



Connecticut Foodshare

Our Community, Our Food Bank

Welcoming Line Management & Intake

April 15, 2026



Welcome!

- Please enter your name, organization and town in chat
- Enter questions in the Q&A and we will answer at the end of the webinar
- To view captions for the presentation, click “show captions” in the meeting controls of your Zoom screen.
- Recording and slides will be sent out after the webinar

Centering Neighbors

Offering Services That Are:



What is **one thing** you do at your program to help people **feel welcome**?



What is the **biggest challenge** you face
with line management and intake?



Blanche Reeves Tucker
Beulah Heights Social Integration Program
New Haven



Beulah Heights Social Integration Program, Inc.
“Helping Hand Pantry”

Food Pantry Distribution





Introduction

- My name is Blanche Reeves Tucker, and I am the Executive Director of Beulah Heights Social Integration Program, Inc. We are a Non-Profit social service organization that offers wrap-around services to primarily the towns of New Haven county, West Haven, North Haven and Hamden, but all are welcome. One of our primary services is our Helping Hand Pantry which is supervised by Evang. Catherine Billups. Our pantry is open the 2nd and 4th Tuesday of the month. We are also a 211 agency. We feed from 200-250 per month.




Preparation for Guest Check In

- Hospitality
- Room set up
- Check our attitudes
- Pray
- Receive guest



Appointment Methodology

- No appointment required
- Welcome all guest prior to entering the building
- Hand out tickets in the order they arrive
- Receive guest at the check in table by receiving their name or client # and are checked in by laptop through Altrulink or by spreadsheet for regular clients
- New guest see the other worker at the table to get checked in through the United Way Altrulink System
- Guest receive an updated copy of the calendar for the year and updated food resource guide.



Why did we move to no appointment required?

1. Minimal Staff
2. When we called to remind them of their appointment, they were not sure which pantry we were calling from.
3. Guest were concerned of their legal status when we called.
4. We want the atmosphere to seem more like they were shopping at a local grocery store



Benefits to no appointment

1. More relaxed atmosphere.
2. A minimum of 10 new guest each time we are open.
3. It has become more manageable and respectful atmosphere.
4. We're able to serve anyone in need on our open days.

