

## 10 Food Stamp Outreach Ideas for Municipal Agencies



**Help your community members learn about the nutrition benefits of the Food Stamp Program. Food stamp benefits bring Federal dollars to your community that can help the local economy. With food stamp benefits, low-income residents of your community can purchase *more* healthy foods such as fruits and vegetables, whole grain foods and dairy products. You can:**

1. Display food stamp posters, flyers, magnets, and other materials in the department of social services and in community buildings, such as town hall, the local library, schools, the department of motor vehicles, and community centers. Go to <http://www.fns.usda.gov/fsp/info.htm> for free USDA materials.
2. Invite local groups like food banks, anti-hunger groups, or other community or faith-based groups to staff an information table to give out food stamp information or pre-screen customers for eligibility at community sponsored events such as job fairs. Use the pre-screening tool available at [www.foodstamps-step1.usda.gov](http://www.foodstamps-step1.usda.gov).
3. Put food stamp information, such as national (1-800-221-5689) or local food stamp toll free numbers, in water or utility bills or community newsletters.
4. Add food stamp information to recorded "hold" messaging or other recorded community resident information lines. Train all staff who come in contact with low-income residents with basic information about food stamps and where and how residents can get more information about food stamp benefits.
5. Encourage local food retailers to be active partners. They can print the national (1-800-221-5689) or local food stamp toll free number on grocery bags, receipts, and in weekly circulars and bulletins or host outreach events.
6. Publish and disseminate food stamp materials in languages spoken in your community. Downloadable materials are available at <http://www.fns.usda.gov/fsp/outreach/translations.htm>.
7. Encourage local radio stations to play Food Stamp Program public service announcements (available at <http://www.fns.usda.gov/cga/radio/radio.htm>) or play them on community access channels.
8. Host nutritious food tasting or cooking demonstrations during local festivals, fairs, or "taste of" celebrations. Give out recipe cards that contain nutrition information and the national or local food stamp toll free number. Check out the recipe finder at <http://foodstamp.nal.usda.gov/recipes.php>.
9. Form partnerships with local community and advocacy groups. Host a "health fair" to conduct food stamp eligibility pre-screenings ([www.foodstamps-step1.usda.gov](http://www.foodstamps-step1.usda.gov)). Invite local media to the event.
10. Encourage local elected officials to speak out about the economic impacts of food stamp benefits for community residents and the local economy.