EVERY MEAL

FIGHTING CHILD HUNGER









Every Meal Program Handbook 2026-2027

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WELCOME

Every Meal is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization with a mission to fight child hunger through community and school partnerships. We strive to make a difference in children's lives by specifically focusing on food gaps – the times when children aren't at school to access meal programs.

Providing children with wholesome food is our focus, and their growth and achievement is at the heart of everything we do. Every Meal's mission and goals of our Program(s) can be found at **www.everymeal.org**.

We hope you will connect with our core values of **commitment**, **thoughtful communication**, **positive impact**, and **relationships**. Your dedication to these values is crucial to the overall success of the program. We truly could not make an impact on child hunger without your support – thank you!

How to use this Handbook

This Every Meal Program Handbook is designed to help you in your role as the facilitator of Every Meal for your site. It includes resources, general information, and requirements for promoting and implementing the Every Meal Program(s). The Handbook supplements the Participation Agreement between the site and Every Meal.

We understand that each site has its own unique layout, culture, and policies. Our hope is that the Handbook will serve as a guide and provide you with tools which can be tailored for your specific situation. To access this Handbook and all editable documents from Every Meal, please visit the Program Toolkit at:
www.everymeal.org/weekend-meal-program-toolkit





GLOSSARY

Bag Type: We offer multiple options of food bags to best meet families' needs and preferences.
Bag types should be referred to by their corresponding color:
Blue bags, Green bags, Orange bags, Purple bags, Yellow bags

Bag Variety: Variation of food within each bag type. (Refer to the Bag Types & Labels Section of the Handbook)

Community Sponsor: An organization or business that partners with the site to provide funding for the program and/or volunteers to distribute food bags.

Decision Maker: Person(s) with authority responsible for signing the annual Participation Agreements on behalf of the partnering organization. Examples may include the principal on behalf of an individual school or superintendent on behalf of an entire school district.

Delivery: When boxes of food are delivered to a site.

Delivery Contact: This is the site staff member who will receive deliveries from Every Meal and facilitate food being moved to the storage location. Typically this is a custodian or the main office. They will receive an email notification when a delivery is expected and may be contacted by phone by the Every Meal delivery driver for assistance accessing the building.

Delivery Week: The week your site can expect your scheduled monthly delivery.

Distribution: When food bags are given out to students each week, typically on the last day of the school week.

Distribution Volunteer(s): The person or people who complete a distribution at an education site.

Education Site: An individual school or school district.

Enrollment Numbers: The total number of students enrolled for each bag type. These change as students opt in and out of the program or switch bag types.

Enrollment Numbers Submission: Once a month, each Site Coordinator submits an update of the number of students enrolled per bag type (at education sites only).

Food Bag: 4-5 pounds of nutritious, nonperishable food, including a variety of fruits, vegetables, proteins, and grains, provided by Every Meal to sites to distribute to children and families.

Inventory Submission: After the distribution on the day highighted in yellow on the Program Calendar, Site Coordinator or Volunteers should count and record current quantity of food bags (by color) on site. Site Coordinator will submit this inventory along with enrollment numbers the following week.

Participation Agreement(s): Participation Agreement(s) contain the commitment made by the education site and/or community sponsor with Every Meal in partnering to fight child hunger. The document contains all the necessary pieces to execute the program well and is signed by all parties in agreement prior to the start of the partnership each year.

Program Coordinator: Your site's point person at Every Meal.

Site Coordinator: The staff person who coordinates Every Meal's Program at the site.

Program Toolkit: A page on our website that provides Every Meal resources: everymeal.org/weekend-meal-program-toolkit.

Volunteer Coordinator: The community partner who manages and schedules volunteers for the food distributions (the Site Coordinator may also fulfill this role).

Weekend Meal Program Distribution Volunteer: Volunteers provided through Every Meal, not from a Community Sponsor (defined above).

