as First-In / First-Out (FIFO) to monitor aging product and reduce excess inventory. This requires case goods to be dated on delivery. Sites should inspect food monthly for signs of infestation or spoilage. Please refer to TEFAP Commodity Inventory Report (Appendix 11).

Any product loss should be reported immediately to your Site Developer upon discovery to safeguard the entire network of sites receiving food. Site staff should not destroy spoiled or damaged foods

without permission unless they pose an immediate health hazard as additional inspections of the product may be required by local state or federal officials.

No foods can be repackaged unless the site has a valid food handling license and a clean room. Federal commodities can never be repackaged. Stockboxes cannot be disassembled.

An **Inventory Calculator**, provided by Hunger Task Force, is an invaluable tool for systematic management of food inventory. This proactive tool can determine the number of individuals that can be served from the amounts of existing inventory. Comprehensive inventory management practices will also aid in facilitating food recalls. Please refer to the Inventory Calculator Management Tool (Appendix 12 and 13).

Food Recalls

A formal procedure for handling food recalls must be adopted and implemented by all partner sites. Site managers will receive notification of any recalls of food product supplied by Hunger Task Force personnel. Since partner sites are required to generate their own food supplies (in addition to food supplied by Hunger Task Force) through donations or purchases, site management personnel are responsible for receiving formal recall notices by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA). Utilizing First In, First Out (FIFO) practices will aid in determining which recipients potentially, if any, received recalled food.

Determining Need of Individuals

The following are income guidelines developed by the USDA to determine eligibility for federal commodities. Please refer to TEFAP Eligibility & Income Guidelines (Appendix 15) or visit <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/nutrition/tefap/eligibility.htm> for the most current eligibility and income guidelines.

At emergency food pantries, a brief interview is conducted to determine eligibility and need. Hunger Task Force requires that this interview be conducted in a confidential way and records of service be held confidential. Each food pantry should collect only the information necessary to verify eligibility -- income and household size.

Residence within a pantry service area and household size can be verified with the following standard household identification:

For Head of Household:

Current mail such as a utility bill or other official communication

AND

Photo Identification, preferable but not required.

For other adults in the house:

Current official mail at the same address

AND

Photo Identification, preferable but not required.

For Children in the house:

Notice of Decision (lists all residents; this is the best form of identification for everyone in the household)

OR

Birth Certificate (lists parents' names) or Birth Announcement

School Records

Immunization Records

WIC ID card (with parent name only)

The Wisconsin TEFAP Operator's Manual further states that: "Applicants must provide one form of ID or documentation for **each member** of the household **once**. Participants without documentation for one or more members *by the time of their third visit will be limited to a TEFAP food supply matching the number of household members for whom documentation **has** been provided*. (Example: If a participant claims a household of four but provides documents for themselves and two members. At the third visit, TEFAP distribution will be for a household of three, unless or until the participant produces documentation for the fourth household member)." See current Wisconsin TEFAP Operator's Manual for full regulation.

Service to new residents, homeless persons, migrant workers, undocumented or victims of domestic abuse cannot be denied on the basis that identification is not available. Refer to Wisconsin TEFAP Operator's Manual (pages 8-10)

All food must be provided free of charge or obligation. Hunger Task Force supported partner sites cannot require membership, attendance or participation in a program of social work, employment or worship/devotional activities in order to receive food.

Hunger Task Force requires that the supply of food distributed by a pantry reflect the size of the household served and represent breakfast, lunch and dinner. During the interview, specific food needs based upon dietary restrictions, religion, culture, living circumstances and preference should be asked to meet the need while reducing food waste. Client choice is the preferred method of food distribution.

At soup kitchens and homeless shelters prepared meals are served to participants based upon “self-declaration.” The USDA assumes that individuals participating in these programs have declared their need for the meal by attending the meal. No eligibility interview is required under self-declaration. All food must be provided free of charge or obligation. Foods must be healthy and relevant at each meal service. Soup kitchen and homeless shelter menus are reviewed by Hunger Task Force’s Community Network Dietitian to assure that meals served reflect the Hunger Task Force MyPlate initiative and *Standards of Excellence*.

