

Wisconsin Food Pantry Conference Call Meeting Notes

Friday, February 26th, 2021 (Next meeting March 12th, 2021 from 10-11am)

Meeting hosted by Stephanie Dorfman, Feeding Wisconsin; led by Jennifer Putzer, Food Security Specialist, The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP). Thanks to Feeding Wisconsin for hosting calls, and posting information to the [FW website](#). Call support folks distributing food to needy households by providing information, providing an ear for challenges and ideas for solutions of practical problems.

- 1) Introduction-
- 2) COVID-19 update <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/covid-19/index.htm>
 - a) 561,311 reported cases compared to 525,924 on January 22nd, 2021. Overall, the 7-day average has dropped to 617 cases.
 - b) Three new variant strains now exist.
 - c) Wisconsin has 6,342 deaths as of 2/24/2021.
- 3) Vaccination information:
 - a) 1,237,807 (248,185 last meeting-1/22/21) vaccinations administered as of 2/24/21. This is 14% of the population.
 - b) Eligibility: See below. Includes Hunger Relief Personnel in the Next eligible population. This is all of our staff and volunteers at food pantries, soup kitchens and shelters.
 - i) Proof of eligibility

Who is eligible for the COVID-19 vaccine?

Current eligible populations	Next eligible populations
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Frontline health care personnel• Residents in skilled nursing and long-term care facilities• Fire and police personnel, Correctional staff• Adults aged 65 and over	<p>Starting on March 1:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Education and child care• Individuals enrolled in Medicaid long-term care programs• Some public-facing essential workers• Non-frontline essential health care personnel• Staff and residents in congregate living facilities



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While these groups are eligible on March 1, educators and child care providers should anticipate receiving vaccine in March and early April, and the remaining groups can plan to be vaccinated in April and May.

- c) Wisconsin COVID-19 Vaccination March 1st Registry. See below for information.
 - i) DHS is launching a new service, a Vaccine Registry, on March 1st to help connect individuals with available vaccines.
 - ii) <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/covid-19/vaccine-registry.htm>
- 4) Food Supply update.
 - a) 43M to WI Agriculture: Through the proposed biennial budget (21-23) Wisconsin will be investing 20M to help connect WI food banks and pantries with Wisconsin producers.
- 5) Feeding Wisconsin Update (Stephanie, sdorfman@feedingwi.org)

- a) Advocacy Opportunities

Federal COVID-19 Relief Bill – House will likely pass it today. There is still time to reach out to your legislators, especially Senator Baldwin and Johnson to share your thoughts on what should be included in that bill and future ending hunger priorities.

State Governor's Biennial Budget – In his \$43M proposal investing in WI Agriculture, Governor Evers included Investing \$20 million to help connect Wisconsin food banks and pantries with Wisconsin producers to provide food to families experiencing food insecurity. It is important that we let our state legislators, especially joint finance committee members, know that we support this piece of the proposal.

<https://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/WIGOV/bulletins/2bf8e85>

Feel free to use Feeding Wisconsin's Hunger Action forms:

<https://feedingwi.org/publicpolicy/advocacy/>. Please make sure to edit the language to make it your own—sharing your own stories as to why these policies and funding is important to your work.

- b) COVID-19 Pulse Survey update

Survey closed at the beginning of December. Our research partners are working on data analysis and should have a report to share publicly in Spring.

856 people at least started the survey and 653 completed the whole survey. This includes 8 who did the survey by phone after contacting the Survey Center (an option which wasn't explicitly offered, but was provided to the few who asked. There was good distribution across our state and respondents lived in 65 of 72 counties statewide. Overall, 61% most recently used a fixed location food pantry, 35% a mobile pantry, 4% home-delivered or other.

We don't have large enough samples to meaningfully break responses out by county. For the couple of largest food banks (Eastern, Southern), we could potentially break some things out for their region.

- c) FoodShare and P-EBT updates (De'Kendrea. dstamps@feedingwi.org)

College Students Eligibility – Students who are income-eligible for FoodShare now have more flexibility in meeting other eligibility requirements. Work-study eligible students and those with an expected family contribution (EFC) of zero are now eligible for FoodShare. These flexibilities will continue until one month after the Federal Public Health emergency order is ended.

Pandemic-EBT - DHS has submitted their P-EBT plan to the USDA and has been approved. DHS is currently working on implementation and timelines for distributing the benefit. P-EBT is provided to families with students currently receiving free/reduced lunch attending classes virtually or in a blended environment. Families should begin receiving information about P-EBT in April/May 2020.

For more information: <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/covid-19/forwardhealth-foodshare.htm>

6) Questions/Discussion/Open forum:

Question about when able to transition back to choice distribution

Question about some pantries not having enough product

Question about client data software

Next Meeting: Friday, 3/12/2021 at 10AM.

How to participate in the calls: Dial: 267-930-4000; Enter Meeting ID: 904-416-028# then when it asks for your participant ID, press "#". Food pantry operators, charitable feeding organizations, emergency response, and social service folks are the key constituents of these calls. During announcements, all participants can mute themselves by pressing mute on their phone or "*#6".

Questions related to notes: Questions related to notes can go to jennifer.putzer@dhs.wisconsin.gov.

For urgent questions about The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP) email

DHSTEFAP@dhs.wisconsin.gov. For Emergency food needs, dial 2-1-1, describe your need and location.

Staff will assist you in locating food resources.