



FOOD ACCESS / NO-COST FOOD ACCESS POLICY

Meaford Food Bank and Outreach (MFBO) is committed to upholding the dignity and rights of all individuals who seek assistance from our organization. This document outlines **MFBO's** service standards and the rights and privileges that clients/visitors have when accessing services at our food bank.

Service Standards

In accordance with Feed Ontario's Standards of Operations, **MFBO** is committed to upholding the following service standards in all interactions with its visitors:

1. We will treat every person requesting help courteously and in such a way that dignity and self-esteem is never compromised.
2. We will serve people who come to us for help based on their self-determination of need and no other criteria.
3. We will recognize the diversity of Ontario, and of our own organization, and will strive for equality and inclusivity in our practices and delivery of services.
4. We will not discriminate against any person for any reason, including race, sex, gender, sexual orientation or preference, religion, disability, source of income, or any other group under the Ontario Human Rights Code.
5. We will respect the privacy of people we serve and strive to maintain the highest standards of confidentiality.
6. When we speak of people who use food banks we will do so with dignity, courtesy, and respect.
7. We will avoid stereotypes and generalizations.
8. We will never compromise the dignity of people using food banks in any promotions, media contacts, or public education materials.
9. We will strive to maintain a friendly and welcoming environment in our organization(s).
10. We will educate ourselves and others about the systemic and structural inequities that lead to people needing food banks.
11. We will strive to include food bank clients in our planning and decision-making regarding services provided to them.
12. We will strive to provide information about other community services to people who come to us for help.

13. We will not accept payment for the food we provide even if offered voluntarily and we will never require people who come for emergency food relief to pay a food bank membership fee, work or volunteer, or participate in any religious or political activities to access emergency food support.

Client Rights and Privileges

In accordance with Feed Ontario's Operating Policy Three: Food Bank Clients, people served by **MFBO**, have and should be aware of, the following client rights and privileges:

1. To be served with courtesy, dignity, and respect;
2. To be served based on need and no other criteria;
3. To be served regardless of race, sex, sexual preference, religion, disability, or source of income;
4. To have any personal information that is provided to the food bank or related organization kept private and confidential;
5. To be informed about and consent to the usage and storage of their own personal information;
6. To request any records or files that include their own personal information and to have that information provided within a reasonable time period, subject to the limitations mentioned above;
7. To request preferred food items when practical and available in order to meet an individual's health, ethnic, and/or dietary needs;
8. To be provided with information regarding community services and other community providers;
9. To be informed of the reason for referral or refusal of service, both verbally and, where possible, in writing; and
10. To be able to bring their concerns or issues a complaint, in accordance with the client complaint process outlined and also posted.