



ESN 2017 PARTNERSHIP GUIDELINES & AGREEMENT

In order to become an Emergency Services Network (ESN) partner, a food pantry site must meet, and agree to comply with, the requirements outlined in these guidelines and agreement. Upon meeting the requirements and agreeing to comply, the ESN site representative will sign and date two copies of this agreement and submit to Branches for their signature; one completed copy will be returned to the partner and one kept on file at Branches.

Requesting Funding: Upon signing this agreement, the ESN site then qualifies to request and receive EFSP funds from Branches. This is done by the ESN site filling out a request form. Funds come in the form of checks or food vouchers. **Only one request can be made per request form.** For example, if the site wishes to receive a check for \$200 as well as 10 food vouchers, it must fill out one request form for the \$200 check and another request form for the 10 food vouchers. Similarly, if the site wishes to receive 2 checks for \$200 each (for a total of \$400), it must submit 2 request forms, one form for each \$200 check. Completed request forms may be mailed or faxed to Branches, or dropped off at the Branches office. Checks must be made payable directly to a vendor (e.g. Publix, Winn-Dixie, Feeding South Florida).

The entire amount of the check must be spent at the vendor to which the check is made payable, and the total amount must be spent all at one time so the whole check is reflected on one receipt. **While the total amount spent cannot be less than the check amount, spending more is acceptable; \$200 from Branches plus \$25 or some amount from the church funds.**

Maximum Grant Funds Allowed: Branches will NOT provide more than 50% of a food pantry's budget. A pantry's budget can include all other sources of donations including cash and in-kind donations (food). As an example, if a church collected \$400, the maximum Branches would issue in checks and/or gift cards is \$400; effectively a **MAXIMUM** of a \$1 for \$1 match. To calculate the maximum we will use a site's monthly reports, so please make sure to include all contributions and resources that you are receiving.

Receipts: The ESN partner must provide Branches with itemized receipts from the vendor to account for all of its purchases. The receipts must include the following information:

- Name of vendor (e.g. Publix or Feeding South Florida)
- Date of purchase (e.g. May 7, 2015)
- Description, number and cost of each item (e.g. 5 Green Bean 16 oz cans \$.79 ea)
- Total cost of purchase (e.g. \$201.59)

Food Banks: For those ESN sites that choose to purchase food from a food bank where checks are simply deposited into the sites' member account (e.g. Feeding South Florida), the site must submit to Branches itemized receipts (see the previous paragraph for what must appear on the receipt) that show that purchase amounts are at least equal to or greater than the amount of funds the site has received through checks from Branches.

Food vouchers: When a site requests and receives food vouchers, it will also receive a signature form with the card serial numbers. When vouchers are distributed, the recipient of the voucher must sign for the voucher. Once all of the vouchers are distributed and the list of signatures is complete, the signature form must be submitted to Branches. **Food vouchers cannot be used by the ESN site to make bulk purchases. They must be distributed to clients only.**

Before a site qualifies to *receive* additional checks or food vouchers, it must first be up to date on the submission of documentation to Branches. This means that Branches has in its possession any and all outstanding:

- itemized receipts that detail how previously issued checks were spent
- signature forms from previously distributed food vouchers



- monthly reports (to be explained below)

An ESN site **may request** additional checks or food vouchers without its documentation up to date. However, Branches will not send the checks or food vouchers until all outstanding documentation is received. To speed up the process of obtaining further funding, a site may submit a request form even while it is gathering or sending in its outstanding documentation. The site should allow at least one week from the date that Branches receives the request form for Branches to issue a check or food vouchers.

Monthly Reports: A monthly report form must be submitted to Branches *every* month and these reports are due by the 15th day of the following month (e.g. July's report is due August 15th). These reports **must be submitted**, even for months when the site receives no funding from Branches.

