

Factsheet 1 - Volunteer Training

Food Safety

Food temperature

If there would be opportunities to receive fresh fish and meat products from partner surplus food distribution charities, it is essential that food should be stored at the correct temperature. The Food Standards Agency sets the **temperature danger zone** for food between 8°C and 60°C, and this is the range you want to keep the food out of. This means that food is safest when it is either frozen, chilled at a temperature of less than 8°C, or heated beyond 60°C.

Chilled food should be stored at a temperature of between 1°C and 5°C as best practice, and frozen food should be stored at a maximum temperature of -18 °C. By storing food at the correct temperature, you will prevent the growth of harmful bacteria and help keep the food safe.

Food dates

It goes without saying that you should never use food past its **use by date**. However, food that has passed its **best before date** can be legally sold, redistributed, and consumed after this date, if judged to be of sufficient quality to be donated and made available to be eaten. Food banks and redistributors should check all food that is past the best before date to ensure it is of sufficient quality - usually a visual inspection of the food will do this.

Food Safe Packaging

Without [correct packaging](#), chemical contaminants or germs could transfer onto food.

Food banks can reuse glass or plastic packaging so long as there are no chips or cracks in it. Any food storage containers or packaging must be cleaned thoroughly between uses to prevent cross contamination of germs, allergens, and physical contaminants. Washing should be thorough and use hot soapy water, sanitiser and/or disinfectant.

Manual Handling

You can access certified courses from various providers such as the one below for a small fee of between £15- £30.

<https://www.flexabee.co.uk/manual-handling-of-inanimate-objects-awareness>

Please follow the link below to find their price quotations.

<https://www.flexabee.co.uk/pricing-plan?submissionGuid=a2947024-d30c-4b14-96d3-f2c6f56e92d8>

Training on how to run a food bank

Together Southwark can put you in touch with other food banks to facilitate the training and volunteer induction.