

Fish & Loaves Enrollment Information

Fish & Loaves is a Non-Profit, All-Volunteer Pantry

The Fish & Loaves Community Food Pantry is a non-profit, faith-based organization committed to insuring that no one goes hungry in the six Downriver communities which we serve: Allen Park, Brownstown Township, Dearborn Heights, Romulus, Southgate, or Taylor. The pantry is completely staffed by volunteers. We look forward to helping you.

Advance Appointment Necessary to Enroll

Enrollment in the Fish & Loaves Pantry is by advance appointment only. Our staff will try to schedule enrollment appointments within 2-3 weeks of your first telephone call. You will be able to shop at the Fish & Loaves Pantry store immediately following your enrollment interview. To address any emergency needs prior to your enrollment interview, the name of the local emergency food pantries closest to your home can be provided.

What to Bring to Your Initial Enrollment Appointment

To enroll in the Fish & Loaves Pantry, you must be able to verify residency, household size, and annual income. Please bring to your initial appointment:

- ***Proof of residency in one of the six Downriver communities our pantry serves.***

Picture I.D. is required, either a current driver's license or State of Michigan I.D. card, plus a recent utility bill with your present household address.

- ***Proof of the number of adults and children presently in your household.***

For adults a copy of a current driver's license is required; for each child a copy of their birth certificate. Alternatively, a copy of your latest U.S. tax return with number of dependents indicated may be used to verify the presence of children in your household.

- ***Proof of household income for the previous twelve months.***

Your most recent income tax return and/or monthly pay stub for yourself and other adult members of your household.

Bi-Monthly Visits Encouraged

Upon enrollment in the Fish & Loaves Pantry, you may shop six times over the next twelve months, starting the same day. Although you can schedule pantry appointments on a monthly basis, we encourage you to spread out your visits to the Fish & Loaves Pantry over the entire calendar year through bi-monthly, rather than monthly, shopping trips. If possible, your next appointment should be made at the time of your shopping visit to Fish & Loaves.

Keep Your Scheduling Card

When you first enroll with Fish & Loaves, you will receive a wallet-sized scheduling card recording your next appointment date. You are required to present the scheduling card at each appointment. If you do not have your card with you and your scheduled appointment cannot be verified by Fish & Loaves, you will not be able to shop in the pantry. Please let our volunteer staff know if you have lost your scheduling card and need a replacement.

Canceling and Rescheduling Appointments

If you are unable to make your scheduled pantry appointment, please notify Fish & Loaves as far as possible in advance so that your appointment time can be offered to someone else and a new appointment can be scheduled for you. If you do not cancel a pantry appointment and fail to show up at your scheduled time, you will not be able to re-schedule your missed pantry appointment.

Annual Client Re-Enrollment

All Fish & Loaves clients may make use of the client choice pantry for two years, re-enrolling for another six visits at the end of their first year. At the end of two years, clients have the option of enrolling for the Emergency Food Assistance Program (T.E.F.A.P.) which provides an equivalent amount of food on a non-client choice basis.

Focus Hope Food for Senior Citizens

In 2009 Focus Hope designated the Fish & Loaves Community Food Pantry as a distribution point for its Seniors Food Program. Registered Focus Hope seniors receive a box of food for pick-up at the pantry on the second Wednesday of every month. Seniors do not have to be enrolled in the client choice pantry in order to be eligible for the Focus Hope distribution. Current pantry clients may sign up for the Focus Hope program as a supplement to the bi-monthly shopping they do at the Fish & Loaves store. To register for the Focus Hope Senior Food Program contact Fish & Loaves (734-442-0031).

Caseworker Services

The Fish & Loaves Community is committed to insuring “food security” for Downriver households. But the needs of the families and individuals served by the pantry are usually broader than food. To help families and individuals assess and address wider needs, Fish & Loaves has partnered with the Wayne Metropolitan Community Services to provide an on-site caseworker. The caseworker is available to meet with pantry clients for an initial interview on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, 10 a.m.-12 noon. Follow-up meetings take place at Wayne Metro offices in the Taylor Human Services Building on the northwest corner of Eureka and Lange Roads in Taylor. The use of caseworker services is optional for Fish & Loaves clients. However, 200 hundred families currently make use of the caseworker services, receiving helpful referrals, as well as assistance with rent, mortgage, and utility payments.

'Operation Frontline' Cooking & Nutrition Classes

Under the leadership of a master chef and nutritionist, Operation Frontline, sponsored by Oakwood Hospital, offers a six week cooking and nutrition program on site at the Fish & Loaves Community Food Pantry. The classes, which are free, last two hours each and provide instruction on how families can prepare tasty, nutritious, and inexpensive meals. Participants receive a bag of groceries after each session with all the ingredients necessary to prepare at home the same meal they have just cooked at the pantry. At the end of the six week course, participants join the chef in a trip to a local grocery store where they receive a cookbook with other enticing recipes and a gift card for the additional purchase of groceries. Enrollment is limited to fifteen participants. The cooking and nutrition classes are offered several times per year for current Fish & Loaves clients.

Safety First

Fish & Loaves is committed to maintaining a safe, attractive environment for clients and volunteers. In shopping at the Fish & Loaves Pantry, please do not do anything that might impair your own safety. If you need help reaching for any shelved items or transporting groceries to your car, our volunteers are available to assist you. Minor children must be accompanied by their parents at all times, whether inside the pantry or in the outdoor parking lot. For their own safety, children should not be wandering in the pantry store aisles.

Mutual Courtesy and Respect Are Our Policy

All of our Fish & Loaves volunteers are committed to providing help with courtesy and respect. We ask you to be courteous and respectful as well to pantry volunteers and fellow pantry clients.

How You Can Help

Our Fish & Loaves Pantry is always seeking ways in which we can improve service to families and individuals. We welcome suggestions for improvements. Also, as a cooperative community project, Fish & Loaves welcomes pantry clients who may wish to volunteer in our office, warehouse, or store. Contact our volunteer line at 734-442-0031.