Each monthly report documents the number of meals distributed in a given month, the funding sources for the ESN site, the number and demographics of clients served, and the number of volunteers working at the site. Note that clients should be counted according to age/ gender and ethnicity and that these totals must match on the report form. Furthermore, the number of clients might not be equal to the number of meals served (e.g. if 5 people came to the food pantry every week, the site served 5 clients and 25 meals).

NOTE: If an ESN partner does not comply with their reporting requirements their funding for the following year may be lessened.

Eligible Costs:

EFSP funding is intended to provide for basic, nutritional meals on an ongoing basis. The funding is not intended to be used for a single event, special celebratory events, holiday baskets, or excessive amounts of dessert items (i.e. cookies, snack food, candy, etc.).

- Food, food vouchers, seeds (for planting and harvesting), gift certificates for food (gift certificates must be marked "Food Only" or "Food & Diapers Only").
- Diapers, only if purchased for direct distribution to individuals

Ineligible Costs:

- Any items not related to the actual feeding of a client. This includes napkins, utensils, cookware, gloves, etc.
- Reimbursements to staff, volunteers, or clients for program purchases
- Cash back of any kind to clients
- Fees, including, but not limited to: bank fees for check replacements, membership fees to food banks, shopping clubs, etc.
- **Prepayments of expenses (i.e. bulk food, etc.)**

For more details on eligible and ineligible costs, there is a complete list in the Emergency Food and Shelter National Board Program: PHASE 33 Program Costs and Required Documentation, pp. 58-65. It is available at the Branches office; please contact with questions.



As a member of Branches Emergency Services Network (ESN) and as a recipient of Emergency Food and Shelter Program (EFSP) funds, I certify that

ESN Partner Site _____:

1. Has resources to operate and is currently operating a food pantry / feeding ministry, will use funds to supplement and extend *existing* resources and will not substitute or reimburse ongoing programs and services with EFSP funds (EFSP must not be the sole funding source of an ESN site);
2. Understands that Branches will not reimburse purchases, but will provide checks or food vouchers before purchases are made;
3. Practices non-discrimination: will not refuse service to a client based on citizenship/national origin, age, race, sex, religion, disability, etc;
4. Will not require recipients of food purchased with EFSP funds to convert or attend any religious activities;
5. Will appropriately recognize Branches as a partner through the Emergency Services Network in any marketing or media related materials (newsletters, press releases, etc.);
6. Will participate in **all** meetings, conference calls and trainings organized by Branches' Emergency Services Network by ensuring that an authorized representative will attend and/or participate;
7. Will fully complete and submit **all** required documentation to Branches in a timely manner. Required documentation includes:
 - a. Monthly reports (due the 15th day of the following month)
 - b. originals or copies of *itemized* receipts for purchases made with EFSP funds
 - c. signature forms from previously distributed food vouchers
8. Will expend monies only on eligible costs as described below;
9. Will spend all funds by the end-of-program date (January 31st, 2018) and will return any unused funds greater than \$1 to Branches;
10. Understands that funding for the following years may be affected if this agreement is not upheld;

We understand that, if we are not in compliance with the terms outlined above, Branches may refuse to honor requests for funds and seek a refund for any funds improperly used or inadequately documented.

Having read and understood the above guidelines, please sign the agreement below.

ESN Partner

Print Name

Signature

Date

Branches Representative

Print Name

Signature

Date



**Emergency Services Network (ESN)
Non-Discrimination Policy**

All members of the ESN shall abide by the following policy effective at the date of Network acceptance.

Practice Non-Discrimination with EFSP funding:

All members of the ESN shall provide emergency services to all people without regard to race, color, national origin, sex, marital status, physical or mental handicap, medical condition, age, religion, sexual orientation, or language. In addition, emergency services shall be a free service to all people without exchange of service or any other obligation.

Furthermore, by signing below, I affirm that if our food ministry is supported with EFSP funds through Branches, we will not refuse services to any client based on religion nor will we require attendance at a religious service as a condition of assistance, nor will we engage in any religious proselytizing through the ministry that is receiving EFSP funds.

(Signature of ESN Partner)

(Date)