EVERY MEAL OVERVIEW

MISSION

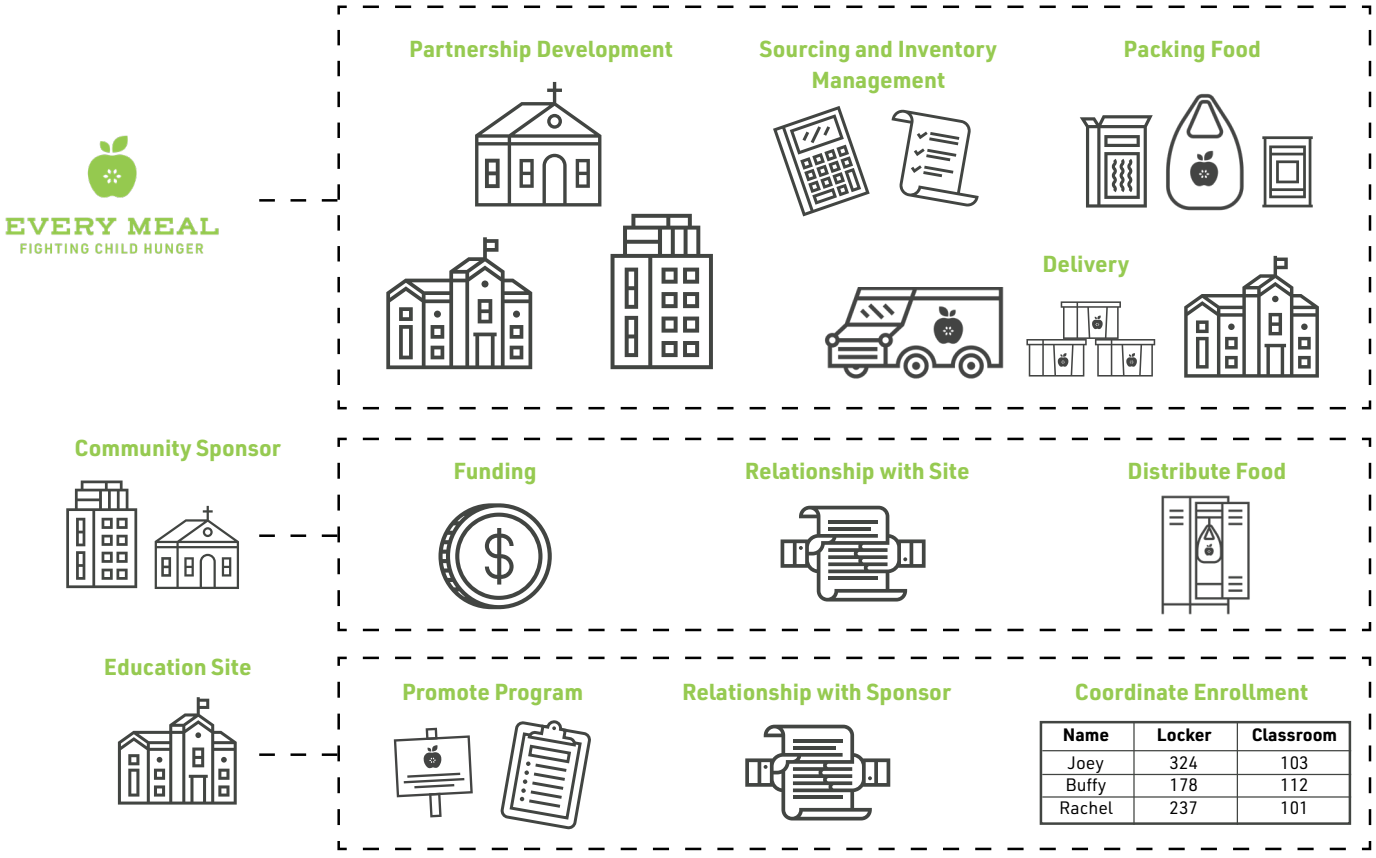
Fight child hunger through community and school partnerships.

VISION

Every Child. Every Meal. ®

Background: In 2010, Every Meal (formerly The Sheridan Story) began by providing weekend food bags to one kindergarten classroom at Sheridan Elementary in Northeast Minneapolis. Every Meal recognized that food insecurity was happening throughout the Twin Cities, and became a nonprofit in 2013 to grow their network of community and school partners.

