



Volunteering to Make a Difference



Tarrant Area **FOOD BANK**

FIGHTING HUNGER IN 13 COUNTIES

Volunteer Handbook

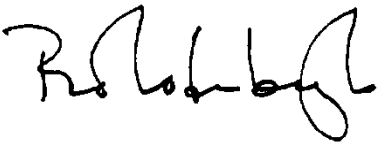
WELCOME VOLUNTEERS!

From our inception in 1982, Tarrant Area Food Bank has been the beneficiary of massive volunteer efforts. Indeed, it would be difficult to operate without the steady stream of volunteers helping us sort and inspect food for our agency partners, organizing food drives, serving on leadership committees and much more.

Currently, Tarrant Area Food Bank distributes enough food to help more than 40,000 households every month. In addition, we provide food every month for 565,000 meals and snacks every month. None of this would be possible without the community's support and the involvement and commitment of our volunteers.

It is our goal to make your volunteer experience meaningful and satisfying. To that end, we are providing you with this handbook, giving you an overview of the Food Bank, presenting various areas where volunteers are needed as well as some of the safety guidelines we request that you observe.

We hope your volunteer experience will live up to your expectations. If you have any questions or concerns, please don't

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Bo Soderbergh', written in a cursive style.

Sincerely,
Bo Soderbergh
Executive Director, Tarrant Area Food Bank

TABLE OF CONTENTS

WELCOME VOLUNTEERS!.....	2
TARRANT AREA FOOD BANK OVERVIEW	4
Our Vision.....	4
Our Mission	4
About Us.....	4
Partners & Recipients	4
Food Donors.....	5
Financial Donors.....	5
VOLUNTEER OVERVIEW	6
TAFB Volunteers	6
Volunteer Program Objectives	6
Volunteer Opportunities	7
Volunteer Bill of Rights	10
Volunteer Orientation & Training.....	11
Volunteer Sign-In.....	11
TAFB Hours.....	12
In Case of Absence	12
Substance Abuse & Smoking	12
Inclement Weather Policy	13
Emergency Procedures	13
Safety Guidelines for Quality Control	13
SPECIAL EVENTS CALENDAR.....	15

TARRANT AREA FOOD BANK OVERVIEW

OUR VISION

Communities where no one has to go hungry.

OUR MISSION

Tarrant Area Food Bank works to eliminate hunger in Fort Worth and 13 surrounding counties by providing food, education and other resources to a network of hunger-relief charities and their communities.

ABOUT US

Founded in 1982, Tarrant Area Food Bank (TAFB) is a nonprofit, regional distributor of donated food and non-food items. TAFB recovers and re-distributes viable food and non-food items, which would otherwise be thrown away, to partner nonprofit agencies that serve people in need. We serve Tarrant County and 12 surrounding counties including Cooke, Wise, Denton, Palo Pinto, Parker, Erath, Hood, Somervell, Johnson, Hamilton, Bosque and Hill.

PARTNERS & RECIPIENTS

Food is distributed to more than 300 nonprofit partner agencies such as food pantries, senior citizen centers, emergency shelters, soup kitchens, rehabilitation programs, low-income child care centers, children's homes, BackPacks for Kids sites and after-school programs. These agencies feed anyone at risk of hunger.

Of the clients served, 43 percent are children and almost 6 percent are elderly. Of the families assisted, almost two-thirds (65 percent) have monthly incomes of less than \$15,000 per year, or \$1,250 per month.

FOOD DONORS

- Commercial food operations (growers, processors, manufacturers, wholesalers, discount brokers, distributors, retailers)
- Feeding America, the nation's food bank network
- Community food drives (corporations, organizations)
- Individuals
- Texas Department of Agriculture (USDA Commodities)

FINANCIAL DONORS

Tarrant Area Food Bank relies upon individuals, corporations and foundations for financial support. Volunteers who donate their time also provide support indirectly by saving the cost of increased staffing. In 2010, the estimated in-kind dollar value of time offered by those who volunteered with TAFB saved the organization more than \$1.46 million.

(www.independentsector.org)

VOLUNTEER OVERVIEW

TAFB VOLUNTEERS

Any individual who donates time to enhance the mission of Tarrant Area Food Bank is considered a volunteer. This includes those who work in Quality Control and with children's programs, nutrition services and SNAP outreach as well as those who serve on the Board of Directors and special events committees and who provide office support services.

VOLUNTEER PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

- To promote an understanding of hunger in our community
- To augment the distribution of food to the hungry
- To provide an environment in which the skills and interests of volunteers can be utilized to benefit the services of TAFB
- To enhance and expand the volunteer program through ongoing recruitment, training and continuing education
- To recognize, reward and acknowledge the work of volunteers to retain their service and show the appreciation of TAFB

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

AGENCY RELATIONS

Assist with site visits, training and orientation, and technical support for partner agencies and TAFB staff. Compile monthly statistics. Assist with community collaborations.

