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LICENSING, CERTIFICATION, AUDIT

For vehicle and equipment certification, see Module 8.

Food Handling Safety

Basic Licensing and Certification Issues:

- Feeding America is increasing the requirements for food handling safety, which Remote Rural Food Banks may have difficulty complying with in light of limited resources and staffing.
- Food Handling Safety encompasses a multitude of practices: safe food temperatures, trained staff, pest control, etc. Attention must be paid to equipment, staff training and oversight, facilities maintenance and housekeeping, and transportation issues.
- Some things that used to be allowed (such as piecing together refrigeration units) are no longer allowed. Refrigeration units need to be certified, if modified, they are no longer certified. Anything with food on it/in it, talk to your local Environmental Health Dept. and Feeding America (CA) to be aware prior to purchase.

Best Practices or Standards:

- Model Standards for food handling, salvaging, distribution, are available from Feeding America (FDA, etc.)
- Local Environmental Health Departments will provide up-to-date information on: (1) food handler certification requirements; (2) new equipment certification standards; and (3) permitting requirements.

Resources and Contacts:

- Feeding America has links to food safety guidelines: <http://www.feedingamerica.org/ways-to-give/give-food/become-a-product-partner/food-safety.html>
- Feeding America will know the different levels of ServSafe food handling certification required for different levels of services. All remote rural food banks are partner distribution organizations (PDOs) and can get information from the closest certified affiliate. PDOs have fewer requirements, but it is helpful to learn standards to aspire to.

Workplace Safety

Hazardous Chemicals, Waste, Safety Equipment (eye wash, defibrillator, etc.). Evacuation plans, CPR training

Basic Licensing and Certification Issues:

- OSHA has strict requirements for workplace safety. For example, flammable materials have to be stored in certain types of cabinets, with signage. Feeding America CA-has resources on requirements.
- Fire extinguishers have to be annually looked at by the Fire Dept. Evacuation plans must be

posted with emergency numbers - fire, ambulance. There should be maps in every room, and a designated meeting place outside building. The local Fire Dept. can help with trainings and demonstrations.

- The Worker's Comp insurance carrier can send a consultant to assess ergonomics. Insurance companies are happy to help with processes and procedures for safety.
- It is helpful to have staff trained on how to deal with difficult clients, e.g. those with mental health issues or under the influence. Your county Behavioral Health dept. or police department may offer trainings on how to diffuse an emotionally charged situation.

Best Practices or Standards:

- CalOSHA can send a consultant to do a site review of your facility and identify any potential hazards that need to be corrected. There is no cost for this and they will not cite you for any hazards they identify during the visit. They will present you with a corrective action plan detailing areas that need improvement and provide a timeframe for response. It is best to designate a key staff person to walk through the facility with the consultant and take notes. You can potentially save thousands of dollars in fines by being proactive.
- Hold ongoing in-service training on equipment use, hazardous waste, heat, eye washing, sexual harassment, safety gear, basic food handling safety. Target training to the group that needs it. Incorporate safety meetings into monthly staff meetings.
- You may be able to connect with local farmers who have livestock to come and pick up food waste for their animals or for 4H.

Resources and Contacts:

- Sources of information:
 - Nearest Feeding America certified affiliate has a monitoring tool to check operational safety issues.
 - Local fire department
 - Local warehouses (WalMart)
 - USDA occasionally inspects.
 - Cal OSHA
 - Hospital / law enforcement - can give some training in emergency equipment use.
 - Red Cross - CPR training
 - Local colleges: safety trainings, first aid, CPR

AUDITS / MONITORING

Program audits/monitoring and financial audits

Financial Audit: If a Food Bank has \$750,000 or more in government funds, there is a requirement for a single audit. The requirement to include the value of USDA commodities puts many small food banks over that threshold. In remote locations, it may be hard to find an auditor who is familiar with these requirements, and it is an added expense to budget for.

Program audits / Monitoring

Challenges: There can be multiple monitoring visits from different funders, regulators, etc. This requires staff time, attention, and follow-up for programs already challenged with limited staffing

capacity. Feeding America has the most intensive monitoring, and they add new sections every year.

Best Practices or Standards:

- Monitors can check on multiple factors in an organization, ranging from organizational structure, to pest control issues. It is good to take all the monitoring tools and make one big checklist, distributing tasks monthly.
- Keep a calendar specific for when certifications need to be updated (ServSafe, CPR, forklift, etc.), fire extinguishers have to be renewed, etc.
- Each monitor/auditor will bring their unique approach and level of intensity to the site visit. Be adaptable and don't take anything personal. Be patient with conflicting advice. Listen for ideas to incorporate for proactive improvement. It is also an opportunity to engage the monitors in seeing ground level work.

Resources and Contacts:

- Contact other rural remote food banks in your region with similar programs to learn of what to expect, and to see what tools they have to assist them in managing certifications, monitoring and audits.

Advocacy Issues for RRFB Program Development

- No advocacy issues identified to date.