

Rappahannock
Food Pantry

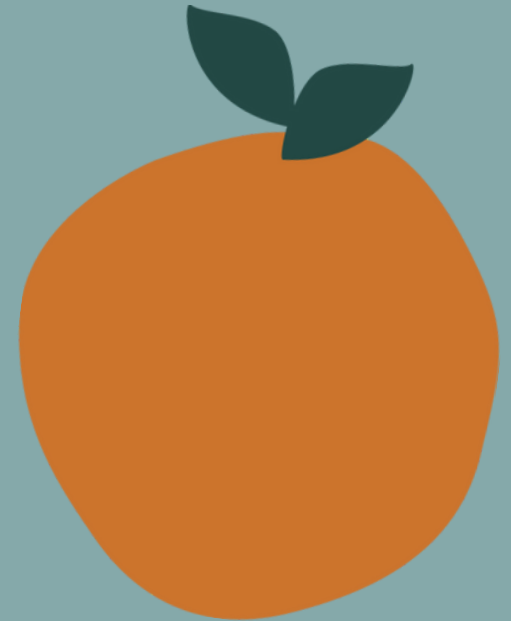


Volunteer Guidelines

January, 2024

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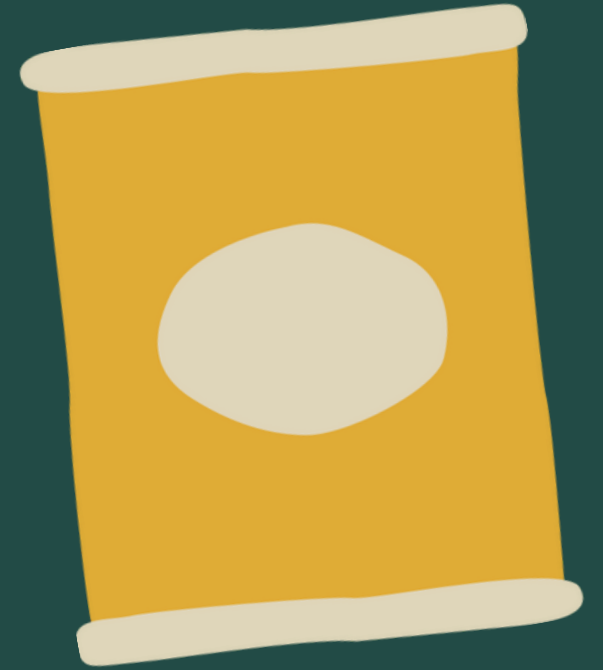


Welcome

Welcome to the Rappahannock Food Pantry. This document contains much of what you need to know about how the food pantry operates and how you can help.

The Rappahannock Food Pantry is a volunteer 501(c)(3) non-profit organization established to help reduce poverty in Rappahannock county by providing food at no cost to Rappahannock residents needing assistance. We also make connections with other service agencies that can help our clients.

The Pantry staff and Volunteers provide the bulk of the assistance for the day-to-day operations of the pantry. The Board provides oversight.



Volunteer Overview

One of the most important things at the Rappahannock Food Pantry is our corp of volunteers. They help with everything from stocking shelves and shopping with our treasured clients.

One of our guiding principles is giving the utmost dignity and respect to our clients. Confidentiality is critical. Flexibility and patience while engaging with everyone at the Pantry is key. While we strive to be as efficient and effective as we can, our team spirit is a key driver of our success.

Don't hesitate to ask questions as it is much easier to re-explain something, then to re-do something.

We know your time is valuable and you being here is a gift to the community.
Thank you!

Volunteer Policies

HONORING OUR CLIENTS

Volunteers should treat all Pantry clients with the utmost dignity and respect. If situations arise where a volunteer must step away, they should seek the guidance of the Pantry staff.

VOLUNTEER INFLUENCE

Volunteers have a great impact on the Pantry clients. Our positive attitude and enthusiasm truly make a positive experience for the clients.

OUTSIDE THE PANTRY

The identity of clients should be kept in the strictest of confidence outside the pantry. If clients are seen in a social situation, volunteers should only acknowledge the client if the client initiates contact first.

PANTRY BUSINESS

Pantry business and happenings should be kept in strict confidence.

SHIFTS

Volunteers should do their best to arrive on time and honor the shifts they sign up for.

RESPECTING THE SYSTEM

Many of the procedures at the Food Pantry have been developed with strict USDA and other federal governing agencies in mind. It is critical that you follow the guidance of the Pantry Manager and Assistant Manager.

SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT

Volunteers should feel free to make suggestions on how the Pantry can improve operations. We request these suggestions come in the form of written notes to the Pantry Staff or any Board member, and not during a shift.



