

# Food Safety Guidelines for Donors

*Ensuring Safe & High-Quality Food Donations*

## 1. Introduction

Thank you for donating surplus food to support our community! To ensure safety and compliance, please follow these guidelines. By adhering to these protocols, you help prevent foodborne illness and maintain trust in our donation program.

## 2. Eligibility: What Can Be Donated?

### Accepted Donations

- **Non-perishable foods:** Unopened, commercially packaged goods (cans, boxes, dried pasta, rice, etc.) within the "best by" date.
- **Perishable foods:** Fresh produce, dairy, meat, or prepared foods *only if*:
  - Kept at safe temperatures ( $\leq 40^{\circ}\text{F}$  for refrigerated;  $\leq 0^{\circ}\text{F}$  for frozen).
  - Prepared in a licensed kitchen (for restaurants/caterers).
  - Packaged securely to prevent contamination.
- **Bakery items:** Bread, pastries (no cream fillings unless refrigerated).

### Not Accepted

- Foods past expiration ("use by" or "sell by" dates).
- Damaged, dented, or bloated cans.
- Homemade foods (unless from a licensed kitchen).
- Raw shellfish, unpasteurized dairy, or recalled products.

## 3. Food Handling & Storage Protocols

### Temperature Control

- **Cold foods:** Must be kept at  $\leq 40^{\circ}\text{F}$  until donation. Use insulated containers with ice packs.

- **Hot foods:** Must be kept at  $\geq 140^{\circ}\text{F}$  if donating prepared meals.
- **Frozen foods:** Must remain solidly frozen (no thawing/refreezing).

### **Packaging & Labeling**

- Use leak-proof, food-grade containers.
- Label all items with:
  - Name of food
  - Date prepared/packaged
  - Storage instructions (e.g., "Keep Refrigerated")

### **Cross-Contamination Prevention**

- Separate raw meats from ready-to-eat foods.
- Use gloves and clean utensils when handling food.

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## **4. Donation Drop-Off Process**

### **Scheduling & Logistics**

- Contact [Organization Name] at **[Phone/Email]** to schedule drop-off/pickup.
- Deliver during designated hours: **[Days/Times]**.
- Provide advance notice for large donations.

### **Inspection Upon Arrival**

Our team will:

- ✓ Check temperatures (for perishable items).
- ✓ Verify packaging integrity.
- ✓ Document donation details (for tax receipts).

*Note: We reserve the right to refuse unsafe or non-compliant donations.*

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## **5. Liability & Compliance**

- **Good Samaritan Act:** Donors are protected from liability when donating in good faith.

- **Documentation:** We provide donation receipts for tax deductions (IRS Section 170(e)(3)).
  - **Recall Policy:** If a donated item is recalled, notify us immediately.
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## **6. FAQs for Donors**

### **Q: Can I donate leftovers from a catered event?**

A: Yes, if they were kept at safe temps and packaged properly.

### **Q: Are tax receipts provided?**

A: Yes, upon request with documented donation value.

### **Q: What if my food doesn't meet safety standards?**

A: We'll respectfully decline and suggest alternative disposal methods (e.g., composting).