

**ONTARIO ASSOCIATION OF FOOD BANKS**  
**Standards of Operation**

APPROVED JUNE 2005

As a member of the Ontario Association of Food Banks (OAFB), we pledge to operate our food bank using the following principles:

### **NATIONAL & PROVINCIAL FOOD BANK RELATIONS**

1. We will abide by the Canadian Association of Food Banks “Code of Ethics”, and the conditions governing the “National Food Sharing System” [NFSS].
2. We will strive to maintain collegial relationships with other food banks, either through our regional association or through membership meetings of the CAFB and the OAFB.
3. We will conduct our public relations within our collective communities in a way that advocates for the people we serve and presents a positive image for all food banks.
4. We will not publicly slander or cast aspersions against any other food bank or feeding program regardless of membership status with the OAFB.
5. We will not use membership with the OAFB as a leverage tool or position of power over another feeding agency.

### **CLIENT DIGNITY & RESPECT**

6. We will treat every person requesting help courteously and in such a way that dignity and self-esteem is never compromised.
7. We will serve those who come to us for help based on need and no other criteria.
8. We will not discriminate against any person on the basis of race, sex, sexual preference, religion, disability, or source of income.
9. We will respect the privacy of those we serve, and maintain the highest standards of confidentiality.
10. When we speak of people who use food banks we will do so with respect, recognizing that most people find themselves in this situation through no fault of their own.
11. We will avoid stereotypes and generalizations.
12. We will never compromise the dignity of people using food banks in any promotions, media contacts, or public education materials.
13. We will strive to maintain a friendly and welcoming environment in our food programs.
14. We will educate ourselves and others about the social conditions of those who need food banks.

15. We will strive to understand the social context of people in need to the extent that our resources allow including social welfare and social service regulation; we will support those who ask for food assistance so they receive their entitlements and rights.

### **CLIENT EMPOWERMENT**

16. We will strive to include people who need food banks in our planning, decision-making and governance.
17. We will strive to provide information about other community services to those who come to us for help.

### **FOOD HANDLING & DISTRIBUTION**

18. We will show our respect for food donors and clients by maintaining the highest possible standards for food storage, inventory controls and stock rotation.
19. We will never hoard food donations beyond our needs, but will share with other food banks as generously as we are able recognizing that there are people in need in every community.
20. We will therefore contribute surplus food to the provincial pool of food for sharing with all food banks.
21. We will strive to provide the most nutritionally balanced food hampers possible respecting dietary restrictions, cultural traditions, and religious beliefs depending on availability of our supplies.
22. We will accept no payment for the food we provide even if offered voluntarily and we will never require people who come for emergency food relief to work for food or to participate in any religious or political activities.
23. We will ensure that all food received from the OAFB or elsewhere will only be used within food bank programs and will not be sold, bartered, exchanged, or allowed to enter commercial channels for resale.

### **INTEGRITY & ACCOUNTABILITY**

24. We will maintain the highest standards of integrity in our handling of financial contributions, and we will provide our financial statements to donors and other members of our community in keeping with the requirements of Revenue Canada.
25. We will keep statistical records of the number of families and individuals we serve and will provide the information to the OAFB as requested to be used as public education material and to determine our fair share of food industry donations under the National Food Sharing System.

26. We support the efforts of the Ontario Association of Food Banks, and the Canadian Association of Food Banks to end the need for food banks.
27. We will acknowledge the OAFB's contribution to the success of our food bank where reasonable and practical in promotions and publicity.
28. We will advise the OAFB of food solicitation efforts which may overlap with the OAFB's own efforts on behalf of member food banks.