

## FOOD BANK

*(Year 3~~4~~5 Service Priority: #~~5~~6 for Part A*

**Food Bank** is a support service. The Food Bank program is a central distribution center providing actual food items (groceries), and personal hygiene products when available, for ~~low-income~~low-income persons who are living with HIV or AIDS. Groceries are distributed in cartons or bags of assorted products to eligible Ryan White Program clients. Local Food Bank assistance will be provided on a temporary, as needed basis to eligible clients to help maintain their health by providing a balanced, adequate diet.

Food Bank providers must offer nutritional counseling to all Food Bank clients through qualified staff supervised by a Licensed Dietitian or Nutritionist. A referral to a Registered Dietitian under a Ryan White Program-funded Outpatient/Ambulatory Health Services provider (specialty care; a core medical service) may also be made for nutritional services to meet this requirement. Proof of the provision of nutrition services from the Food Bank provider, or a referral for nutrition services to an appropriate provider, or the client declining such service must be documented in the client's record.

Ryan White Program funds for Food Bank services may not be used for water filtration/purification systems in communities where issues of water safety do not exist, household appliances, pet foods, or other non-essential products.

### A. **Program Operation Requirements:**

#### A.1 **Standard Provisions**

Food Bank services may be provided only on an **emergency basis**. For this program, an emergency is defined as an extreme change of circumstance: loss of income (i.e., job loss or departure of person providing support), loss of housing, or release from institutional care (substance abuse treatment facility, hospital, jail, or prison) within the last two weeks. Duration of Food Bank service provision is to be **temporary**. Other emergencies, as defined by the client's Medical Case Manager, must be documented in the client's chart (or in the Client Profile in the Provide® Enterprise Miami data management system) as they arise. A severe change to the client's medical condition, as defined below under the provision for additional occurrences, may also be considered an emergency.

Medical Case Managers must conduct initial and ongoing assessment of each client to determine if the client is eligible for food-related services under any other public and/or private funding source, including food stamps or other charity care food banks and food distribution events.

Unless otherwise approved by the Miami-Dade County Office of Management and Budget, the provision of this service will be limited to twenty (20) occurrences within the Ryan White Part A Fiscal Year (March 1, 2024<sup>5</sup> through February 28, 2025<sup>6</sup>). One (1) occurrence is defined as all Food Bank services provided within one (1) calendar week. For example, a client could receive Food Bank services once a week every week for five (5) months, or twice per month for ten (10) months, in the grant Fiscal Year or any variation thereof, with the limit of twenty (20) occurrences in the grant Fiscal Year.

Groceries, including personal hygiene products when available, can be picked up on a weekly or monthly basis. If groceries will be picked up on a **weekly** basis, the client will be limited to groceries valued at \$85.00 per week at each pick-up. A client accessing Food Bank services on a weekly basis may not pick up groceries sooner than seven (7) days from the prior pick-up day.

If the client chooses to pick up groceries on a **monthly** basis, the client will be limited to groceries valued at \$85.00 per week multiplied by the number of times the original day of pick-up occurs in the month. A client accessing Food Bank services on a monthly basis may not pick up groceries in a new month prior to the same pick-up day from the previous month.

Providers must make every effort to obtain matching funds, donations, or any supplemental assistance for the program and these efforts should be documented. Providers must also be familiar with and capable of referring clients to other community, faith-based, and/or neighborhood Food Bank sites when the client is not in an emergency situation and/or has reached their Food Bank allowance limit.

Providers must be able to provide ethnic foods and foods suited to special client dietary needs.

## **A.2. Initial Referral and Additional Occurrences**

A letter of medical necessity is NOT required for a referral to Food Bank services for the client's first twenty (20) occurrences during the grant fiscal year; however, the circumstances justifying the referral to Food Bank services should be clearly documented in the client's chart and a Ryan White Program In Network Referral should be generated by the Medical Case Manager. A completed Out of Network Referral is also acceptable for this support service. Once the client's initial twenty (20) occurrences are exhausted, the client may NOT receive additional Food Bank services during the same Ryan White Part A Fiscal Year (i.e., March 1, 2024<sup>5</sup> through February 28, 2025<sup>6</sup>) **without a Ryan White Program Nutritional Assessment Letter for Food Bank Services**

A **severe** change to the client's medical condition (i.e., new HIV-related diagnosis/symptom, wasting syndrome, protein imbalance, recent chemotherapy, recent hospitalization, etc.) may warrant additional occurrences of Food Bank services. When needed for the additional occurrences, the **Ryan White Program Nutritional Assessment Letter for Food Bank Services** must be completed by a licensed medical provider **OR** a Registered Dietitian or Licensed Nutritionist not associated with the Ryan White Part A Program-funded Food Bank provider. The client must be reassessed for the medical condition justifying additional Food Bank services every four (4) months. The Physician or Registered Dietitian or Licensed Nutritionist must specify the frequency and number of additional Food Bank visits (occurrences) that should be allowed for the client (maximum of sixteen (16) additional occurrences).

