

HAMILTON JEWISH FAMILY SERVICES KOSHER FOOD BANK POLICY

INTRODUCTION:

The Talmud explains that each Jewish community must provide food for the hungry, and our sages explain that feeding the hungry is one of our most important responsibilities on earth.

The Hamilton Kosher Food Bank (including Carol's Cupboard) operates with the exclusive intent of providing a variety of food supports, and household and personal hygiene items, to clients of Hamilton Jewish Family Services (HJFS). The Hamilton Kosher Food Bank puts a special emphasis on ensuring that food items are kosher, nutritious and healthy.

GUIDELINES:

The Hamilton Kosher Food Bank adheres to the following guidelines:

Client confidentiality must always be respected. HJFS collects client information for registration and tracking purposes. This information is seen only by designated staff. Information is stored in a secure database;

Carol's Cupboard and any room utilized by the food bank (such as the kosher kitchen) must be properly maintained and sanitized. Food must always be stored according to public health requirements;

All food distributed by the food bank must be safe for consumption and handled in an appropriate manner to ensure client safety;

Volunteers and staff are prohibited from smoking in the areas where food is being handled and stored, including cars being used for food delivery;

Only foods with kosher certification will be offered to clients. Any non-kosher foods will be donated to non-kosher facilities in the community;

With respect to best before dates, all food provided to clients must be within the guidelines established by Second Harvest. At the discretion of HJFS staff, produce will not be accepted or distributed if it is visibly spoiled.

ELIGIBILITY AND DISTRIBUTION PROCEDURES:

In order to access the Hamilton Kosher Food Bank on an ongoing monthly basis, individuals must complete the mandatory paperwork and meet the eligibility criteria, in order to become clients of HJFS.

Individuals not registered with HJFS as clients, who approach HJFS, will not be denied one-time emergency food support

HJFS clients are permitted to access the food bank once per month. Eligible households are entitled to a monthly Hamilton Kosher Food Bank hamper.

To ensure ongoing eligibility, mandatory paperwork must be updated on a regular basis, which includes the submission of annual Notice of Assessment

In order to protect client confidentiality, clients must make an appointment each time to visit the Hamilton Kosher Food Bank. Appointments are encouraged to be made 2 days in advance, if possible.

Deliveries by volunteers/staff must be scheduled ahead of time for clients who have transportation and/or mobility challenges

All clients will receive a monthly grocery stipend to be utilized to purchase food items that HJFS cannot provide (i.e. milk, cheese, eggs, or other dietary needs). Stipends will be standardized in denominations of \$25. For a household of one person, the stipend will be \$25. For a household of more than one person, the stipend will be for \$50. The client shall have the option of selecting the stipend from any of the HJFS selected sources. Stipends will be distributed with the monthly hamper.

HJFS recognizes that there may be special circumstances where food insecure households may require additional supports for food. These special circumstances include dietary restrictions, allergies, and households of more than 5 persons. If a household feels that they meet these special circumstances, they will be required to complete additional paperwork demonstrating need, which will then be reviewed by a case committee on a case-to-case basis.

HJFS actively encourages clients to seek additional supports in the wider community. HJFS works collaboratively with other community food supports and social service agencies.