



Volunteer Guide

Thank you for your participation in the Sauk Prairie Food Pantry. We are a not-for-profit social service agency established in 1983 by the Ecumenical Council of Sauk Prairie. We have one paid worker but really rely on volunteers like you to help the Food Pantry! We depend on volunteers and greatly appreciate your help.

Patrons must be residents of the Sauk Prairie School District and meet the financial guidelines to qualify for assistance. Patrons are eligible for food once a month. In case of emergency, an additional amount of food may be given. Each patron fills out a card with information about themselves and their family: address, names of family members and the age of each; any special needs. The chart outlining financial guidelines is printed and displayed at the Food Pantry. By signing the card, the patron states that all the information is correct and that their family income falls at or below the level listed poster. A family may register at any time. Cards last 4 years. Patrons may update their information at any time. Patrons must bring an ID for every member of the household every January (or when they first come.) A piece of mail showing they live in the Sauk Prairie School District is needed every month. If a patron fails to bring an ID they have 3 chances. On the 3rd strike, the family member who does not have an ID will be crossed off the card but can be added back on. Cards are kept at the Pantry and pulled when the patron comes for assistance. They sign the back of the card each time they receive food.

All information on these cards or gathered during a distribution is confidential! No information about any patron should be discussed outside the Pantry. This is extremely important!

This guide is intended to be a helpful tool in getting acquainted with the Pantry and its procedures. If you have questions, ask a Board Member or an experienced volunteer. We hope this will be a pleasant and worthwhile experience for you. Use your common sense and your best judgment and all will be well.

The Sauk Prairie Area Food Pantry Food Safety Policy is also included in this guide. Please familiarize yourself with this policy and follow it. If, in working with the food items, you find anything that seems to be damaged, spoiled or not good, discard it. When in doubt, toss it out!

Food Pantry distribution days and hours are:

First Wednesday of the month	5:30pm-6:30pm
Second Wednesday of the month	5:30pm-6:30pm
Third Wednesday of the month	9:30am-11:00am
Third Saturday of the month	9:30am-11:00am
Fourth Wednesday of the month	5:30pm-11:00am

Volunteers should arrive at the Pantry 30 minutes before distribution begins.

Pre-distribution tasks:

- Check shelves to see if foods are properly arranged and accessible. A Board Member or experienced volunteer will help determine if any additional items need to be put on shelves.
- Put frozen meat in bins according to the labels on the bins
- Arrange other food from the freezers and coolers on the shelves or tables so patrons can make their selection.
- Check availability of plastic and paper bags for patrons use.

Distribution tasks:

- Registration of patrons – this task is generally by the responsible Board Member for confidentiality issues. All information about patrons is confidential. This is very important!
- The registrar gives each family a coupon, valid at Sentry, Kwik Trip or Piggly Wiggly for \$10 (small or medium family) or \$15 (large family). This coupon is valid for one month and can be used to purchase fresh fruit and vegetables, eggs, bread, and/or dairy (milk, butter, cheese, yogurt) products.
- After completing registration, volunteers will help patrons make their way through the Pantry and collect their food. The shelves are marked with the amount of each item that can be taken, some by family size. There are grocery carts to be used. Assist patrons with bagging their items as they shop.
- When the patron is finished collecting their food, volunteers help carry out their groceries and bring the carts back into the Pantry.

Post-distribution tasks:

- At the end of the distribution, the registrar tallies information on the number and sizes of families served and enters it on a form. Patron cards are then returned to the folder.
- Return any unused food to freezer or cooler if necessary.
- Restock and straighten shelves ready for next distribution.
- Be sure all freezers, etc. are tightly closed.
- Turn out the lights. Turn off fans. Make sure windows are closed and locked.
- Lock the doors.

Know that you have been very helpful and that your help is appreciated. Thanks!