

ACCEPTING FOOD DONATIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

You may accept donations from the public without fear of spreading COVID-19 to your clients or volunteers.

Can hunger relief organizations still take donations from individuals?

Yes. Currently, there are no restrictions on individual donations from members of your community in response to the COVID-19 outbreak. We encourage donors to follow the existing food safety recommendations from the Department of Health which have not changed:

- [Donation Guide for Home Kitchens¹](#)
- [Donation Guide for Businesses²](#)



Canned, Packaged, Refrigerated or Frozen Goods:

Coronaviruses are generally thought to be spread from person to person through respiratory droplets. According to the CDC, *“the risk of infection by the virus from food products, food packaging, or bags is thought to be very low. Currently, no cases of COVID-19 have been identified where infection was thought to have occurred by touching food, food packaging, or shopping bags.”*

People should wash their hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds after shopping, handling packaged food, or before preparing or eating food.

Fresh Produce:

COVID-19 is not known to be transmissible through food, including fruits and vegetables.

Maintain regularly required food safety protocols such as:

- Meal programs should rinse raw produce using as much agitation as the produce can handle before cutting and/or serving.
- Use gloves or utensils to prevent bare hand contact with ready to eat foods, such as rinsed produce.
- Have volunteers and staff wash hands thoroughly before and during food handling.



We recommend that you:

- Encourage customers to wash/rinse their produce at home before consuming.
- Pre-bag and portion produce to reduce shopping time by customers.

1 <https://www.doh.wa.gov/Portals/1/Documents/Pubs/333-248.pdf>

2 <https://www.doh.wa.gov/Portals/1/Documents/Pubs/333-241.pdf>

