



Thank you for your interest in partnering with the Lowcountry Food Bank (LCFB) to provide equitable access to nutritious food to the neighbors we feed. We partner with non-profit and faith-based organizations to distribute food across our ten-county service area: Beaufort, Berkeley, Charleston, Colleton, Dorchester, Georgetown, Hampton, Horry, Jasper, and Williamsburg counties.

LCFB is a member of the Feeding America Network of food banks which enforces national compliance regulations for food banks and their member agencies, including requirements provided below.

Interested organizations can submit their contact information through an online form located on the LCFB's website under the Partner Agencies tab to be informed when the next round of applications is being accepted.

The Application Process:

The LCFB invests extensive time with applicants to ensure that new partners are provided with all necessary information to manage a successful food distribution organization. To become a member of the LCFB partner agency network, an agency must first be approved for initial screening.

Not all organizations applying for partnership will be invited to continue with the application process. Our application review committee will consider factors such as how frequently applicants can distribute food, the location of the applicant in relation to our other agencies, and overall readiness for partnership with LCFB. We appreciate that every organization applying wishes to advance in the application process. At the same time, LCFB must make strategic and equitable decisions about where to place our partner agencies.

If invited to continue in the application process, onboarding lasts about four months from beginning to end.

If approved to move forward, a prospective agency must also:

- Attend a New Member Information Session.
- Submit New Member Application and provide additional documents for consideration.
- Submit a \$150 non-refundable application fee.
- Complete food safety training, pantry choice training, and Link2Feed (pantry visit software) training.
- Meet and work with an assigned LCFB mentor agency.
- Complete all objectives set forth in the probationary period.



Requirements for Membership:

To be considered for partnership with the Lowcountry Food Bank, agencies must do the following:

- Provide proof of tax-exempt status under Section 501(c)(3) of federal Internal Revenue Service statutes **or** be a faith-based organization in good standing with the state and/or denomination.
- Be accessible to the public (if operating a food pantry or soup kitchen). For example, a food program cannot serve only a select population such as members of their own church congregation.
- Maintain consistent hours of operation and distribute food at least four times a month. It is strongly encouraged that at least one of your weekly distributions take place on a Saturday or after 4:00 pm Monday-Friday. The expectation is to utilize partnership with the Lowcountry Food Bank to provide food for their neighbors; therefore, periods of inactivity (no food from the Lowcountry Food Bank for two consecutive months) may lead to deactivation.
- Provide food assistance to those in need without charging or asking for donations.
- Operate using a “pantry choice” model which allows your neighbors to choose what they receive from a variety of foods, better enabling them to meet their personal dietary needs and preferences. Instead of a pre-packed bag of groceries, your neighbors will select the food themselves.
- Have adequate and reliable transportation to and from the Lowcountry Food Bank to pick up food orders. The agency will need to have regular access to one or more large vehicles (e.g., SUVs, trucks, trailers, cargo vans) to transport food.
- Have at least two employees or volunteers to manage and operate the food program.
- Keep up-to-date and accurate records. The Lowcountry Food Bank requires new agencies to utilize an online management software, so it is important that your volunteers be comfortable using technology.
- Have reliable internet service, a computer/tablet dedicated to the agency, and a copier.
- The agency must have a refrigerator and freezer designated for the food pantry to store perishable items such as produce, dairy, and meat.
- Maintain an adequate budget to support a sustainable food program.

*** If you are applying to be an on-site feeding program (plan to cook with the food), a current Manager ServSafe Certificate is required. This certification may be obtained from local organizations such as Atlantic Food Safety.*

Please watch our website for updates: <https://lowcountryfoodbank.org/about-us/partner-agencies/>

Email membershipservices@lcfbank.org for more information.