



## TEFAP Overview for Long Island Cares, Inc.

### What is TEFAP?

The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP) is a federal program that helps supplement the diets of low-income households by providing emergency food assistance at no cost. In New York, the Office of General Services (OGS) contracts with LI Cares, Inc. to administer TEFAP. LI Cares, Inc., distributes TEFAP to eligible food assistance programs that directly serve the public.

### What food assistance programs are eligible to receive TEFAP?

Based on USDA and OGS guidance, programs eligible to receive TEFAP include food pantries, emergency shelters, and soup kitchens that are operated by public entities (municipalities) or private 501(c)3 organizations.

### What foods are available through TEFAP?

Products vary but include canned, frozen, dried, and fresh fruits and vegetables, eggs, meat, poultry, fish, nuts, milk, cheese, and whole-grain and enriched grain products including rice, cereal, and pasta.

### Who is eligible for TEFAP in New York?

- **At food pantries:** any individual who verbally attests to being a Suffolk or Nassau County resident with a household income at or below 300% of the federal poverty level is eligible for TEFAP, regardless of town residency and with no identification or proof required.
- **At meal programs:** any individual receiving prepared meals at an emergency shelter or soup kitchen is considered to be low-income and eligible for TEFAP, with no proof required.

### How should agencies track client information at intake?

- **FOR FOOD PANTRIES ONLY**  
COUNT the number of households served as well as each person in the household who received food, even if only one person came to the pantry.
- **FOR SOUP KITCHENS AND ON-SITE MEAL PROGRAMS ONLY**  
COUNT each person served a meal at each mealtime. For example, if a person is served breakfast and lunch at your site on the same day, count this as two persons served.  
DO NOT COUNT persons returning for “seconds” at a single mealtime. COUNT as one person served.
- **AGES OF CLIENTS** If you do not know a client’s age, please estimate:  
Children: All those between 0 and 17 years old  
Adults: Those between 18 and 59 years old  
Elderly: Those 60 years and older

### What information is required in monthly statistics reporting?

By the 5<sup>th</sup> of every month TEFAP partners are required to submit statistics for the previous month to LI Cares, Inc., using our [online form](#).

- Food pantries report total households served, and total individuals in those households. Pantries can use a spreadsheet or database to track households served.
- Meal programs (soup kitchens and emergency shelters) report total individuals (not seconds) served (not households).

### Are there additional requirements for programs that distribute TEFAP?

As a federal program, TEFAP requires partners to follow specific food handling and distribution guidelines. Each year, OGS randomly selects partners for compliance monitoring. Use the checklist below to ensure compliance. Contact your LI Cares Network Relations Representative with any questions—we’re here to help.

## TEFAP Checklist for Long Island Cares, Inc.

### ALL programs that receive TEFAP products must:

- Meet LI Cares, Inc. Food Safety and Civil Rights guidelines.
- Maintain Temperature Logs (including dry storage areas) for 4 years.**
- Maintain Pest Control Logs for 4 years.**
- Have an authorized representative sign the LI Cares TEFAP Agreement and keep a copy on file for 4 years.
- Save LI Cares, Inc., sales orders and invoices for 4 years, either in electronic or paper files. Be sure to sign your copies that you keep on hand upon delivery. **Maintain these records for 4 years.**
- Store TEFAP product in a secure location that has been approved by LI Cares, Inc. Distribute TEFAP only at your approved location.
- Make TEFAP available to any eligible household seeking food assistance.
- Never share or redistribute TEFAP products with other organizations.
- Immediately report any lost or damaged TEFAP items to LI Cares, Inc.
- Post green "And Justice for All" poster for client visibility.
- Post Federal Poverty Income Guidelines for client visibility.
- Post Written Notice of Beneficiary Rights in a visible location.
- Annually, ensure that all guest-facing staff and volunteers renew their Food Safety and Civil Rights training, either online or in-person. **Training records must be kept on site for 4 years.**
- REQUIRED:** Submit monthly statistics to LI Cares, Inc. on the number of households and individuals served (**due by the 5<sup>th</sup> of each month**).

### If the program is a food pantry:

- Ensure that TEFAP product is made available to any individual who self-attests to eligibility.
- Ask guests to self-attest to eligibility using the current TEFAP Self-Attestation form, which is available in multiple languages and available on our website.
- Ensure that intake forms, procedures and any promotional materials do not require guests to provide more information than is required for TEFAP.
- Every October, start using the new income guidelines provided by LI Cares, Inc. and attentions distributed by LI Cares, Inc and have your clients complete the new attestation.
- At each visit, ask all returning clients if anything has changed and make sure current income guidelines are available
- Use a log or database to capture basic information from people served: name, address, number of people in household, and date they verbally attested to eligibility
- Maintain TEFAP Participation Logs for 4 years, either in electronic or paper files

### If the program is a meal program or soup kitchen:

- Ensure that TEFAP product is only utilized in prepared meals, and not distributed as grocery items for individuals to take home

### If the program is faith-based:

- Ensure that religious activity does not take place in the same location or time as TEFAP food distribution.