Through our network of community partners, we work hard to get food to children who are experiencing food insecurity, which means they don't have consistent access to enough food for an active, healthy life. Every Meal strives to make a difference in children's lives by specifically focusing on food gaps – the times when children aren't at school to access meal programs.



Name	Locker	Classroom
Joey	324	103
Buffy	178	112
Rachel	237	101

SECTION 2: PROGRAM RULES

These rules apply to all individuals and sites that interface with the Every Meal Weekend Meal Program. If you have questions, please contact your Every Meal Program Coordinator.

General Rules. The following general rules are applicable to the Program:

- The food provided by Every Meal to site(s) is intended for use exclusively in conjunction with the Program. The food may not be used for any other purpose without prior approval of Every Meal. This includes, but is not limited to, sale of the food bags.
- No additional item(s) (e.g., candy, additional food, written materials including brochures and flyers) may be distributed in conjunction with Program bags unless prior written approval has been obtained from both Every Meal and site(s).
- No religion or faith may be promoted in conjunction with the Program. This includes, but is not limited to, dissemination of religious materials, invitations to events hosted by a religious organization, or use of religious music or art in conjunction with distribution of Program bags.

Student Privacy and Confidentiality Rules. The following rules regarding student privacy and confidentiality are applicable to the Program:

- Every Meal will follow any and all site-provided requirements regarding student and/or site privacy and confidentiality.
- Every Meal will not take photographs or video of students who participate in the Program, or release any image or statement that can be used to identify such students.
- Every Meal will obtain any and all necessary permission before disseminating any information about site employees or students that may be deemed private or confidential under Minnesota law.

Child Safety Rules. In addition to laws, regulations, and site-specific child safety rules, the following Every Meal policies apply to the Program:

- Any individual who has reason to believe that a child may have been, currently is, or will be abused physically, emotionally, sexually or in any other manner by a person(s) connected to Every Meal should contact the most senior individual possible at the site.
- After ensuring that site administration has been adequately notified and that they are taking action to ensure the child is safe, the President of Every Meal should then be contacted immediately, to the extent that such contact is permitted by applicable law.
- The President will notify the Every Meal Board of Directors who will be involved in further action. Every Meal will then notify the most Senior Officer of any partner organization that may be involved.

Every Meal will defer to and cooperate with site policies and procedures that pertain to such situations.

Discretion: Every Meal works hard to ensure that food will be distributed discreetly to children enrolled in the Program. It is incredibly important that no student ever be singled out, or feel embarrassed for receiving a food bag. Here are some examples of what discretion means to Every Meal:

- **Never write a child's name or any other information on the outside of the food bags.**
- **Never ask a child to come into the hallway to identify their backpack, especially in front of other students.**

OUR FOOD

Our Commitment

Every Meal is committed to providing food that is nutritious, delicious, and relevant which retains the dignity of our children and families. Learn more here: https://www.everymeal.org/nutrition/

Nutritious: Registered Dietitians have worked to ensure all of our bag types meet current nutrition standards for children and youth as outlined by the Dietary Guidelines for Americans and the National School Lunch and Breakfast Programs.

Delicious: Every Meal continually gathers feedback from taste tests and program participant surveys. For each item we provide, we make sure it looks, smells, and tastes delicious.

Relevant: What good is dried rice if a family doesn't have access to a kitchen to cook it? What good is macaroni and cheese to an immigrant family who is unfamiliar with how to prepare the item? What good are pork and beans if a family's religion forbids eating pork? We offer five food bag options with a variety of menus designed to be relevant for the various dietary preferences of the children and families we serve.

Weekend Food Bags

Families may choose from five food bag options. All bag types contain 4-5 pounds of nutritious, nonperishable food, including a variety of fruits, vegetables, proteins, and grains. Bag types are identified by different colors of the Every Meal logo. Each color has four bag variations to ensure families do not receive the same items every week.

Blue Bag

Tailored for East African dietary preferences, this bag is pork-free and may contain items such as tuna, spaghetti, black-eyed peas, corn flour, and tomato products.



Purple Bag

Tailored for Southeast Asian dietary preferences, this bag may contain items such as rice, rice noodles, coconut milk, bamboo shoots, curry paste, green beans, and mandarin oranges.