Kathleen Souvigney
Enfield Food Shelf

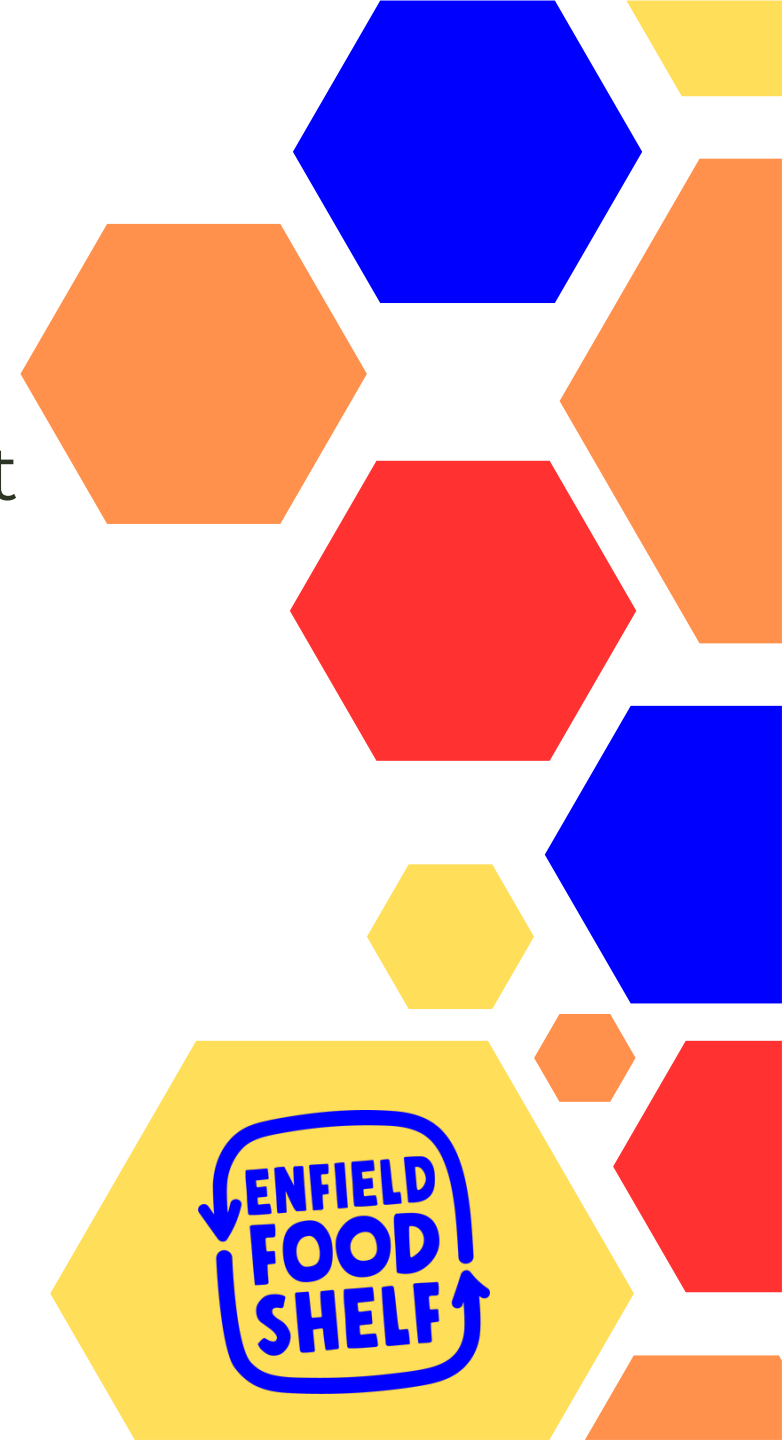




A Welcoming Line

Our Goals

- Create calm & welcoming environment
- Remove incentives for early arrivals so each person feels like there's a chance to enter first
- Separate groups who don't get along
- Eliminate the "place holder" mentality and reserving spots for others
- Mitigate weather-related discomforts



A Welcoming Line

Our Outcomes

- Developed randomized colored stick system
- Sticks distributed just 15 minutes prior to open
- Shoppers involved in drawing process
- Limited number per color helps to modulate the line
- Provide tents, heaters, fans and chairs for more comfortable waiting





A Welcoming Line

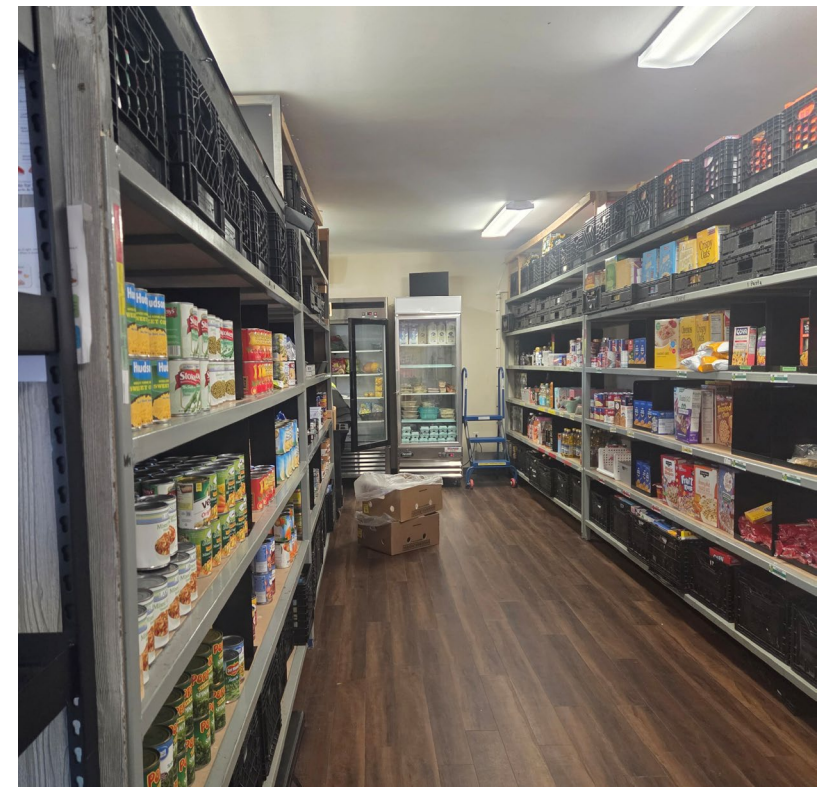
Our Change Process

- Identify issues of current system
- Involve shoppers, staff and volunteers in the development process. *See it for yourself.*
- Communicate proposed changes to all stakeholders
- Pilot the process and collect feedback
- Full implementation and periodic checks



Chelsea French
TEEG
North Grosvenordale





Appointments at TEEG

Clipboard: Undo, Paste, Copy, Paste as text only

Font: Aptos Narrow (B...), 11, Bold, Italic, Underline, Text color, Background color, Font color

Alignment: Wrap Text, Merge & Center

Number: General, Currency, Percentage, Thousand Separator, Decimals

Styles: Conditional Formatting, Format As Table, Cell Styles

Cells: Insert, Delete, Format

Editing: Sum, Sort & Filter, Find & Select

Add-ins: Add-ins, Copilot

V8

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V
1	TEEG Community Market																					
2	Monday, June 1, 2026																					
3	Time:	FID	Client Last Name(s)	Town	HH#	Phone Number	Rec'd l/p?	ds	TEFAP	Notes	Next Appt	Staff Initials	Reminder	d/b entered								
4	3:00																					
5	3:00																					
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Why an Appointment-based Model?



- **Improved client experience:** Clients have adequate time to shop and feel more comfortable.
- **Relationship building:** Seeing the same volunteers regularly helps foster trust and connection.
- **Better planning:** We know how many clients to expect during each distribution.
- **Inventory control:** Helps ensure we have enough food and an appropriate variety.
- **Efficient staffing:** Allows us to schedule the right number of volunteers.
- **Consistency and routine:** Clients benefit from predictable scheduling.