Senior Meal Sites and Subsidized Permanent Housing sites also operate under a self-declaration model for income declaration to receive a Stockbox. However, seniors must show identification and sign for the receipt of each Stockbox. Seniors may appoint a qualified proxy to sign for their Stockbox. Service cannot be denied to new residents, homeless persons, migrant workers, undocumented or victims of domestic abuse. All food must be provided free of charge or obligation.

Providing Qualified Assistance

Qualified Local Providers must adhere to Federal and State law in order to fairly distribute emergency and supplemental foods. Adhere to application procedures and guidelines for collection of household information and documentation. Refer to the Wisconsin TEFAP Outlet Operator’s Manual, pages 7-11 or CSFP Daily Operating Guidelines. Each provider must adopt policies and assure proper administration of daily operations to proper program administration. Hunger Task Force provides samples of compliant policies and trains provider staff and volunteers.

Complaint Procedures

All network partners must show evidence of an established, multi-step Customer Service Procedure that has been adopted by their governing body. The procedure must include steps and contact information for filing a complaint, including Federal or State agencies. The procedure and accompanying “And Justice for All” poster must be posted in conspicuous areas where participants gather and should be translated into common languages spoken by participants. All providers are required to include the USDA non-discrimination statement on printed materials and websites. Please refer to “And Justice for All” poster (Appendix 16).

Short version: *“This institution is an Equal Opportunity Provider.”*

Long version: *“In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, sex, religious creed, disability, age, political beliefs, or*

reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g. Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.), should contact the Agency (State or local) where they applied for benefits. Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, (AD-3027) found online at: http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html, and at any USDA office, or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter 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;

(2) Fax: (202) 690-7442; or

(3) Email: program.intake@usda.gov.

Civil Rights Compliance

All network partners must comply with Federal and State Civil Rights Compliance Requirements for profit and nonprofit entities. The Civil Rights Compliance Plan Requirements include Affirmative Action (Appendix 21), Equal Opportunity (Appendix 21) and Limited English Proficiency (Appendix 19c). Notices and Complaint Procedures must be posted in a public area of the network partner facility that is frequented by the clientele. All site staff and volunteers who come in contact with those served must be trained in civil rights topics annually. Information provided on "And Justice for All" Poster (Appendix 16).

Limited English Proficiency (LEP)

A site must secure access for clients with limited English proficiency. Wisconsin TEFAP Outlet Operator's manual states: ***"All TEFAP outlets must have the capacity to interpret in any language at any time for any participant who speaks English 'less than well,' TEFAP outlets MUST have available access to a telephone interpretation service that can be used as needed. Beyond that requirement, pantries may: hire staff with special interpretation skills or finding qualified persons who are available within a reasonable period of time and can communicate with limited or non-English speaking, speech or hearing-impaired clients at no cost to the client. The program must also provide aid, assistive devices and other reasonable accommodations to the client during the application process, in receipt of services and in the processing of complaints or appeals. Staff and volunteers should be trained in human relations techniques, sensitivity practices to persons with disabilities and unique cultural characteristics. Sites and facilities should be made accessible as appropriate and informational materials should be offered in languages and formats appropriate to the needs of the client population. If a client with limited English proficiency requires information regarding other community services available, please***

contact Hunger Task Force staff to arrange assistance. Please refer to the list of qualified contractors (Appendix 19d); Warshafsky Deck translation tool (Appendix 22); and the *I SPEAK cards* document (Appendix 23).

Confidentiality

Wisconsin Statutes require that participant confidentiality is acknowledged and maintained at all times. Participants seeking food assistance are providing household information that is confidential. Only immediate staff or volunteers should have access to this information. Qualified Local Providers are required to put in place procedures to respect participant confidentiality including maintaining locked files (on premises and in transport), managing sign-in sheets, waiting lists and waiting rooms in a manner that protects individual privacy, and to conduct interviews in private. Staff and volunteers must be trained in the confidentiality statement. The confidentiality statement must also be posted in conspicuous areas where participants gather and should be translated into common languages spoken by participants. Please refer to Confidentiality Policy, LEP Policy, Ethical Policy, etc. (Appendix 19).