Green Bag

Tailored to offer the widest variety of food items, this bag may contain items such as chicken, tuna, pasta, rice, mac and cheese, chili/soup, and varied vegetables and fruits.



Yellow Bag

Tailored with all ready-to-eat items which require little or no preparation, this bag may contain items such as dried fruit, chicken salad, sunflower seeds, granola, pasta cups, and soups.



Orange Bag

Tailored for Latino dietary preferences, this bag may contain items such as rice, black beans, pinto beans, corn flour, fideo pasta, enchilada sauce, chipotles in adobo, and diced chiles.



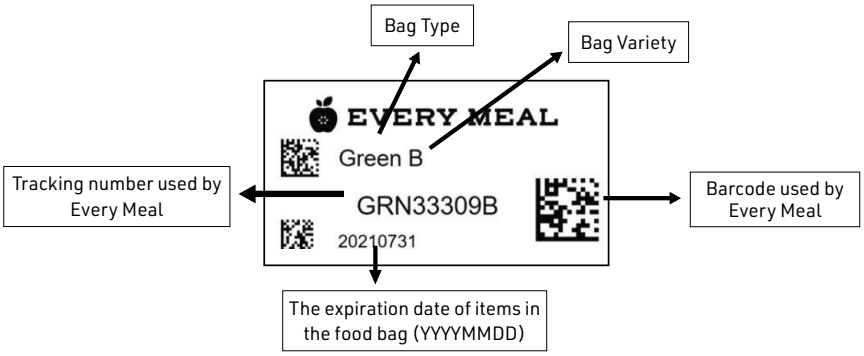


BAG TYPES AND LABELS

Every Meal currently has five different food bag options. Each food bag type is distinguished and referred to by color. The Every Meal apple logo on the food bag will correspond to the same color label on the box it came from. For example, an orange apple on the bag will correspond to the box with an orange label.

Bag Type Overview:

LABEL COLOR	LOGO COLOR
Blue	
Green	
Orange	
Purple	
Yellow	



Each Every Meal Bag Type (Blue, Green, Orange, Purple, Yellow) has four varieties (A, B, C, D). Each variety letter represents a bag with unique contents or recipes. Your Program Coordinator will send a mixture of bag varieties to help ensure families receive an array of items week to week.

Orange A
Pineapple
Tomato Sauce
Chicken
Fideo Pasta
Chipotle in Adobo

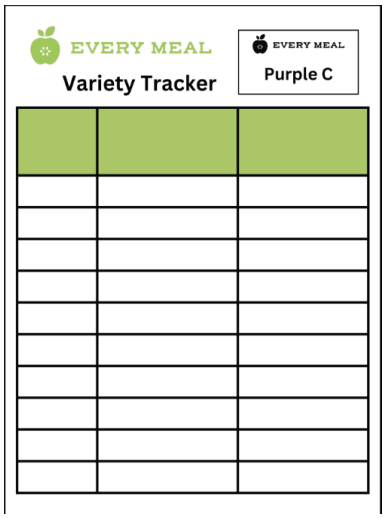
Orange B
Pears
Corn
Black Beans
White Rice
Enchilada Sauce

Orange C
Peaches
Carrots
Tuna
Corn Flour
Diced Tomato

Orange D
Mango
Peas
Pinto Beans
Brown Rice
Diced Green Chile

*This is a generalized content list and does not reflect the actual bag contents.

Every Meal provides a Variety Tracker (link found in Program Toolkit) when there are 1-3 students at the school enrolled in a single bag color. This sheet will help you track varieties used each week . This is an important factor in making sure families are not receiving the same bag contents 2-6 weeks in a row.



