To better serve our participants, the Redwood Empire Food Bank launched **W^5** to 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 W^5 important to the Redwood Empire Food Bank?
A: The Redwood Empire Food Bank wants to better serve our community to fight hunger. **W^5** helps to 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 offer W^5 NOW?
A: The Redwood Empire Food Bank 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 were limited in information to determine how we could be more effective and have a greater impact. We recognized the need to understand what the frequency of food

needs were for larger families vs. seniors. We wanted to know if someone was interested in other government programs, including WIC and CalFresh. Participants can register a permanent proxy to pick up for them, which is 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 Redwood Empire Food Bank. The database technology and security are held to the same security standards as banks and are not 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 code and any additional household members. It helps to have information about the number of children, for example, so we can plan meal bundles for our Summer Lunch program. If a family is in need of diapers, it's necessary to have a birthdate to determine how many diapers are needed at sites.

Q: Why do you want information about my other family members?
A: Having the names of your family members who live in the home with you will allow the Redwood Empire Food Bank 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. As partner organizations use W^5 you can use the same card at those locations as well. No need to register more than once.

Q: What if I don't register?
A: This is a system the Redwood Empire Food Bank 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 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: 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 Redwood Empire Food Bank should already have my information, do I need to re-apply?
A: No, you do not need to re-apply. Your information is already in W^5 and you're welcome to attend any time, even if you have not been to a site in several months.

Q: How will W^5 store proxies (someone else can pick up your food for you)?
A: Participants can authorize other people to pick up food for them. We will ask that you verify or update this information annually to be sure we have up to date information on who you want to get your groceries for you.

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. You can also register through our [website](#) (update this to not have the last question about what they'd like more information on).