AGENCY ANNOUNCEMENTS

▪ Fax on Demand discontinued June 30
▪ All agencies transitioned to new E-Ordering System
▪ New TEFAP Form effective July 1
▪ Foodbank closed July 4 in observance of Independence Day

Effective July 1, 2014, all orders and order changes for the following day appointments must be submitted by 11:30am the day before.

AGENCY INSIDER

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SNAP REFERRAL

In April, the Streetsboro Christian Cupboard adopted the Foodbank’s SNAP Referral service to connect their clients to SNAP application assistance. One of the clients they helped was Margie.

Margie is an elderly, low income woman who was removed from SNAP in 2013 when she briefly worked part-time. However, she did not go back to work for long, and since the fall of 2013 has been trying to get by on her small Social Security Retirement income.

When we reached out to Margie, she shared that she has not reapplied for SNAP because she has no way to get to the Portage County Job and Family Services offices. For months, this barrier kept her from reapplying for benefits.

One of the Foodbank’s SNAP counselors explained to Margie that she could complete the application over the phone. The Foodbank can electronically submit her application and she can complete her eligibility interview over the phone. She was ecstatic to find out how simple it would be to reapply and did an application over the phone in minutes.

This is just one of hundreds of clients benefiting from the Foodbank’s SNAP Referral service. If you would like information on how you can connect your clients to this service, contact Laura Vanzo, SNAP Outreach Specialist, at 330.535.6900 or lvanzo@acrfb.org.

NEED HELP PAYING FOR FOOD?

The Akron-Canton Regional Foodbank is a proud member of Feeding America, the nation’s largest domestic hunger-relief charity.

The 2014 Agency Roundtable Series, sponsored by Huntington Bank, is off to a great start. This month, we will hit the road, traveling to all eight counties in our service area. All emergency feeding programs (food pantries, hot meal sites and shelters) are required to attend a minimum of one Agency Roundtable in order to maintain eligibility for grant funded product and be eligible to attend an equipment distribution. Agencies can RSVP online at akroncantonfoodbank.org/agency-roundtables.aspx or call the Foodbank at 330.535.6900 and ask for the Member Services Department.
As of June 27, 2014, there will be changes to the communication structure for the Ohio Benefit Bank (OBB). Previously, AmeriCorps VISTA members were assigned to the Foodbank to fulfill the role of OBB Community Organizers. There will no longer be community organizers for the Ohio Benefit Bank placed at Ohio’s 12 Feeding America Food Banks.

All OBB communications will now come from the Ohio Association of Foodbanks. A structure has been developed to provide support to the extensive OBB network throughout the state. This structure includes three Work Support Initiative Teams assigned to different tasks: the Community Engagement team, the Network Development Team and the Training and User Support team.

The Community Engagement team will work primarily with new OBB network participants or agencies interested in becoming a site. The Network Development team will provide customer service to existing OBB sites. Finally, the Training and User Support team will provide training and ongoing learning opportunities for both new and existing OBB sites and counselors. If you have questions or concerns regarding the Ohio Benefit Bank, or are interested in learning more, email contactobb@ohiofoodbanks.org.

FOODBANK CREATING NEW WEBSITE

The Foodbank is thrilled to be creating a new website, which will launch later this fall. Currently in the design stages, the new site will ensure the best possible experience to all online visitors. The new site will feature updated content, images and graphics which will provide a new and refreshed look. Additional upgrades include greater accessibility from mobile devices, social media integration and location based content.

The site will include an Agency Zone, just like our current website; however, pages will be slightly reorganized to improve the user experience. Improvements to the Agency Zone include a Resource Center for our network with information for agency staff and for clients, county specific statistics, an updated calendar function and more.

Member Agencies will be informed of the new website launch via Extra Helpings, a monthly email blast from the Member Services Department.

TEFAP FORM UPDATE JULY 1

Each year, the Federal and State Eligibility to Take Food Home (TEFAP) form changes on July 1, coinciding with the state of Ohio's fiscal year. Please dispose of all blank July 2013 forms. Your agency will need to file and store all forms currently being used. All clients will need to complete a new form to begin this new fiscal year.

Keep in mind that if a food pantry client uses a proxy, the proxy form needs to be updated each year as well. The task of completing TEFAP forms is a crucial part of maintaining compliance with the Ohio Department of Job & Family Services. As with all Foodbank documentation, we require maintaining all files for at least three years for auditing purposes.

Would you be interested in a system that automatically updates the TEFAP form for you? PantryTrak, an online, cloud based system for client intake, not only updates the TEFAP form automatically on July 1, but it also generates all data for the monthly report and much more. Agencies interested in PantryTrak simply need a computer and internet to use this system, which eliminates the need for the paper TEFAP form. If your agency is interested in learning more about PantryTrak, contact Gary Green, Manager, Member Services at 330.777.7575 or ggreen@acrfb.org.