BACKPACKS FOR KIDS

Pack non-perishable, kid-friendly food for school-aged children at risk of hunger on the weekends. Groups and families with children over eight years of age may volunteer.

CANNED FOOD DRIVES

Work with businesses and organizations in their food drives or work with existing groups to enhance their drives, or start your own canned food drive.

COMMUNITY GARDEN OPPORTUNITIES:

- **COMMUNITY GARDEN RESOURCE**

Maintain strong knowledge and understanding of fruit, vegetable, and herb gardening in North Texas. Assist local community gardens maintenance team by answering questions and offering on-site help. Must be available to assist in two to three garden education classes per year for the site.

- **COMMUNITY GARDEN SET-UP**

Assist in the initial set-up and construction of new community gardens.

- **COMMUNITY GARDEN RESEARCH**

Assist in maintaining the Food Bank's Community Garden website pages, Resource Guide, garden site evaluation and updating current information.

COMMUNITY KITCHEN PRODUCTION

Assist the production team in producing the maximum number of prepared meals provided to partner agencies and their clients.

DATA INPUT/WORD PROCESSING

Input information into the volunteer database and help with other computer-based projects.

DOCK/WAREHOUSE

Help in receiving, sorting, pulling orders and delivering product at the dock.

FARMER'S MARKET PICK-UP

Collect and transport donated produce from local farmer's market to TAFB warehouse for distribution to partner agencies.

NUTRITION EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES:

- **COOKING MATTERS CHEF INSTRUCTOR**
Lead class participants in preparing healthy recipes while meeting the goals and objectives outlined in the course curriculum. The instructor must adhere to food safety practices.
- **COOKING MATTERS NUTRITION INSTRUCTOR**
Educate class participants about healthy eating habits while meeting the goals and objectives outlined in the course curriculum.
- **COOKING MATTERS CLASS ASSISTANT**
Ensure that groceries and supplies are purchased for each class within the budget guidelines. Support volunteer team members and participants in preparing for and administering each class. Must adhere to food safety practices.
- **COOKING MATTERS PHOTOJOURNALIST**
Capture the Cooking Matters story of volunteers and participants during each class. Actively record direct, inspiring quotes from class participants in order to promote the program.

- **EAT SMART, LIVE STRONG NUTRITION INSTRUCTOR**
Educate class participants about healthy eating habits while meeting the goals and objectives outlined in the course curriculum.
- **LOVING YOUR FAMILY, FEEDING THEIR FUTURE NUTRITION INSTRUCTOR**
Educate class participants about healthy eating habits while meeting the goals and objectives outlined in the course curriculum.

OFFICE/CLERICAL

Help with record-keeping, list management, writing thank you notes, preparing mailings, telephoning and reception desk duties.

QUALITY CONTROL

Inspect, sort and repackage food donations prior to distribution to partner agencies. Open to individuals and groups.

SNAP (FOOD STAMP) OUTREACH EVENT ASSISTANT

Assist Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Outreach team in helping families apply for SNAP benefits.

SPECIAL FUNDRAISING EVENTS

Provide support for fundraising events by serving on the planning committees, preparing mailings, decorating, collecting prizes, helping with registration and setting up for the event. (See page 14 for list of annual events.)

YOUTH GROUP SPECIAL PROJECTS

Youth younger than 16 can help with special tasks such as assembling boxes, sorting, stuffing or labeling – jobs that do not involve activity around heavy machinery OR, assemble special bags of food, off site, such as “Birthday in a Bag,” to distribute to hungry children. Children must be 16 years or older or accompanied by a parent or guardian to work in Quality Control. Please schedule groups in advance.

VOLUNTEER BILL OF RIGHTS

As a Volunteer it is your right:

- To be assigned a meaningful task
- To work in a friendly, clean, and safe environment
- To be oriented, trained and supervised for the duration of your activity
- To ask questions about your task
- To receive seek feedback about your performance and recognition for your service
- To be treated with respect and kindness at all times by every member of the organization for which you volunteer
- To offer input and feedback to the organization about the job or task you are performing in an effort to improve your situation and the needs of volunteers in the future.
- To be trusted with confidential information which may be necessary to fulfill your task
- To expect that your time will be used efficiently and effectively

As a Volunteer it is your responsibility:

- To follow the rules, policies and procedures of the organization
- To sign any paperwork necessary **before** volunteer work begins (Code of Ethics, Confidentiality Agreement, release forms, etc.)
- To be prompt and ready to work at the assigned time

- To give adequate notice if you will be unable to fulfill your responsibilities
- To perform your tasks to the best of your ability
- To accept assignments without complaint, but to provide constructive feedback if your expectations aren't met so that a new assignment may be given if appropriate. (Be ready though to take on things that may not be "exactly" as you had hoped. Remember, you believe in this mission and the organization needs to get the work done!)
- Do not take on more responsibility than you can handle and don't agree to commitments that you can't keep
- Provide constructive input and offer suggestions on ways to improve the work flow of your assignment if appropriate.
- Respect the confidential nature of issues shared with you in order to complete your job.