Only Personal Identifiable Information (PII) required by an applicant recipient for food services at an EFO can be collected; the PII collected should be controlled with limited access to PII by staff with a business need to view it. PII is to be kept and treated as confidential and not used for any other purposes unless written permission is granted from the recipient. Do not collect or use the Social Security number for any reason. Please refer to Personally Identifiable Information Policy in the Wisconsin TEFAP Outlet Operator's Manual, page 14.

Ethical Conduct and Conflict of Interest

Hunger Task Force strongly encourages Qualified Local Providers to uphold the highest standards of ethical conduct. Employees and volunteers should not use their affiliation with an individual client, or their status as an employee of the provider to initiate, support or engage in activity to achieve personal, financial or sexual benefit either for themselves, their family or some other personal associate. *(A client is defined as any person who is currently receiving, or has received within the past 12 months, a direct service from any Hunger Task Force site or partner affiliate).* Please refer to the Ethical Conduct Policy in multiple languages (Appendix 20).

Providers should adopt a policy and procedure for identifying and managing conflicts of interest. Ethical conduct training should be provided to all volunteers and staff.

Accountability and Reporting Outcomes

Monthly Service Reports

Hunger Task Force allocates and distributes food to providers based on the number of people assisted in the prior month. Hunger Task Force requires that pantries maintain a count of the number of adults, seniors 60+, children and households served each month. Soup Kitchens and Homeless Shelters must record the number of meals served monthly. Senior Meal sites and Permanent Subsidized Housing sites must submit a monthly roster of individuals who received a Stockbox. Thorough and accurate reports are due electronically to Hunger Task Force no later than the fifth of every month (even when the fifth of the month falls on a weekend or holiday). Please refer to Monthly Report Cover Sheets for Meal and Pantry Sites (Appendix 6 and 9), Infant Need Providers Intake Log (Appendix 14), Pantry Clientele Register (Appendix 10), Meals Provider Monthly Meal Log (Appendix 7 and TEFAP Commodities Inventory Report (Appendix 11). Identify any irregularities in individuals served and report irregularities to Hunger Task Force on the Monthly Report Cover Sheet (Appendix 6 & 9)

Registration with 211 Impact

Emergency Food Pantries, Soup Kitchens, Homeless Shelters and Senior Meal sites must register their service with 211 at Impact. Changes to hours of operation or temporary closure for inclement weather or holidays must also be reported to 211. Homeless Shelters and Soup Kitchens are strongly encouraged to establish a disaster plan to respond to extreme community need. Any permanent change to routine operating hours must be reported to Hunger Task Force.

Financial Reporting and Supporting Documentation

Hunger Task Force requires that agency financial control information is submitted annually. An audit, financial statements, a board roster and list of key contacts are required to be placed on file by each provider. Qualified Local Providers receiving grant funds from Hunger Task Force may be required to submit additional reports and cost documentation.

- ✓ Articles of Incorporation and By Laws
- ✓ 501(c)(3) Letter of Determination from Internal Revenue Service
- ✓ Profit and Loss Statement
- ✓ Balance Sheet
- ✓ Most recent organizational audit (if applicable)
- ✓ Most recent Form 990 (if applicable)
- ✓ Current Board of Directors Roster and contact information
- ✓ Limited English Proficiency policy*
- ✓ Confidentiality policy*
- ✓ Non-discrimination policy*
- ✓ Succession Plan
- ✓ Current certificate of insurance coverage

**These written policies can be provided by Hunger Task Force for adoption by the organization's Board of Directors.*

Required Meetings and Trainings

Quarterly Network Meetings for Pantries and Meal Providers

Representatives of network sites are required to attend these regularly scheduled meetings to receive notice of food allocations and sources, funding opportunities, operational or procedural guidelines, modification to government programs, community-wide food & fund drives, service trends and how status of collateral benefit programs may impact the populations served by Qualified Local Providers.

