

Helping you run a successful foodbank

In these difficult economic times, more and more churches are setting up foodbanks for people in their parish. If you are running a foodbank, the advice below should help you make sure everything is safe.



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What happens at a foodbank?

1. People donate food

Schools, churches, businesses and parishioners donate non-perishable, in-date food. You may well collect food during Harvest Festival, or at 'Supermarket Collections', when volunteers buy something extra during their weekly shop.

2. You store and sort the food

Volunteers check that the food is still in-date and pack it into boxes ready to be given to people in need.

3. You identify who needs help

Your foodbank will probably be working with people from the care sector who are best placed to weigh up who might need help. Professionals like doctors, health visitors, social workers and police can identify who needs help and give them a foodbank voucher.

4. You give people food

People bring along their foodbank vouchers to your foodbank centre where they can swap them for a box of food. Each box normally contains at least three days worth of nutritionally balanced, non-perishable food. Volunteers will meet them and also let them know about other organisations that can help.

Your foodbank might also run a delivery service to take boxes of food out to people living in rural areas.

Things to think about

To make sure that your insurance covers all the risks involved in running a foodbank, we have to ask you some questions which you can find below. They should help to highlight the issues you need to think about.

Please fill in your answers as fully as you can. To make sure your church insurance policy covers your foodbank, we will need to add a small annual charge to your premium.

Questions

1 Where do you hold the foodbank?

(For example, the church hall, the church, other premises.)

2 Who runs the foodbank?

(For example, the church, a charity or another organisation.)

3 Is it covered by any other insurance?

(For example, if another organisation is running it.)

4 How many days is the foodbank open each month?

5 What are the opening times?

6 Where do you get the food from?

(For example, donations, charities, supermarkets.)

7 How many food boxes do you give out each week?

8 Have you carried out a risk assessment and written down the results?

(For example, slip and trip hazards, suitability of premises for storage and distribution etc.)

9 Do you follow health and safety procedures and keep a note of them?

10 Have you updated your fire risk assessment to take account of the foodbank?

(For example, more combustible stock such as cardboard boxes, restricted access to fire exits etc.)

11 Have volunteers been trained in manual handling? If so, who trained them?

12 Have staff been trained in how to run a foodbank? If so, who trained them?

13 Is food stored above head height? If it is, have your volunteers been trained in storage, and have you checked ladders and stepladders?

(We recommend that you only store light items above head height.)

14 Have you had to modify the building at all?

(For example, providing extra security.)

15 If the food is stored on church premises, did you need a faculty? Have you obtained one?

16 Do you deliver food boxes? If so, have you checked your motor insurance as it may well not cover deliveries?

17 Do you have a set of procedures that you follow for checking and distribution?

18 Are people from another organisation helping with the foodbank? If so, have you checked that they know the layout of your premises?

19 Do you use stock control?

(For example, to make sure that food doesn't go out of date and isn't contaminated in any way.)



20 Are all donations non-perishable food?

21 Do you have a training programme for all your staff and volunteers?

22 Do you check that new staff and volunteers are suitable and experienced?

23 Have you arranged for the local authority to collect any extra rubbish from the foodbank?

(We recommend not to keep waste outside the building as this could increase the risk of fire.)

If you'd like to know anything more, please call us on **0845 777 3322** (lines open 8am-6pm Monday to Friday, excluding Bank Holidays). Alternatively please get in touch with your local Insurance Consultant and Surveyor.

Advice for foodbanks

If your church is involved in a foodbank, we have created a set of questions to help you keep things as safe as possible. Find out more.

