



Guidance on Immigration Issues

We want to balance our mission to feed people who struggle with hunger and our ability to show compassion to marginalized populations with the polarizing debates on immigration that could hurt us going forward. Our goal is to highlight that Feeding America food banks follow all federal, state, and local statues without drawing attention to the fact that some programs, such as TEFAP, do not require that we collect information about immigration status. We would like to ensure that that we're prepared to respond to questions about additional administrative or regulatory burden about data collection for commodity programs (TEFAP) that could hinder our ability to serve people in need.

Talking Points:

- Food is a basic human need, and ensuring access to adequate food is an obligation of any responsible and compassionate society.
- As we (food bank) work on the frontlines to end hunger, we have a responsibility to help any neighbor in need, regardless of race, religion, citizenship, disability, age, gender identity, sexual orientation, or any other criteria.
- Our mission is to help end hunger in our community and that includes providing food to any person facing hunger within our service area.

Consideration (Anticipated Questions)*:

- What documentation do you (food bank) require of people in order for them to receive food assistance?
- Do you share any records (of people receiving assistance) with the federal government?
- What percentage of the people you (food bank) serve are undocumented?
- What percentage of your budget comes from the government?

** Have responses drafted just in case, and if you do not have the answer (because you don't have the data) your response should be simple and direct. "We do not collect that information." If your food bank's policy is to keep this information confidential, consider a general statement, such as "Our food pantries and meal programs are simply there to feed those who are hungry, regardless of race, religion, or citizenship."*

Standard Reply Statement:

Thank you for contacting the [FOOD BANK NAME].

Our mission is to help end hunger in our community and that includes providing food to any person facing hunger within our service area.



As we work on the frontlines to end hunger, we have a responsibility to help any neighbor in need, regardless of race, religion, citizenship, disability, age, gender identity, sexual orientation, or any other criteria.

If you have questions regarding SNAP and program eligibility, please click [HERE](#) for information.

Additional Information:

- The Feeding America network of food banks and hunger-relief agencies do not discriminate in the provision of service against any person because of race, religion, citizenship, disability, age, gender identity, sexual orientation, or any other criteria.
- Feeding America respects the inherent worth and dignity of every person.
- Individuals, charities, businesses and government all have a role in ending hunger in America.
- With regard to SNAP, certain non-citizens – like green card holders, trafficking victims and refugees – are eligible to participate in SNAP, generally after waiting 5 years.
- Undocumented immigrants are not eligible for SNAP.
- There is evidence that immigrants are already less likely to use public assistance than native-born citizens.