Training Sessions

Hunger Task Force offers a variety of training sessions spanning all aspects of operations of Qualified Local Providers. Some are mandatory such as the Civil Rights Compliance Trainings at the Hunger Task Force main office. Other sessions are specific to the capacity building needs of each individual site and assigned by the Site Developers as needed. These sessions are detailed in the Annual Site Review as Required or Recommended trainings to be completed within that next 12 month period. Other training session topics include Inventory Management, Proper Intake Interview Procedures, Providing Client Choice, Best Customer Service Practices, Succession Plan Implementation, Conflict Resolution, Educating Food Donors and Completing Accurate Monthly Service Reports.

Ongoing Site Monitoring and Annual Review

Ongoing monitoring occurs on numerous occasions throughout the year by Site Developers and Distribution Team members. Each year Hunger Task Force assesses the overall performance of each Qualified Local Provider. Annually, Site Developers and Route Representatives conduct a comprehensive review of the operating practices of each partner site according to the *Standards of Excellence*. An Annual Site Review considers how each provider meets the *Standards of Excellence* and assigns a rating for overall performance: poor, fair, good or excellent. Ratings are based on the various factors of service quality as follows on the next page:

Excellent:
☆☆☆☆

This site provides the highest levels of service in all areas to address the short and long term solutions to hunger and meets all *Standards of Excellence*. Not only does this site institute and maintain consistent operational practices of accountability for equitable distribution of food resources, they implement procedures to promote community services and remove barriers to these services for participants. These sites improve each participant's food security with emergency food *and* connections to existing community services. This site meets or exceeds all *Standards of Excellence*.

- Maintains clean, safe and accessible food storage facilities.
 - Staff and volunteers are trained in and practice safe food handling.
 - Site posts a prominent sign that informs the community of the access to emergency or supplemental food at the site, including site's name and hours of operation of the food service.
 - Site operates three or more days weekly and registered with 211@ Impact.
 - Site has commercial grade refrigerator and freezer equipment, telephone, computer and scanner. Vehicle used to transport food is well maintained.
 - Site orders, receives and stores food deliveries according to "Handling Food Safely" directives.
 - Site staff and volunteers consistently demonstrate respect for client dignity and adhere to ethical conduct standards.
 - Site staff adhere to Confidentiality Standards.
 - Exceeds in its allocation and distribution of food by providing food in excess of the 2-3 day emergency supply. Canned and staple goods are combined with fresh and frozen foods, meeting the Hunger Task Force MyPlate nutrition guide, to supply a household based upon size, diet, religion, culture, living circumstances and preference. (Pantry sites only)
 - Site operates as a Hunger Task Force MyPlate service point.
 - Pantry Site: Food distribution is 100% client choice. (Pantry sites only)
 - Site has adopted Civil Rights, Affirmative Action, Limited English Proficiency, Conflict of Interest and Ethical Conduct Policies and demonstrates evidence of adhering to policy statements through staff training, posted rights/complaint information and translation services.
 - Site provides required electronic reporting on time every month.
 - Site fully complies with Section 504, the ADA and Wisconsin Law. Site has a Policy Statement of Compliance with Americans with Disabilities Act and demonstrates a commitment to providing equal access to employment, service, and activities to persons with disabilities.
 - Site staff are trained and provide support to apply for federal nutrition assistance programs including school meals, summer meals, Stockbox, FoodShare and WIC.
 - Site staff participates in advocacy efforts or are members of *Voices Against Hunger*.
 - Site directly funds staff and/or operations of its emergency or supplemental food program with resources from independent fund raising.
 - Site provides homebound delivery or serves special needs populations in a unique way.
 - Pantry client records are kept orderly, up-to-date and in adherence to commodity program regulations and Hunger Task Force contract.
 - Menus plans and service reflect healthy, nutritious food consisting of food items commonly accepted by the community standards as appropriate foods for the time of day the meal is served. (Meal Providers only)
-

Good:
☆☆☆

This site provides high levels of service in most areas to address the short term and long term solutions to hunger, regularly meeting most of the required *Standards of Excellence*. This site upholds most standards for operational practices of accountability for equitable distribution of food resources and implements efforts to promote some community services and assistance to remove barriers to these services for their clients. These sites offer to improve each household's level of food security temporarily with emergency food, but can provide only limited resources to provide connections for their clients to existing community services. This site meets most of the Standards of Excellence.

