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VISITING A FOOD BANK FOR THE FIRST TIME

Food banks are an accessible resource for anyone in our community who needs help getting food. They provide produce, pantry staples, and other groceries. Some food banks also provide other household goods, like diapers and pet food.

Here's what you should know about visiting a food bank:

Everyone is welcome.

Some people visit a food bank regularly and some people only go once in their life. Food banks are a community resource available to everyone.

Go to a food bank near you.

Many food banks serve people living in specific zip codes, cities, or school districts. Some have rules about serving people outside of those areas. Contact your food bank if you have questions about your eligibility.

Each food bank operates differently.

Some food banks are set up like grocery stores, allowing you to choose which items you want. At others, you'll receive a pre-packed bag of food.

Expect a line.

Many food banks are working to reduce wait times, but you might need to wait for more than an hour before you receive food. The wait could be outside or in a waiting room.

Food banks will ask for some personal information.

Food banks use this information to collect data about the communities that they serve. They may ask you for a photo ID and proof of address. You might also be asked questions about your race, ethnicity or income. You can still receive food even if you don't have the right documents or choose not to answer a question. Most food banks provide food to everyone, regardless of paperwork.

You have a right to be treated fairly.

You have the right to be treated fairly regardless of race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, nationality, marital status, disability, or citizenship status. If you are the target of discrimination, you can ask your food bank how to file a complaint. Learn more about filing a formal grievance by calling the U.S. Department of Agriculture at 866-632-9992.

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