VOLUNTEER ORIENTATION & TRAINING

These sessions familiarize volunteers with the history and operation of Tarrant Area Food Bank, give an overview of the volunteer program and include information on current volunteer opportunities. Some volunteer positions require specialized training, which will be held as needed.

VOLUNTEER SIGN-IN

The volunteer entrance for Quality Control is on the east side of the building off of N. Vacek St. The volunteer sign-in and information desk is located through the double doors in the Quality Control holding area. Upon arrival, please sign-in on the correct form: one is for groups and one is for individuals. This information is used for volunteer recognition, grant applications and credit toward agency maintenance fees.

TAFB HOURS

Tarrant Area Food Bank's normal operating hours are:

Monday: 8:30 a.m. – 5 p.m.

Tuesday: 8:30 a.m. – 9 p.m.

Wednesday: 8:30 a.m. – 9 p.m.

Thursday: 8:30 a.m. – 9 p.m.

Friday: 8:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.

Saturday: 9 am. – 4 p.m.

IN CASE OF ABSENCE

Volunteering requires commitment. Tarrant Area Food Bank depends on volunteers to work at specific assignments on the agreed-upon schedule. If you are ill, are going to be out of town, or for any other reason are unable to report as scheduled, please call the office and leave a message for the volunteer coordinator or program supervisor.

SUBSTANCE ABUSE & SMOKING

Tarrant Area Food Bank is dedicated to establishing and maintaining a safe, healthy and drug and alcohol-free working environment that is conducive to effective business operations. Employees and volunteers are prohibited from using, being under the influence of, in possession of, purchasing, dispensing, distributing, or manufacturing of any illegal drug on the Food Bank's premises or while performing services for the Food Bank.

Tarrant Area Food Bank is a non-smoking facility.

INCLEMENT WEATHER POLICY

Tarrant Area Food Bank follows the closure or delayed opening decisions of the Fort Worth Independent School District (FWISD). This information is announced prominently and repeatedly on several television and radio stations when inclement weather occurs.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

If you become aware of an injury or accident involving a volunteer, staff member, visitor or representative of a member agency, report the incident immediately to the supervisor.

In the event of fire, exits are clearly marked and you are asked to exit the building as quickly as possible and move to areas in the parking lot furthest away from the building. In the event of stormy weather during regular hours, safe zones are marked and you are asked to move to one of these areas quickly.

SAFETY GUIDELINES FOR QUALITY CONTROL

Our 69,000 square foot warehouse is a very busy place, and because of this, strict policies are in place to ensure the safety of our volunteers and employees:

- Volunteers must be at least 16 years or older or accompanied by a parent or guardian to box food or work in any area where heavy machinery is used. The exception is the Wednesday night Backpack program.
- All youth groups must have adult supervision.
- Group size should be limited to 15 volunteers unless prior arrangements have been made.

- Sandals, flip flops and open toed shoes are not allowed. Shoes must have a closed toe and cover the entire foot. **No exceptions.**
- Wear clean, comfortable, appropriate clothes – no short shorts, half shirts that bare the midriff or low cut tops may be worn. Clothing and jewelry should not be loose or dangling.
- In certain areas you may be asked to wear aprons, hairnets or gloves provided by TAFB.
- Volunteers are not allowed to operate a forklift, compactor, hand jack or any powered equipment.
- Follow proper lifting techniques. If you do not know them, ask for a demonstration.
- Hands should be washed before starting work and after eating or using the restroom.
- Cleaning of the work area is considered part of the work shift or project.

SPECIAL EVENTS CALENDAR

Canned Food Drives: Year Round

Businesses, organizations, schools and individuals hold drives to collect food and money for Tarrant Area Food Bank. Food drives include the National Association of Letter Carriers', Summer Hunger Buster Drive and Holiday Drives.

Empty Bowls Tasting Event: February

Participants purchase a handcrafted bowl created and donated by a Texas artisan and then sample soups, breads and desserts prepared by area chefs.

Breakfast with the Stars: Spring

Children and families are invited to the Tarrant Area Food Bank Warehouse for a morning of food and fun-filled activities. This event benefits TAFB's BackPacks for Kids program. Brunch is served by Community Kitchen culinary students.

Volunteer Appreciation: April

Tarrant Area Food Bank invites all volunteers that offered their time in the last year to an afternoon of awards and enjoyment.

Kick the Can: November

This has become the symbolic "kick-off" for the Holiday Canned Food Drives. Teams from businesses, schools and organizations, often in costume, compete in can-kicking relays in downtown Fort Worth.



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Find us on Facebook
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