

10 Food Stamp Outreach Ideas for Faith-Based Organizations



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

1. Display food stamp posters, flyers, magnets, and other materials in your place of worship. Go to <http://www.fns.usda.gov/fsp/info.htm> to order free USDA food stamp outreach materials.
2. Form an outreach partnership with your local food stamp office. Go to <http://www.fns.usda.gov/fsp/outreach/coalition/map.htm> for a locator map. Develop and implement an outreach strategy for your community.
3. Staff a food stamp information table to give out information or pre-screen for food stamp eligibility after worship service or during other sponsored events. Use the pre-screening tool available at www.foodstamps-step1.usda.gov.
4. Put food stamp information in all bulletins, newsletters, or other items given or mailed to the congregation or community.
5. Train all staff, including parish nurses, lay leaders, faith leaders, and others with basic information about food stamps and where and how residents can get more information about food stamp benefits.
6. Encourage local food retailers to be active partners by printing the national (1-800-221-5689) or local food stamp toll free number on grocery bags, receipts, and in weekly circulars and bulletins. Work with them to host outreach and pre-screening (www.foodstamps-step1.usda.gov) events.
7. 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>.
8. If your organization manages a food pantry or food bank, include food stamp information with every package of food you distribute. Offer food stamp pre-screening (www.foodstamps-step1.usda.gov) to clients and help them fill out the food stamp application.
9. Host a nutritious food tasting, cooking demonstration, or health fair at your place of worship. Give out recipe cards that contain nutrition information and the national (1-800-221-5689) or local food stamp toll free number. Check out the recipe finder at <http://foodstamp.nal.usda.gov/recipes.php>. Conduct food stamp eligibility pre-screening (www.foodstamps-step1.usda.gov) and invite local media to the event.
10. Encourage local elected officials to speak about the positive economic impacts of food stamp benefits for community residents and the local economy.