- Maintains clean, safe and accessible food storage facilities.
 - Staff and volunteers are trained in and practice safe food handling.
 - Site posts a prominent sign that informs the community of the access to emergency or supplemental food at the site, including site's name and hours of operation of the food service.
 - Site operates a minimum of two days weekly for two hours each day and are registered with 211@ Impact.
 - Site has commercial grade refrigerator and freezer equipment, telephone, computer and scanner. Any vehicle used to transport food is well maintained.
 - Site orders, receives and stores food deliveries according to "Handling Food Safely" directives.
 - Site staff and volunteers consistently demonstrate respect for client dignity and adhere to ethical conduct standards.
 - Site staff adheres to Confidentiality Standards.
 - Meets distribution of food by providing a 2-3 day emergency food supply. Canned and staple goods are combined with fresh and frozen foods, meeting the Hunger Task Force MyPlate nutrition guide, to supply a household based upon size, diet, religion, culture, living circumstances and preference. (Pantry sites only)
 - Pantry site food distribution is partially accomplished through client choice.
 - Site has adopted Civil Rights, Affirmative Action, Limited English Proficiency, Conflict of Interest and Ethical Conduct Policies and demonstrates evidence of adhering to policy statements through staff training, posted rights/complaint information and translation services.
 - Site provides required electronic reporting on time.
 - Site fully complies with Section 504, the ADA and Wisconsin Law. Program has a Policy Statement of Compliance with Americans with Disabilities Act and demonstrates a commitment to providing equal access to employment, service, and activities to persons with disabilities.
 - Site staff are trained and refer applicants to apply for federal nutrition assistance programs including school meals, summer meals, FoodShare Stockbox and WIC.
 - Site directly funds staff and/or operations of its emergency or supplemental food program with resources from independent fund raising.
 - Pantry client records are kept orderly, up-to-date and in adherence to commodity program regulations and Hunger Task Force contract.
 - Menus plans and service reflect healthy, nutritious food consisting of food items commonly accepted by the community standards as appropriate foods for the time of day the meal is served. (Meal Providers only)
-

Fair:
☆☆

This site has not implemented the *Standards of Excellence* and is providing a minimum level of service. This site lacks compliance in one or more significant areas of site operation for food safety, customer service or accountability. The site may lack sufficient volunteer, financial or organizational support to meet emergency food needs in the community.

- Maintains clean food storage facilities.
- Site is open less than 2 days per month for 2 hours per day.
- Site is deficient in one or more aspects of “Handling Food Safely” directive.
- Pantry site meets minimum standard of “How to Pack a Bag” strategy but does not supply fresh or frozen foods regularly.
- Site has not adopted or instituted one or more site integrity policies: Confidentiality, Civil Rights, Affirmative Action, Limited English Proficiency, ADA, Conflict of Interest and Ethical Conduct Policies.
- Site provides required reporting on time every month.
- Site lacks sufficient volunteer, financial, or organizational support to meet its obligations to the community.
- Menus meet minimum standard food items commonly accepted by the community standards as appropriate foods for the time of day the meal is served. (Meal Providers only)

Poor:

This site is on temporary probation with a written plan for improving performance. Site may lack compliance in many areas, including food receipt and storage, accountability and service. Client rights and safe food handling may be so significantly compromised that its affiliation with Hunger Task Force is at risk of being terminated.

