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Partner Agency Blast

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Important Reminders

Upcoming Closures

IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT – **CTFB will be closed on Thursday, December 23 and Friday, December 24** in observance of the winter holiday. **CTFB will also be closed on Friday, December 31** to ring in the New Year but there will be no closures in 2022 related to the New Year’s Eve holiday. All regularly scheduled pick-ups, deliveries, and ordering will be cancelled during these times. Below are the modifications being made to the ordering schedule as a result of these closure:

If you are picking up or receiving delivery on:	Your ordering window opens on:	At:	Your order is due on:	At:
Mon., Dec. 27	Mon., Dec. 20	10:00 a.m.	Tues., Dec. 21	9:00 a.m.
Tues., Dec. 28	Tues., Dec. 21	10:00 a.m.	Wed., Dec. 22	9:00 a.m.
Mon., Jan. 3	Tues., Dec. 28	10:00 a.m.	Wed., Dec. 29	9:00 a.m.
Tues., Jan. 4	Wed., Dec. 29	10:00 a.m.	Thurs., Dec. 30	9:00 a.m.

If your organization will be in need of a rescheduled pick-up at CTFB during this closure, please reach out to your relationship manager to see what may be possible. Reschedule spots will be limited and are available first-come, first-served.

For the most up-to-date closure information, please refer to the [2021 Holiday Guide](#), the [2022 Holiday Guide](#), and the [agencies page](#) of our website. CTFB will post and send out closure ordering guidelines 30 days prior so you can plan for your pantry needs.

[**Click here to download the 2022 Holiday Guide.**](#)

[**Click here to visit the Agencies page.**](#)

Agency News

TEFAP Update: Signature Waiver to Expire

The Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA) waiver to remove the signature requirement from participants/proxies on TEFAP intake forms will expire on Friday December 31, 2021. Please start planning to discontinue the use of the [Temporary TEFAP Intake Form](#) after 12/31/21. Starting January 1, 2022, continue the use of the original two sided TEFAP intake form in [English](#) and [Spanish](#). Agencies must obtain federally required intake criteria to properly determine and document eligibility from all participants received TEFAP/USDA foods. Please ensure to determine eligibility based on categorical and/or income.

As reminder, all partners must publicly post and/or share the [Participants Rights and Responsibilities](#) with clients during the intake process. CTFB will notify all Partners if TDA extends the signature waiver beyond Dec. 31. If you have any questions regarding the intake process, TEFAP recertification or eligibility, please reach out to your relationship manager.

Reminder: Monthly Report Holds

The reports partner agencies submit each month are crucial to the Central Texas Food Bank's mission and here's why:

- To source food accurately. The food sourcing team at CTFB analyze the data from partner agency reports to procure and forecast food purchases. Accurate monthly reports ensure our shelves are stocked and ready to serve the nutritious food our neighbors need.
- To inform national organizations. The food bank also uses the data from reports to provide cumulative information to the Texas Department of

Agriculture, which reports consolidated statewide numbers to the United States Department of Agriculture and to Feeding America. Accurate and timely monthly reports have immediate and larger implications.

As we enter the New Year, we want to remind you of the report hold policy. Monthly reports must be submitted through the online reporting system by the eighth of the following month that is being reported (Example: November's report due by December 8). **If a Partner Agency does not submit their reports by the eighth, they are put on hold and may not place orders until all reports are submitted.**

Once an agency has accrued 4 report holds in a calendar year, the account will automatically be suspended until the first of the following month. The suspension will not be removed until the first of the following month, even after the late report is received. Every late monthly report received after an agency has accrued 4 report holds in a calendar year will automatically be suspended until the first of the following month. Excessive holds in a calendar year may lead to termination. Please let your relationship manager know if you have any questions.

Special Winter Holiday Request

The Central Texas Food Bank would like to ask for your help this holiday season! Do you know of an event coming up in your area that will serve holiday meals or groceries? CTFB requests that agencies share any information regarding free holiday food events happening in your area by filling out this [survey](#). Also, please let us know if you plan to close or change distribution times during the holiday season. Thank you all in advance for taking the time to submit any information you have.

Merchandise Store

This is a reminder that CTFB has a merchandise store available to our partners and the public! We will continue to provide free t-shirts to our primary agency contacts, but now there is a purchasing option for staff and volunteers who would like a "This is my Hunger Fighting Shirt" t-shirt or other merchandise items to represent our partnership! Check it out here: <http://centraltexasfoodbank.org/merch>.

Free CTFB Gardening Classes - Austin Area Only

The Garden Team here at CTFB would like to extend an invite to our Travis County neighbors who are interested in learning more about food gardening or cooking from the garden. Classes are offered in English and Spanish and participants must be able to pick up food or attend in-person at an Austin-area location. More details and registration information below.