Tips for Getting Started with Appointments



Start simple: Even a basic spreadsheet or paper system can work initially.



Be flexible: Expect to make adjustments as you learn what works best.



Use shared systems: Tools like Microsoft Teams improve communication and coordination.



Create consistency: Assign recurring appointment times to build routine for clients.

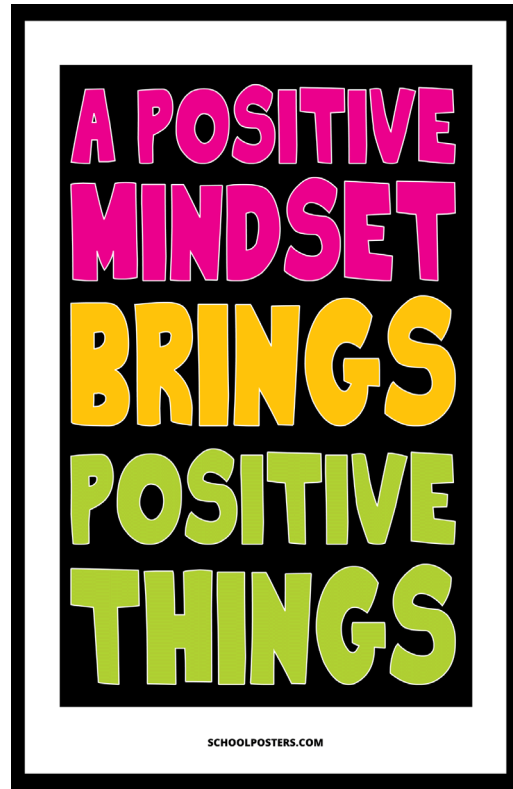


Communicate clearly: Make sure clients understand how scheduling works.



Plan for growth: Choose a system that can evolve as your program expands.

A welcoming culture starts with YOU



Your mindset matters – it sets the tone for your volunteers and guests



Tips for Welcoming Line Management & Intake

- ✓ **Center every interaction on guest dignity, safety, respect, and choice**
- ✓ Always start with a warm greeting before paperwork
- ✓ Avoid invasive intake - only ask questions that are necessary
- ✓ Prioritize a short wait time
- ✓ Add other activities or resources to offer while people wait
- ✓ Assign the right person to greet guests, walk the line, and answer questions
- ✓ Establish a clear process for intake and shopping that is consistent for all
- ✓ Coach and empower volunteers – team huddles before and after service
- ✓ Add clear signage - consider the language and tone
- ✓ Add volunteer nametags



More Tips

- ✓ Ask guests for feedback to continuously improve and build trust
- ✓ Be open to trying new approaches
- ✓ Connect with other food pantries to get ideas and brainstorm together
- ✓ Support your team with trauma informed de-escalation techniques
- ✓ Practice self-care
- ✓ When in doubt, reach out to your Network Relations Representative

TAKE CARE



OF YOURSELF

NEW De-Escalation Training Video

**15-minute
Crisis De-escalation Training Video
Now Available**



The Connection
Institute for
Innovative Practice
TRAINING | PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT | CONSULTATION

Presents

Engagement-Based Crisis De-Escalation

Supportive Crisis Management in the Workplace



**Connecticut
Foodshare**

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- English and Spanish
- A **Summary Handout** in English and Spanish
- Find under **Neighbor Centered Practices**
- Share with volunteers!

Upcoming Learning Opportunities

Register at ctfoodshare.org/webinars

Partner Peer Connect Sessions

Topic: Welcoming Line Management & Intake

Join virtual small group conversations hosted by your colleagues that are currently serving on the Network Advisory Council (NAC). Discuss line management and intake challenges you're facing at your program and exchange solutions and best practices.

Wednesday, **April 22** from 3PM to 4PM

Thursday, **April 23** from 3PM to 4PM

May Network Update

Hear updates from Connecticut Foodshare leadership

Wednesday, **May 20** from
1:00PM to 2:30PM

Recordings and slides are always available at ctfoodshare.org/webinars



Connecticut Foodshare Network Connection

**Connect, chat, and share
with your network partners.**

Connecticut Foodshare Network Connection is a free online discussion tool that helps connect at your convenience. Share an appliance repair company, discuss fundraising challenges and successes, ask how others manage volunteers, and more.



Scan to register and
start chatting!

Or visit
ctfoodshare.discourse.group/



Today's Presenters

Miranda Muro, Senior Director of Network Relations

mmuro@ctfoodshare.org

Blanche Reeves Tucker, Beulah Heights Social Integration Program, Inc

btucker@bhcsip.org

Kathleen Souvigney, Enfield Food Shelf

ksouvigney@enfieldfoodshelf.org

Chelsea French, TEEG

chelseaf@teegonline.org

Jackie Riberdy, Resource & Engagement Coordinator

jriberdy@ctfoodshare.org



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Thank You!



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