- Does not meet the majority of the *Standards of Excellence*
- Compliance concerns may be so significant that its affiliation with Hunger Task Force is at risk of being terminated.

Hunger Task Force has established a goal that 90% or more of the Qualified Local Providers will be rated good or excellent. Sites rated poor or fair will receive direct support and an infusion of resources to improve program operation.

Sites operating at any level may be challenged to establish an enhancement plan in order to improve their operation or increase collaboration with others. This written plan outlines measurable steps to improve access to food, customer service or food handling practices. Hunger Task Force is available to provide necessary training and can identify community resources in support of enhancement efforts.

Preventing Hunger Tomorrow: Making Referrals to Federal Nutrition Programs

Qualified Local Providers supply emergency food throughout Milwaukee County on a daily basis. Still, long-term food needs for many of Milwaukee's citizens require more than just emergency food resources. People with persistent food needs should be enrolled in supplemental nutrition programs when eligible.

Food Pantries, Soup Kitchens, Homeless Shelters, Senior Meal sites and Subsidized Permanent Housing sites are able to help people with persistent food needs by improving participation in fully funded federal nutrition programs. These programs reduce demand for emergency food while increasing normal access to healthy foods.

Hunger Task Force strongly encourages referrals to FoodShare, School Meals, Summer Meals, Stockbox and the Women, Infant and Children's Program (WIC). These programs were established under the law to ensure that people receive help to meet their basic food needs. Some of these programs are briefly described below.

Consistently referring visitors to supplemental food programs is a critical step in stabilizing households with persistent food needs. To emphasize this point, Hunger Task Force has upgraded the rating criteria for network programs to reflect the importance of this level of the service provided.

FoodShare (Food Stamps): The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program is known as FoodShare in Wisconsin. Administered by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the Department of Health Services (DHS) in Wisconsin, FoodShare enables low-income people to use a Quest card (debit card) to buy food, including seeds and plants to grow food. Successful FoodShare enrollment will produce an average household benefit of \$111 a month. The benefit amount varies, with some benefits being as low as \$15 a month.

The eligible population for FoodShare is precisely the population served by our Qualified Local Providers. Hunger Task Force encourages providers to actively refer and assist people to apply for and maintain FoodShare benefits.

Through FoodShare modernization, applicants can manage application and reporting requirements using a telephone and computer. Applicants are no longer required to visit a welfare office. Required proof of eligibility, referred to as verification, can be submitted by mail, fax or using a scanner. Inquiries into eligibility and a full application are found online at www.access.wisconsin.gov. After application is made this same website allows FoodShare recipients to meet reporting requirements and submit six month reports. Milwaukee residents can also call to apply or check case status at 1-888-947-6583.

Partner sites can improve access to FoodShare by providing a telephone, computer, scanner or fax machine for use by applicants at their sites. Offering direct help to learn how to use this program is encouraged. Hunger Task Force teaches FoodShare modernization to all interested parties. Hunger Task Force has FoodShare Outreach staff available at locations throughout the community and are able to provide any needed FoodShare / ACCESS training to our partner sites. FoodShare Outreach Staff are also to provide periodic onsite support to connect new enrollees to benefits or troubleshoot existing accounts to reactivate FoodShare benefits.

Stockbox: Known federally as the Community Supplemental Food Program (CFSP), Stockbox works to improve the health of low-income elderly persons at least 60 years of age by supplementing their diets with nutritious USDA Foods. Age and income seniors qualify to receive a Stockbox full of staple food items once a month from more than 100 sites located in 11 counties in Southeastern Wisconsin. The box contains milk, juice, cereal, fruits, pasta, vegetables, canned meat and a 2 lb. block of low fat cheese. When available, donated food and fresh produce are provided to recipients at distribution.

Women, Infants and Children Program (WIC): The WIC program provides an EBT card for the purchase of healthy foods to pregnant women, postpartum mothers and their children until their 5th birthday. Supplemental infant formula and health and nutrition education are also included in this program. There are 13 WIC Clinics in Milwaukee County. Phone 211 for a referral to a WIC Clinic near a parent's home.

