



To Whom It May Concern:

Thank you for your interest in providing a food ministry in your community. Mississippi Food Network (MFN) partners with community-led ministries to help serve people at risk for hunger. Mississippi Food Network does **not** set up food pantries or food assistance programs. **Our role is to provide assistance to those grass roots organizations that have a direct link to the people within their communities.**

Submission of an application does not automatically guarantee approval for partnership. There are several factors that will be taken into consideration, which includes: 1) each new application must be from an organization that has been distributing food/serving their community for at least six months; and 2) MFN only partners with nonprofit organizations (must provide valid 501(c)(3) documentation) and churches (must provide church designation documentation).

Things to keep in mind as you move forward with your program: resourcing food in your community is a must i.e. food drives, purchasing food, MFN is just an additional supplement of food and there are not endless amounts. The agency must have sustainable funding. What does the food pantry staffing look like for your agency, whether volunteer or paid, this will be critical. Food programs cost money and not all food from Mississippi Food Network will be free of charge. How is your organization planning to fund this program now and in the future?

The application process begins with a completed application form, including all requested documents, being submitted to MFN. Once a completed application is received and reviewed by our Agency Relations department, the applying organization will be contacted regarding next steps and a timeline. Initial steps for determination and potential partnership will include a site visit, additional partnership requirements, if applicable, orientation training, and a \$150 deposit.

Many of the food items available from Mississippi Food Network are at no charge to our partner agencies, while some will have a per pound "shared maintenance fee" associated with the item. MFN's per pound shared maintenance fee will not be more than 19 cents per pound and is most likely to be significantly less. This fee is used by MFN to offset handling costs incurred as the food bank acquires, purchases, warehouses, and distributes millions of pounds of food per year.

In addition, routine reporting is required of all partner agencies, as well as other documentation, i.e., food safety training, temperature logs, pest control . . . all of which must be completed each month. Proper recordkeeping and reporting are required of all MFN partners.

Please contact us with any questions. Thank you for your service to individuals at risk for hunger in your community.

Thank you,
Robin Copeland
Agency Relations Director
601-973-7085

NOTE: Mississippi Food Network does not provide food distributions for holidays or special events.