Roles & Tasks

STOCKING

Our Tuesday and Thursday morning shifts are primarily responsible for stocking the Food Pantry. Not only is this task incredibly important for maintaining the Pantry inventory for our clients, but also for adhering to USDA guidelines.

SHOPPING

Our afternoon shifts are made up of volunteers who assist our clients with shopping. This role is the heart of our mission - assisting those in need to get their groceries with dignity and respect.



Shopping

While client shopping is the heart of our mission, it can be somewhat complicated because of the different categories of foods and the eligibility of the clients. Your Pantry staff and team leader is well-versed and can be consulted at any time with any questions.

Volunteer Shoppers:

If you are assisting USDA eligible clients, scan the USDA shelves first to avoid duplicating later in the process

USDA

Eligibility for shopping for USDA items must be verified by Pantry staff. All USDA items are on designated shelves and the number of items available to clients is posted. Clients can shop for USDA items one time per month.

DONATED

From Grocery Stores,
Farms, Individuals

Much of our produce comes from local gardens, farms and grocery stores. These donations also include everything from dry goods to frozen meat.

PURCHASED

Critical Basics Purchased
by the Pantry

When enough critical food is not provided by donation, the Pantry must purchase inventory to keep the shelves stocked.

Shopping

Volunteer shoppers will be guided each shopping day by Pantry staff and briefed about what items are available, in abundance, limited, etc. – as well as any specifics to be taken into consideration while shopping.



Meat is not always available and is expensive.

Pantry staff will provide guidance on distribution based on family size



Deli items should be used as quickly as possible due to their "best by" dates



Shoppers can have as much of these items as are available on a given day.

Left-over fresh veggies should be stored in the storeroom.



Shoppers can have several types of bread, including the frozen which is often past the "use by" date.

Sweets, breakfast, and snack items are available based on the signage.



Please follow quantity guidelines that are posted.



Each family is allowed one package of each type of pet food per shopping trip.



Items should be given according to family size since they are limited.

Families can have as many children's books as they like.

Once shopping is finished, volunteers typically assist the customers with loading their items into their vehicles. Carts should be brought back into the pantry.

Stocking

The objective of stocking the shelves is to provide accessibility of the food items to the clients. We also strive to make the shelves as neat looking and convenient for the shoppers as possible.

Please help us to ensure all items are placed on their correct and designated shelves (ie USDA, Donated, Purchased). Do not mix categories even if they are the exact same item. This is important for USDA inventory.



RESTOCKING

- Identify where gaps are on each of the shelved areas
- Make a list of low-stock items
- check storage area for items and restock shelves
- inform Pantry staff about limited inventory or out of stock items

SORTING

- Confirm shelves are properly sorted and tidy
- (ie canned fruit together; dry pastas together, etc.)
- Cans should not be stacked more than 3 high
- Small items that don't fit easily on a shelf can be placed in a small container

RECYCLING

- Check for out-of-date, expired or unsafe items – especially produce, bakery and deli items
- Expired Items should be removed from the shelves and placed in plastic bags and left outside for recycling
- Confirm that frozen items past their dates must be recycled

Roles & Tasks

Receiving Food & Product Donations



RECEIVING DONATIONS

- All donations must be weighed and recorded.
- Side-by-side donation forms are used - one side going to the donor and the other side placed in the labeled metal rack next to the scale.
- Items must be categorized - see Pantry staff for instruction.
- Even if the donor doesn't want a receipt, we must have one for Pantry records.

Roles & Tasks

Miscellaneous

DRIVERS

Drivers are always needed for:

- Pick-up runs to Wegmans, Trader Joe's or Food Lion
- Client Grocery Deliveries

RECYCLING

- Boxes often need to be assembled and/or broken down.
- All excess cardboard can be broken down and placed in the RED recycling bin.
- Hard plastics and glass should be placed in the recycle container.
- Plastic Bags need to be taken to a recycling site. (Currently we have no way to recycle them unless a volunteer takes them)

HOUSEKEEPING

- Sweep/Vacuum before clients come to shop and at the end of each shopping day.
- Make coffee if needed
- Keep kitchen clean and dry

STORAGE

Pantry storage has designated areas for specific inventory. They are marked USDA, non-USDA purchased items etc. When assisting with storage, please be careful not to mix them.

Volunteer Scheduling

Thank you again for volunteering your time and energy.

We are always in need of volunteer assistance so please consider mentioning us to your friends and neighbors, and we hope to see you again soon.

Contact Volunteer Coordinator Shauna Volmrich to schedule a return visit

volunteer@rappahannockpantry.org

Rappahannock Food Pantry

540.987.5090

Rappahannock Food Pantry

Thank You!



GROW IT FORWARD

540.987.5090
VIRGINIA

CARING.
SHARING.
TOGETHER.