Programs can help boost participation in the WIC program, and increase nutritional resources for Milwaukee's infants and youth by referring pregnant women and new moms to this program. Early intervention with nutritional, medical and mental health support provided by programs like WIC is one way for kids to get the nutrition they require to grow healthy and strong.

School Meals: Community Eligibility Provision All families seeking emergency food assistance should be reminded that their children can eat up to two meals a day at school at no cost at Milwaukee Public Schools.

Established by the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010, the Community Eligibility Provision replaces traditional free/reduced price meal applications and allows qualifying schools to offer all students breakfast and lunch at no charge. For more information on Community Eligibility in Wisconsin: <https://dpi.wi.gov/school-nutrition/national-school-lunch-program/community-eligibility>.

Summer Food Service: Milwaukee's children and youth are eligible for free summer meals at schools, parks and recreation centers throughout the summer. Breakfast, lunch, supper and an afternoon snack are offered at no cost by the Milwaukee Public Schools, West Allis West Milwaukee Schools, Cudahy Schools and South Milwaukee Schools. Additionally, area day camps, youth clubs and organized recreation providers also offer free meals. No enrollment is required. Most sites have a "Free Summer Meals" sign posted at the entrance during meal service. Most sites also offer additional programs for youth in the summer, including books, art and recreational activities between the meal services. For the closest location, call 211@ IMPACT for a referral.

Clients may also benefit from referrals to programs such as energy assistance and tax preparation in order to take advantage of the Earned Income Tax Credit, which offers a benefit of over \$3,000 primarily to working families.

Hunger Task Force as Partner

Hunger Task Force provides Qualified Local Providers with more than just food. As an anti-hunger leader, Hunger Task Force can provide training and technical assistance; cash grants for operating or purchasing equipment; information sharing, and membership in the Hunger Relief Fund of Wisconsin.

Information and Support

The **Food Team** is made up of many people ensuring a safe, free food supply to meet our obligation to our network sites, overseeing and executing daily logistical and operational tasks, monitoring and adherence to OSHA, TEFAP and CSFP regulations, tracking inventory, food orders & managing free deliveries, sorting donated food and assembling Stockboxes – all to afford our partners the tools they need to provide highest levels of dignified, considerate service to those in need. We offer multiple experts and ways of support for your organization to succeed in your direct anti-hunger efforts.

The **Advocacy Team** of Hunger Task Force is made up of a Policy Analyst, Advocacy Campaign Manager, Lobbyist and Educator. Together they can inform our network partners of facts & maps, provide reports, visit and educate your members or organize them to help combat hunger in the long term. Join Voices Against Hunger and speak on behalf of for those whose concerns are often left unheard.

The **Development Team** is made up of a Director (Food raising, Fundraising & Donor Management); Writer (Grants, Agency publications & website); Community Relations Manager (Event and Volunteer Coordination); Communications Manager (Branding and Messaging); Database Administrator (Donor Tracking & Acknowledgement) all with high degrees of expertise and years of experience to share with you to build the capacity of your organization.

The **FoodShare Access Team**, are the experts to provide a direct connection to various federal benefits for eligible people in the community. From seniors to people with Limited English Proficiency (LEP), this team has specialists to address your concerns and they are located in various sites in the Milwaukee County. Check your eligibility? Done. Supply document receipt verification? Done. Troubleshoot your account? Done. This team is mobile and can visit your service point to assist people.

Training and Educational Opportunities

Hunger Task Force provides training for all or portions of the *Standards of Excellence*. We can help Qualified Local Providers identify areas that need improvement or enhancement. We are available to train Qualified Local Providers in best practices for handling food safely, determining need, providing qualified assistance, reporting outcomes and preventing future hunger. Training can occur at a time and location that is convenient for the partner site.

Hunger Task Force holds quarterly or bi-annual meetings to inform programs about important information and changes related to your program and clients. Meetings are scheduled in advance and require an RSVP to ensure seating.

