

2008 – 2009 CDBG/HOME APPLICANT QUESTIONS AND RESPONSES

Name of Organization: **People Resources**
Project Title: Home Delivered Meals

1. What efforts has your agency taken or plans to take to increase your agency's collaboration with the Yolo County Food Bank, i.e., so that they are more able to meet your agency's nutritional needs?

Elderly Nutrition Program (ENP) and the Food Bank have an on-going relationship. Currently, we receive a listing of available food products from the Food Bank, usually weekly. Our Food Service Manager regularly shops at the FB to take advantage of any and all food items that can be used in our menus. We regularly use items purchased from the FB to augment the frozen meals that we distribute to home-delivered meals recipients on holidays. Last fiscal year and in July 2007, we participated in the Bulk Purchase Program through the FB twice. For example, in August, we received one month's supply of chicken (2,100 pieces), ground beef (300 #) and cheddar cheese (80#) at no cost. In September, when we applied again for this assistance, we were unsuccessful.

ENP serves over 325 meals per day to seniors through the congregate and home delivered meals programs. Strict oversight by Area 4 Agency on Aging (A4AA) and federal and state regulations impact our ability to use the Food Bank as a daily food vendor, given their existing mode of operation. Our menus must be approved by the A4AA registered dietitian one month before distribution. Once menus are distributed to our recipients, they must receive written notification from ENP of any changes to the menu, which is labor intensive and costly for ENP. Therefore, we rarely change our menus once established. We cannot distribute or use any food item that has an expired date. Some of the items at the FB have either a use by date that has expired or are nearing it. Also, many items at the FB do not meet the nutritional guidelines for elder adults to which we must adhere. Many foodstuffs we could use are not available in bulk at the FB or, if there is a large quantity, we understand that it needs to be more evenly distributed to customers of the FB. Also, Gloria Tandy, ENP food manager, has reported that in the past ENP has been able to purchase some bulk items at lower costs from Sysco, our major vendor, than what we would have paid at the FB.

However, your question is thought provoking. Even considering these above described limitations, exploration of further avenues for collaboration with the FB to meet the nutritional needs of our population would be beneficial. Rapidly rising food costs require us to look creatively at expanding existing relationships. ENP hopes to offer a monthly "surprise" meal to recipients, provided we receive approval from A4AA. This meal would allow us more flexibility to purchase in smaller quantities for that one day, by serving a different main course at each site. We hope to be able to shop at the FB for this meal. In addition, I intend to immediately promote the establishment of regular meetings between the FB and ENP staff for the purpose of investigating, planning and implementing further ways that we might work together.

Thank you.

Respectfully submitted,

Nicki McCabe
Executive Director