Food Gatherers’ Pantry Shopping Guidelines

The Food Gatherers’ Food Pantry exists to help our partner programs meet the needs of their clients! The pantry is particularly helpful for programs who serve a lower volume of clients and/or serve clients with special dietary needs. It is our hope that shopping for food at the Food Gatherers’ Food Pantry is a pleasant experience for all programs and we need everyone’s help to make this program run well!

You can remember the pantry guidelines below with the word PANTRY!

- **Preparation.**
  - Don’t forget to bring bags or totes to gather and store food during your shopping time! (Sometimes there are boxes and bags available, but it is not guaranteed). Shopping carts are available for your use.
  - Arrive on time because you only have your scheduled 30 minute appointment to shop. If your shopping time is at 9am and you are 15 minutes late, you can’t shop until 9:45am because two other programs have the 9:30-10am slots.
  - Come to the front door/main entrance of Food Gatherers to check-in on the tablet at the front desk. You may only check-in up to 5 minutes early and then begin shopping.

- **Awareness of other programs.** Food Gatherers schedules two programs per 30-minute schedule blocks throughout the day (9:00-11:30am & 1:00-3:30pm). There can be up to two programs shopping at one time in the pantry and up to two people per program. This is so all programs have equal access to the food on the shelves and it’s not too crowded.
  - There is only one parking space available per agency. You may double-park 2 vehicles, one in front of the other, in a single space outside the pantry doors.
  - Please shut off your engine in the winter time. The fumes get into the warehouse making it an unpleasant shopping experience for others. Please speak with a Community Food Programs staff if you have any concerns.
  - Share the shopping carts with the other program shopping at the same time and be sure they are empty and ready to go for the next two programs arriving after you.

- **Names of all shoppers**
  - All shoppers’ names should be entered when signing in. While you may sign in 5 minutes ahead of your scheduled shopping time, none of your shoppers can start shopping prior to this.
  - If both shoppers arrive together, you can sign in one time and write both names.
  - If you have more than two volunteers or staff present, they may wait outside to help load up your cars, but cannot help shop. If you are training a new person, please only have two people removing items from the shelves.
• **Take only what you need for the week and save time!**
  - Food Gatherers’ volunteers do their best to restock the food pantry throughout the day, but please only take what you need to serve your clients for the week. You will be back the following week to shop again! 😊
  - Place an online order ahead of time to help save time during your shopping time! Ask a Community Food Programs Coordinator for more information or email cfp@foodgatherers.org.
  - If you are a large program using multiple carts, please alert the warehouse staff when a cart is ready to be weighed-out.
  - We use these groupings *(Produce, Prepared, Dairy/Eggs, Bakery/Desserts, Meat, Non-Perishable, Beverages, and Non-Food)* to track the pounds of all items flowing in and out of our pantry. As best you can, separate all items according to these categories while shopping to allow for a faster checkout.

• **Respect.**
  - If you are running late and still decide to pantry shop during your scheduled time, you cannot stay late. Two additional programs may be scheduled after you and will need the parking spots, the carts and their designated time to shop the pantry.
  - Regardless of where your program falls on the pantry shopping schedule, we have set pantry hours so our staff can focus on other essential daily tasks when the pantry is not open.
  - If you are unable to make your scheduled shopping time, please call (734) 761-2796 or email cfp@foodgatherers.org to reschedule.
  - Please be mindful of Food Gatherers’ volunteers who may be stocking pantry shelves while you shop. Please don’t crowd them or take items off their carts while they are sorting and stocking.

• **You are what makes the pantry a success!**
  - If you need an item that you don’t see, please ask a warehouse staff if they could get it for you. We almost always have extra fresh produce available.
  - If you have any questions or issues, please talk with a Community Food Programs staff person or email them at cfp@foodgatherers.org.
  - Thank YOU for your cooperation, kindness and commitment to serving your clients!

**CHECK-OUT PROCESS:**

• **Begin the check-out process with 5-10 minutes left in your 30 minutes shopping timeframe.**
  - Once you’re done shopping, head to the Warehouse area (between the bakery and specialty products) where you’ll see Food Gatherers employees in green shirts at the computers. Let them know you’re done shopping and they’ll weigh your items and have you check-out.

• Be sure to safeguard food from rain, snow, and hot and cold temperatures while transporting it to your site!

• Keep your drive time to 30 minutes or less and immediately store food in its proper place when you return to your site.