

The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP) – Written Notice of Beneficiary Rights

Name of Organization:

Contact Information for Program Staff: Name:

Phone Number:

Email Address:

Because TEFAP is supported in whole or in part by financial assistance from the Federal Government, we are required to let you know that—

- We may not discriminate against you on the basis of religion or religious belief, a refusal to hold a religious belief, or a refusal to attend or participate in a religious practice;
- We may not require you to attend or participate in any explicitly religious activities that are offered by us, and any participation by you in these activities must be purely voluntary;
- We must separate in time or location any privately funded explicitly religious activities from activities supported with USDA direct assistance;
- If you object to the religious character of our organization, we must make reasonable efforts to identify and refer you to an alternate provider to which you have no objection. We cannot guarantee, however, that in every instance, an alternate provider will be available; and
- You may report violations of these protections (including denials of services or benefits) by an organization to the State agency (<http://www.fns.usda.gov/fdd/food-distribution-contacts>). The State agency will respond to the complaint and report the alleged violations to their respective USDA FNS Regional Office (<http://www.fns.usda.gov/fns-regional-offices>).

We must provide you with this written notice before you enroll in TEFAP or receive services from TEFAP, as required by 7 CFR part 16.

Alternate Service Location(s) or State Agency Contact Information:

Name of Organization and Contact Person: Food Bank of Alabama

Phone Number: 334-821-9006

Email Address: eafborder@foodbankofeastalabama.com

This Institution is an Equal Opportunity Provider.

*The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP) and
Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP) –
Beneficiary Referral Request*

Name of Organization:

Contact information for program staff (name, phone number, and email address, if appropriate):

Name:

Phone Number:

Email Address:

If you object to receiving services from us based on the religious character of our organization, please complete this form and return it to the program contact identified above. Your use of this form is voluntary.

If you object to the religious character of our organization, we must make reasonable efforts to identify and refer you to an alternate provider to which you have no objection. We cannot guarantee, however, that in every instance, an alternate provider will be available.

Please check if you want to be referred to another service provider.

Please provide the following information:

Your name:

Best way to reach you (phone/address/email):

FOR STAFF USE ONLY

1. Date of objection: __/__/__

2. Referral (check one):

Individual was referred to (Food Bank of East Alabama)

Individual was given State agency-provided referral information (i.e. a website, hotline, or list of other service providers funded by the State agency)

Individual left without a referral

No alternate service provider is available—summarize below what efforts you made to identify an alternate provider (including reaching out to State agency or local or eligible recipient agency):

This Institution is an Equal Opportunity Provider.

Food Bank of East Alabama
Guidelines for Churches Regarding the Sharing of Religion with Clients

Many of our partner agencies are churches or other religious entities, and it would be unreasonable for the Food Bank to assume that these agencies will provide their hunger relief services without some degree of religious activity. However, proselytizing must not be discriminatory, burdensome or time-consuming to the client. It is clearly stated in the Criteria for Participation Agreement in the agency application that the Food Bank's food must be free to the client without any requirement of payment or action from the client.

Here is a brief summary of the Food Bank guidelines on this issue:

- Food Bank goods are intended to be free and provided to people in need.
- Member agencies cannot *require* clients to pray, worship or to receive religious messages as a condition of receiving food.
- The client must be allowed to come and pick up their food or eat the meal and leave without participating in any service or activity if that is their preference.
- Member agencies are welcome to invite clients to participate in religious services, but cannot tie those services to the food distribution process. If a food recipient does not wish to participate, their decision must be respected.
- Information regarding religious opportunities may be made available to recipients, provided they are available as an *option* for recipients to receive or choose to decline.
- Be mindful that clients coming to receive food assistance are in a vulnerable position and may feel pressured to participate. We want the clients that are served by the Food Bank and member agencies to feel safe, not pressured, when receiving help.
- Religious information, prayer or counseling may be provided only at the clients' request, *after* receiving food.
- Offering a prayer or blessing before a meal or food distribution is acceptable.

Exceptions to this restriction on religious proselytizing are programs in which clients voluntarily reside at an agency in which religion is a part of its stated mission (such as rescue missions.)