### **A.3. Provision for Families**

In addition to the maximum amount defined above for groceries available per week to eligible clients, each additional adult who is a person with HIV and lives in the same household is eligible to receive \$85.00 per week in groceries subject to the same service guidelines. Each dependent (i.e., minors under 18 years of age and living in the same household as the client who is a person with HIV) is also eligible to receive \$26.00 per week in groceries, subject to the same service guidelines above. The client must provide documentation to prove the dependent's age and place of residence.

### **B. Rules for Reimbursement:**

Providers will be reimbursed based on properly documented invoices reflecting the distribution of weekly bags of groceries, including personal hygiene products, plus a dispensing charge to be agreed upon between the provider and the Miami-Dade County Office of Management and Budget-Grants Coordination (OMB-GC). The cost of the weekly bag of groceries will not exceed \$85.00. Providers will also submit a quarterly reconciliation of actual expenditures for food costs, staffing expenses, and other line items as listed on the approved budget.

### **C. Additional Rules for Reporting:**

Providers must report monthly activities according to client visits (i.e., weekly occurrences). Providers must also submit to OMB an assurance that Ryan White Program funds were used only for allowable purposes in accordance with the contract agreement, and that the Ryan White Program was used as the payer of last resort. Providers must also submit an assurance regarding compliance with all federal, state, and local laws regarding the provision of Food Bank services, including any required licensure and/or certifications.

### **D. Additional Rules for Documentation:**

Providers must maintain documentation of the amount and use of funds for purchase of non-food items; and make this documentation available to OMB staff upon request.

**E. Special Client Eligibility Criteria:**

A Ryan White Program In Network Referral or an Out of Network Referral (accompanied by all appropriate supporting documentation) is required for this service; and must be entered in the Provide® Enterprise Miami data management system. Current referrals expire automatically on February 28<sup>th</sup> of each Fiscal Year (or February 29<sup>th</sup> if a leap year). Each Medical Case Management referral must document the number of eligible dependents (i.e., minors). For additional occurrences, the client must be reassessed for the medical condition justifying additional Food Bank services every four (4) months. Providers must document that clients who receive Ryan White Part A Program- funded Food Bank services have gross household incomes that do not exceed **250%** of the 2024-2025 Federal Poverty Level (FPL).

Clients who fall between **251% to 400% FPL** should be referred to the **Ryan White Part B Program** to access Emergency Financial Assistance resources, as funding allows; or to other resources in the community.

Clients receiving Food Bank services must be documented as having been properly screened for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) (formerly known as the Food Stamp program) benefits, home-delivered meal services through Medicaid's Long-Term Care (LTC) program, other community food bank programs, or other public sector funding as appropriate. Medical Case Managers must document a client's need for food services in the client's Plan of Care (POC) and indicate if the client is eligible to access food services under other available programs, with the understanding that the Ryan White Program-funded Food Bank services are provided on an emergency basis and as payer of last resort. If the client is eligible to receive food service benefits from another source, the Medical Case Manager will assist the client in applying to such program(s). If the client already receives SNAP benefits when requesting Ryan White Program-funded Food Bank services, the client must submit a copy of their SNAP award/benefit letter as documentation that the award is \$250.00 or less per month in nutrition assistance benefits per person in the household; unless otherwise adjusted by the Office of Management and Budget-Grants Coordination/Ryan White Program with written notification to subrecipients. If the client applied for Food Stamp benefits and was denied, a copy of the denial letter must be scanned into the Client Profile in the Provide® Enterprise Miami data management system.

While clients reside in institutional settings (i.e., nursing home or a substance abuse residential treatment facility) they will not qualify for Ryan White Part A Program-funded Food Bank services. Similarly, while clients qualify for and can access

other public funding for food services, they will not be eligible for Ryan White Part A Program-funded Food Bank services, unless the provider is able to document that the client has an emergency need, or has applied for such benefits and eligibility determination is pending (a copy of benefit application must be kept in the client's chart).

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