Austin-area partners: please share these opportunities with your clients! [Click here for Cooking from the Garden flyers \(English/Spanish\)](#) and [click here for Organic Food Gardening flyers \(English/Spanish\)](#).

Cooking From the Garden

Learn to cook seasonally using produce harvested in the Food Bank Gardens. This class pairs basic gardening information with weekly boxes of food and live cooking demonstrations by CTFB staff.

- Available in Spanish and English.
- **Virtual only.** All participants must have stable, reliable internet access and a Zoom capable device to participate in this virtual class series.
- Participants who want to receive weekly grocery supplement with recipe ingredient must pick it up from the food bank at a pre-scheduled time.

Grocery pick up is encouraged, but not required to participate in the virtual class.

- This class is suited for Adults, Seniors, and Families.
- Participants should have access to cooking facilities with refrigeration, stove/cooktop, oven, pots and pans, blender, and cutlery.

Registration Links for Cooking From the Garden

English www.centraltexasfoodbank.org/cookingclass January 12 - February 16

Spanish www.centraltexasfoodbank.org/cocinardeljardin January 13 - February 17

Introduction to Organic Food Gardening

Get your hands dirty while learning in depth gardening skills. This class pairs monthly gardening lessons with all the materials you need to start your own portable container garden to grow fresh, seasonal produce.

- Available in Spanish and English.
- **In person only. Participants must travel to the class location.**
- This class is suitable for Adults and Seniors.
- Participants should have access to a space where they can place a 1 sq ft container garden. Space should have ample sunlight and convenient water access.
- COVID protocols for in-person classes include masking at all times, and maintenance of 6 ft social distance from all participants not in the same household. In addition, this class will be conducted 100% outside (restrooms will be available).

Registration Links for Intro to Food Gardening

English www.centraltexasfoodbank.org/gardening-classes; January 25th, February 22, March 22 - held at Hill Country Community Ministries

Spanish www.centraltexasfoodbank.org/clasedejardinaria; January 22, February 26, March 26 - held at CTFB Garden

Special Announcement

Enrolling in health insurance can be complicated, but CTFB Partner Agency **Foundation Communities** is here to simplify the process! Open Enrollment starts Nov 1 and runs until Jan 15, 2022.

Monday through Saturday during Open Enrollment, Foundation Communities simplifies health insurance enrollment in Marketplace insurance plans, for free. Please help us spread the word by referring clients or community organizations to these services. You can find English and Spanish outreach materials including flyers, posters, email banners, and social media posts [here](#).

Three easy steps are all it takes to get enrolled:

- 1) Complete the initial "Get Ready" form or phone appointment. This can be done [online](#) or over the phone. To complete the form over the phone, clients can call 512-381-4520 or visit ProsperHealthCoverage.org to schedule a phone appointment.
- 2) Schedule an Enrollment Appointment. After completing the initial "Get Ready" form, clients will receive a link and phone number to schedule their enrollment appointment, which can be in-person at one of their two locations or online.

3) Upon completion of the enrollment appointment, clients will be enrolled in affordable health insurance! Foundation Communities can help them navigate healthcare all year.

If you'd like to request a staff training or additional information, please contact Clisha D'Souza at clisha.dsouza@foundcom.org.

Health insurance. Simplified.
Let us simplify your Marketplace insurance enrollment, *for free.*

Open Enrollment: Nov 1 to Jan 15

To schedule your "Get Ready" phone appointment, call or visit us at:

ProsperHealthCoverage.org 512-381-4520

FOUNDATION COMMUNITIES

This publication is supported by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) as part of a financial assistance award totaling \$1,000,000 and 100% percentage funded by CMS/HHS and 0% funded by non-government sources. The contents are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily represent the official views of, nor an endorsement, by CMS/HHS, or the U.S. Government.

Special Announcement for Partners in the Waco area

That Fall Feeling

Is COVID-19 or Winter Storm Disaster stress keeping you distanced from loved ones? We're here to hear you.

Give us a call or check out our website!
www.trthotccp.org
(866) 576-1101

We're here for Bosque, Falls, Freestone, Hill, Limestone, and McLennan counties.

Texans Recovering Together is providing mental health support through a crisis-counseling program. Texans Recovering Together has a team of qualified professional that provide free confidential phone calls or virtual meeting sessions for those in **McLennan, Bosque, Falls, Hill, Freestone, and Limestone** counties Monday-Friday 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. The crisis counseling assistance and training program is a fantastic resource to share with our neighbors who may need some assistance on coping through life after the winter storm and during the COVID-19 pandemic. Counseling sessions may include resource navigation, grief support, coping skills development, linkage to available support groups, and more. To

recommend this resource to a neighbor please referral them to navigate the website and register for assistance at <https://www.trthotccp.org/>.

Contact the Team

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