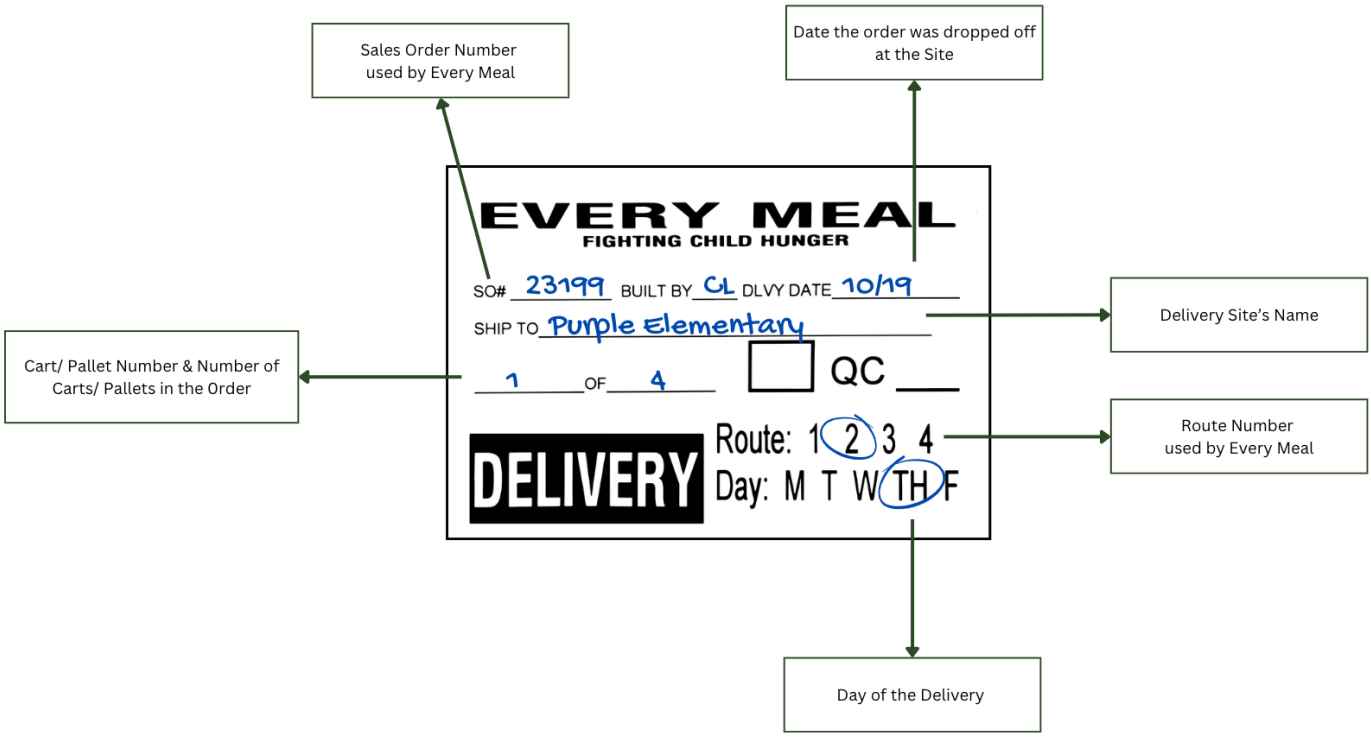
FOOD DELIVERIES

Every Meal delivers food to sites Monday through Friday between 8am- 3pm (unless otherwise communicated to your Program Coordinator). Please have your empty boxes, carts and any additional items to be returned to Every Meal gathered in one location, either in your food storage area or near your delivery entrance, for our drivers to retrieve during your delivery.

We ask that the Site Coordinator makes office staff and building employees aware of Every Meal and our delivery process in order to avoid confusion and mishaps.

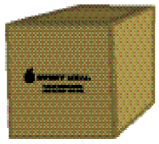
Your site's designated Delivery Contact will receive a delivery notification email prior to your food's arrival which will contain an ETA and tracking link. They will also receive a delivery confirmation email once our drivers have marked your order as completed.

On every delivery you will find a delivery sticker - see image below for all the info it contains. **It is most important for you to confirm that the school name written on the sticker is correct before removing the plastic wrap.**



FOOD STORAGE SPACE

Every Meal provides a variety of delivery methods to accommodate various building entrances and storage spaces. Below are examples and images of our different options. The majority of our sites receive food bags in cardboard boxes. For sites with pests, food bags in plastic totes from Every Meal may be an option. Please work with your Every Meal Program Coordinator to find the best fit for your location.



