

THE EMERGENCY FOOD ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (TEFAP)

CLARIFICATION FOR FAITH-BASED ORGANIZATIONS

REGULATORY INFORMATION

- ❖ **7 CFR Part 16 – Equal Opportunity for Religious Organizations** – Ensures that faith-based organizations have a level playing field when participating in USDA programs.
 - Prohibits discrimination for or against organizations on the basis of religion.
 - Allows organizations to retain their independence.
 - Clarifies that organizations can use space in their facilities without removing religious materials.
 - Ensures that organizations do not discriminate against program participants or prospective participants on the basis of religion.

- ❖ **7 CFR 251.10 – Limitation on Unrelated Activities (TEFAP)**
 - Must be made clear that unrelated activities are not part of TEFAP and are not endorsed by the USDA. Information unrelated to TEFAP may not be placed in, or printed on, the TEFAP food package.
 - Must be made clear that cooperation in the unrelated activities is not a condition for receipt of TEFAP commodities.

- Must be conducted in a manner that does not disrupt the distribution of TEFAP commodities

- ❖ **White House Office of Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships** – Provides additional information regarding purpose of faith-based partnerships.

KEY POINTS

- ❖ USDA funds cannot be used to support any inherently religious activities (i.e. worship, religious instruction, or proselytization).
- ❖ Organizations must not discriminate against program participants or prospective participants on the basis of religion.
- ❖ Organizations must not include materials that are unrelated to TEFAP in bags, boxes, or other containers in which commodities are distributed. (i.e. religious pamphlets, brochures, etc.)
- ❖ Organizations must not require program participants or prospective participants to participate in unrelated activities in order to receive TEFAP commodities. (i.e. signing religious petitions, speaking to religious officials, contributing money to causes)

SAMPLE DO'S & DON'TS IN TEFAP

<i>It is acceptable to...</i>	<i>It is unacceptable to...</i>
Have a cross hanging on a wall at the food distribution facility.	Require participants to stand by the cross and recite a prayer prior to receiving commodities.
Have a menorah on a table at the food distribution facility during the holiday season.	Refuse commodities to participants who do not practice the Jewish faith.
Have a display stand at the front/back of the facility that contains faith-based pamphlets for anyone interested.	Insert faith-based pamphlets in bags or boxes when distributing commodities.
Have a pastor or other religious official assist with the distribution of commodities.	Force or encourage participants to have a religious conversation with the pastor or official prior to receiving commodities.