



Best Practices for Food Banks, Pantries, and Rescues During COVID-19 Response

- **The Wyoming Department of Agriculture** can help organizations adhere to best practices by coming to train volunteers and review the operation. To arrange for a certified instructor from The Department of Agriculture to visit, call **(307) 777-7211** anytime to schedule an appointment. Refrigerator thermometers are available for distribution to closely monitor storage temperatures; additionally, educational pamphlets on proper food handling, hygiene, and other topics are available for distribution. The Department of Agriculture recommends that **all** organizations review safe food handling and CDC guidance regularly to ensure safe delivery of food to vulnerable populations. This includes:
 1. Be vigilant about asking staff/volunteers to stay home if coughing, sneezing, or any other signs of illness are present
 2. Perishable food should be consumed shortly after delivery to avoid the “food danger zone,” which is between 40° and 135° degrees
 3. Training new volunteers in safe food handling practices
- **The Wyoming State Epidemiologist and Wyoming State Health Officer** remind all organizations that it may be possible for a person to contract COVID-19 by touching a surface or object that has the virus on it, then transferring it to their body by touching their mouth, nose, or possibly eyes. While this is not currently believed to be the primary way of spread, it is recommended to help avoid the transmission of COVID-19 through surface contact to observe the following recommendations:
 1. Conduct frequent washing and sanitizing of all food contact surfaces and utensils. Find a list of approved cleaning products from the **Environmental Protection Agency**

2. Food-service workers and volunteers must practice frequent hand washing and glove changes before and after preparing food
3. Some food banks have started having volunteers wear gloves when handing out food
4. Include frequent cleaning and sanitizing of counters and condiment containers. Wipe tables, counters, etc. with a bleach solution before and after programs and guests.
5. Consumers should wash their hands after using serving utensils.
6. Send clear messaging out to staff and volunteers reminding them to stay home if they are feeling sick. Send sick individuals home if they come.
7. Use alternative service delivery models in order to minimize person-to-person contact. If possible, use a pre-bagged or boxed distribution model so volunteers and staff are not handling food.

Helpful Links

[Wyoming Hunger Initiative COVID-19 Response](#)

[CDC Guidance regarding best practices in community locations](#)

[Food Safety Guidance from the Wyoming Infectious Disease Epidemiology Unit](#)

[Feeding America's Safe & Healthy Food Pantries Project](#)