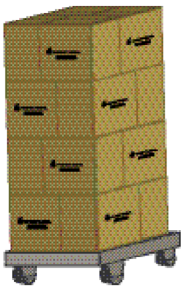
H
10.25 in

W
10.75 in

L
13.9 in

Standard Box

- Single box (6 bags of food)
- Approx. L: 13.9 in x W: 10.75 in x H: 10.25 in



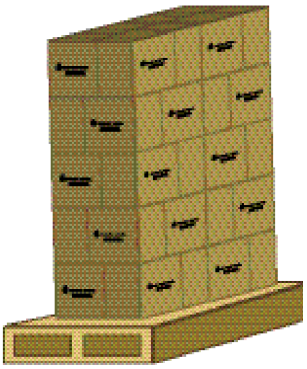
H
4 ft

W
28 in

L
28 in

Metal Cart

- Holds up to 16 boxes (96 bags of food)
- 4 layers of 4 boxes per layer
- Approx. L: 28 in x W: 28 in x H: 4 ft



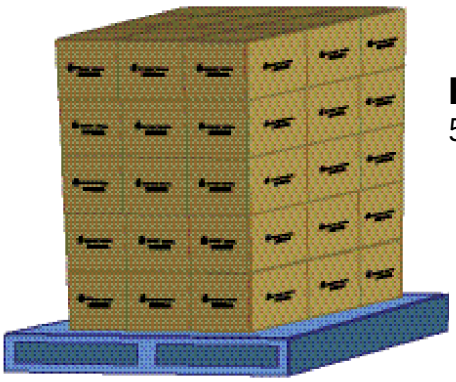
H
5 ft

W
30 in

L
4 ft

Medium Pallet

- Holds up to 40 boxes (240 bags of food)
- 5 layers of 8 boxes per layer
- Approx. L: 4 ft x W: 30 in x H: 5 ft



H
5 ft

W
48 in

L
4 ft

Full Pallet

- Holds up to 55 boxes (330 bags of food)
- 5 layers of 11 boxes per layer
- Approx. L: 4 ft x W: 48 in x H: 5 ft

FOOD STORAGE REQUIREMENTS

Food is one of our most precious resources at Every Meal. Please help Every Meal ensure that it is stored safely so we can feed as many children as possible. All partner organizations with Every Meal must sign a Participation Agreement for the Program timeframe and have agreed to comply with the following food storage requirements.

1. **Applicability:** These food storage requirements are applicable to every location where food provided by Every Meal is stored for any period of time; this includes storage at a site. These requirements are subject to external laws and regulations, as well as relevant best practices, and may be changed from time to time in the sole discretion of Every Meal.

2. Food should be stored in a temperate environment that is well ventilated and generally between 41° F - 70° F.

3. Boxes and totes should never be stored on the ground and should remain closed unless a distribution is taking place. Please ensure they are:
   - 6 inches off the ground – Every Meal pallets and carts work well for this
   - 4 inches away from the wall (for airflow, and to prevent mildew)
   - 2 feet from the ceiling

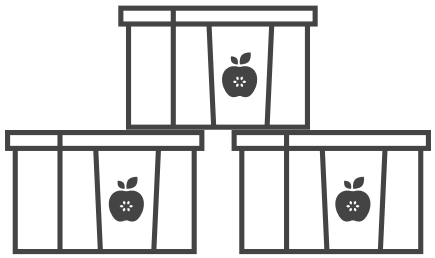
4. Boxes should not be stored:
   - Directly under pipes
   - Under stairwells
   - In bathrooms
   - Near chemicals
   - In a spot where students can tamper with the food

5. Following a distribution, any remaining bags should be sorted according to the bag colors and returned to the corresponding boxes. Boxes containing food should always be resealed or shut to the best of your ability prior to returning a box to storage. Totes containing food should always have their lids securely fastened.

6. **Receiving requirements:** Every Meal food must be inspected when it is received while Every Meal staff are there. This includes inspection of:
   - Totes for openings in the base or lid, such as holes or cracks:
     - If an opening is noted, and it is suspected to be caused by a pest, reject the delivery and contact Every Meal immediately. (See also "Pests and possible contamination".)
   - Boxes for openings such as holes or tears:
     - If an opening is noted and it is suspected to be caused by a pest, reject the delivery and contact Every Meal immediately. (See also "Pests and possible contamination".)

