OUTREACH PROGRAM Frequently Asked Questions

To better serve our participants, we are launching the W^5 project to help us better understand who our clients are, what they do, when they need food, where they are located, and why they come to the Redwood Empire Food Bank.

Q: What is the W^5 program?
A: W^5 is an easy-to-use, cloud-based client database designed to streamline the client intake process, improve record keeping, track assistance provided, and allow hunger relief programs to quickly and easily manage food bank reports.

Q: What does W^5 mean?
A: W^5 comes from the letter W from the Who, What, Where, When, Why. These are some questions we have to better understand our clients in pursuit of ending hunger.
Who are the individuals and families we serve, are they senior citizens, children, families? Are they living in a multi-generational household? Large families, small families, does it vary by site or region? We may adjust the amount of food, based upon the demographics of each site.
What programs or assistance do they need? What can we do to improve the provision of help?
Where do they live? This will help us identify distributions hence bring the food as close to the client as possible. It will show us how far they're traveling for groceries.
When does the client need food? We can track the frequency and ensure we're meeting their needs. We can gauge if we have distributions throughout the day/week/month.
Why is a certain location better than others? Why are certain programs better at certain locations?

Q: Why is the REFB doing the W^5 program?
A: The REFB wants to better serve our community to fight hunger. W^5 will help the REFB better understand who our clients are, what they do, when they need food, where they are located, and why they come to the food bank.

Q: Why is the REFB doing the W^5 program NOW?
A: The REFB has been curious about our clients for a long time. While we certainly have relationships with folks and see them on a regular basis, we are limited in information to determine how we can be more effective and have a greater impact. We recognize the need to understand what the frequency of food needs are for larger families vs. seniors. We want to know if someone is interested in other government

programs, including WIC, CalFresh and SSI. They can register a permanent proxy to pick up for them, which will be saved in their client profile.

Q: Who has access to the information?
A: Information provided is entered into a secure, password-protected database that is administered by the REFB. The database technology and security are held to the same security standards as banks and will not be shared with anyone.

Q: How secure is W^5?
A: The platform is encrypted and the database is HIPAA-compliant. Whenever the information is entered or viewed it is encrypted during communications with the server. This ensures there is no eavesdropping with the connection.

Q: What information is required, and what is optional to register?
A: First name, last name, address, zip codes and any additional household members. It is very important for the client to include any other household members they buy, share, and prepare meals with. Demographic information is optional, but highly encouraged to better understand the clients the site is serving.

Q: Why do you want the names of my other family members?
A: Having the names of your family members who live in the home with you will allow the REFB to understand the participant's unique needs. For example, if we have school supplies available, it would be nice to know the age(s) of the child(ren) in the household. Should we have diapers available, knowing if any of the children are ages 0-4 would be helpful. If family members are adults, we may have programs or services that would benefit them, depending on their age.

Q: Can I use my client ID at other distributions or do I need to register again?
A: You only need to register once. You will receive an ID card that can be used at other distribution sites.

Q: What if I don't register?
A: This is a new system the REFB is implementing across all sites to streamline the check-in process for food assistance. Participants only need to complete the intake form *once* to register, and will receive an ID card that can be used at other distributions in the area for food assistance. If any client is still resistant, they can think about it and sign up on their next visit. In order to receive food assistance, we will have to have a client profile in our system ongoing.

Q: Why do you want to take my photo?
A: Having your picture taken is optional. One reason the client may want their picture as part of their profile is they will not have to present an ID when they pick up their food.

We can always scan their card or search by name and check ID, so taking a picture is not mandatory.

Q: What happens if I lose my ID card?
A: Since the information is stored in the online database, we can look up participants by first name, last name, and/or date of birth to retrieve the information. We can also issue a new card as needed.

Q: Who can receive the ID Card?
A: Anyone who enrolled in the program and is 18 years old or older can request an Identification Card.

Q: The REFB should already have my Senior Basket (CSFP) application, do I need to re-apply?
A: No, you do not need to re-apply. We will make every effort to migrate the Senior Basket information into W^5. When it is safe to collect a digital signature, we will ask all participants to sign using one of our tablets, just like at the grocery store. We will ask participants if there are family members they want to include in their profile and if they are interested in learning more about additional programs; Women, Infants, Children (WIC), CalFresh or Supplemental Security Income (SSI).

Q: How will W^5 store proxies (someone else can pick up your food for you)?
A: Participants can authorize up to two people to pick up food for them. Once we are over the current pandemic, we will collect digital signatures from all participants and their proxies that will be saved in the data system.

Q: Can I enter my information from my own computer?
A: Unfortunately, this is currently not possible. However, the software provider is currently testing a feature. Our staff and volunteers are happy to help you in person with tablets and/or over the phone with registration.