Cash Grants

Hunger Task Force is the annual administrative agent for the Emergency Food and Shelter Program (EFSP.) EFSP funds allow Emergency Food Pantries, Soup Kitchens and Homeless Shelters to be reimbursed for food purchases obtained. Emergency feeding organizations interested in applying must:

1. Be private voluntary nonprofits or units of government
2. Have an accounting system
3. Practice nondiscrimination
4. Have demonstrated the capability to deliver emergency food
5. Have a voluntary board (if they are a private voluntary organization)

Other Partner Support

Hunger Task Force assesses equipment and other infrastructure needs of its Qualified Local Providers each year. Hunger Task Force solicits donors and government programs for cash grants on an ongoing basis. Some grants are used to purchase food in order to assure variation in the menu of foods offered. Others are offered to programs for the purchase of culturally relevant foods, equipment or emergency repairs. Our Site Developers are responsible for identifying unmet needs at the service points and the network and helping prioritize grant applications. Sites in need of equipment, operating money or supplies should identify those needs to their Site Developer as they occur.

Hunger Relief Fund of Wisconsin

This federation of small nonprofit agencies is listed under the shared masthead of the Hunger Relief Fund of Wisconsin in order to solicit funding from the public sector campaigns in workplace giving. Municipal, County, State and Federal employees are able to designate annual workplace gifts to any member organization of the federation, or the federation as a whole. Qualified Local Providers that are not members of the United Way, Community Shares or Combined Health Charities Federations are welcome to join the Hunger Relief Fund. Hunger Task Force absorbs all administrative costs and issues payments so 100% of gifts are passed on to member organizations. All funds passed through to member organizations are unrestricted and can be utilized as the organization sees fit to support food and equipment purchases, staff or facility improvements.

Hunger Relief Federation

Hunger relief Federation is a statewide coalition of food pantries and food banks focused on improving the quality and service for low-income clients across the state. Membership is free and members benefit from mutual support, networking, resource sharing, public policy advocacy, and organizational and leadership development in order to build the sustainability and effectiveness of their organizations—institutions that directly interact with low-income communities. The Hunger Relief Federation also works to advance the free and local model throughout the state, promoting food access equity across communities. This statewide consortium will strengthen the fight against hunger and improve food security statewide.

Resource List of Websites

BadgerCare

General Information

<http://dhs.wisconsin.gov>

-BadgerCare Plus

Apply for Benefits - ACCESS website

<https://access.wisconsin.gov/access>

CSFP (Stockbox)

General Information

www.usda.gov

-Programs & Services

-Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP)

www.fns.usda.gov/csfp/commodity-supplemental-food-program-csfp

Dept of Aging Meal Resources for Milwaukee County

General Information

www.county.milwaukee.gov

-Get Info on Aging

-Area Agency on Aging

-Senior nutrition program

EFSP

General Information

www.efsp.unitedway.org

Food Recall Information

Register to receive automatic recall notification and alerts at

www.foodsafety.gov/recalls/alerts/index.html

FoodShare (SNAP) and ACCESS

General Information

www.hungertaskforce.org

-Learn About Hunger

-FoodShare Modernization

<http://dhs.wisconsin.gov>

-FoodShare

Apply for Benefits - ACCESS website

<https://access.wisconsin.gov/access>

Hunger Task Force www.hungertaskforce.org

-Signature Programs

-Summer Food Service Program

-MyPlate Initiative

National School Lunch Program

General Information

www.usda.gov

- Programs & Services
- National School Lunch Program

<http://mpsportal.milwaukee.k12.wi.us>

- Programs/Resources
- Lunch Menu / Nutrition

Summer Food Service Program

General Information

www.usda.gov

- Programs & Services
- Summer Food Service Program (SFSP)

TEFAP

General Information

www.usda.gov

- Programs & Services
- The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP)

WIC

General Information

www.usda.gov

- Programs & Services
- Women, Infants and Children (WIC)

<http://dhs.wisconsin.gov>

- WIC (Women, Infant and Children) Program
-