- Bags for tears and holes:
  - Food distributed to the students must be safe.
  - Dispose of the damaged product(s).
  - Remaining bag contents can be set aside with a note "Return to Every Meal." Every Meal staff will collect the items at the earliest convenience.
  - We recommend that you not try to determine if any of the food in the bag is still sanitary and safe to be distributed to the students. When in doubt – send it back.
  - If a bag is suspected of being contaminated by a pest, reject the delivery and contact Every Meal immediately. (See also "Pests and possible contamination".)

7. **Pests and possible contamination:** If pests are noted in the storage location, proceed as follows:
   - Pest contamination when Every Meal is at fault, includes pest(s), and/or the evidence of pest(s), in the bags, totes, and/or boxes at the time the bags are received. (See also "Receiving requirements".) If you ever notice any food contamination from within the school or the boxes, please take a photo of the box label and damaged items immediately, before discarding the boxes/items and contacting your Every Meal Program Coordinator.
   - Pest contamination when the storage location is at fault includes pests and/or the evidence of pest(s) in the bags, totes, and/or boxes in which pests are noted after receiving and/or storage of the food items. The storage location will be responsible to investigate and resolve, at their cost, the pest contamination, or make special arrangements to store the food in a different location, and contact a pest control service



SECTION 3:
EVERY MEAL RESPONSIBILITIES

The list below provides a summary of responsibilities of Every Meal, as detailed in the Participation Agreement. Please contact your Every Meal Program Coordinator for a full copy of the annual Participation Agreement.

Every Meal will:

1. Provide sites with relevant Every Meal rules, procedures, and policies (as revised from time to time at the sole discretion of Every Meal), including but not limited to those provided within the Participation Agreement.
2. Screen, train, and supervise Every Meal employees on Every Meal and site-provided policies that are applicable while on the site property. Assist the site and sponsor, if applicable, with planning and implementation of the Program.
3. Procure, package, store, and coordinate delivery of food to the location determined by mutual agreement with site.
4. Upon request and subject to availability, provide a cart for use in distributing food at the site.
5. Plan, facilitate, and manage the packing of food bags, including food-packing events where volunteers place food in bags in preparation for delivery and distribution to students in conjunction with the Program.
6. Follow all necessary and proper food packaging and handling processes and procedures, including any applicable laws and regulations, to ensure the food is delivered to the site in uncompromised condition and safe for human consumption.
7. Coordinate food inventory management with the site and sponsor.
8. Prepare written materials describing the Weekend Meal Program to be sent home to the parents/guardians.
9. Have sole responsibility for all costs and expenses associated with operating the Weekend Meal Program.
10. Actively respond to questions and concerns raised by the site.
11. Take all necessary steps to avoid contamination of the food or packaging (including COVID-19 contamination), in keeping with public health guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH).

SECTION 4:
EDUCATION SITE RESPONSIBILITIES

Prior to the start of the school year, Decision Makers from each partnering district, charter school and private school sign a Participation Agreement with Every Meal. The list below provides a summary of responsibilities of the education site, as detailed in the Participation Agreement. Please contact your Every Meal Program Coordinator for a full copy of the annual Participation Agreement.

Education Site(s) will:

1. Assign a Site Coordinator to serve as the main liaison and key contact person between Site and Every Meal, and to have primary operational responsibility for planning and implementing the Program at the Site.
2. Determine the consent (if any) that education site deems necessary from a parent or guardian of each student who will receive Every Meal food, obtain such consent, and maintain any such authorization in education site files.
3. Maintain an accurate and updated list of students enrolled and participating in the Program at the Site.
4. Provide Every Meal with relevant Site rules, procedures, and policies (as revised from time to time at the sole discretion of Site).
5. Follow the food storage requirements and procedures provided by Every Meal in order to provide safe, secure, and sanitary storage for all food items from the time they are received to when they are distributed to participating students
6. Restrict use of Every Meal-provided equipment (e.g., cart) to Program-related purposes only.
7. Complete Program evaluation materials prepared by Every Meal.
8. Respond to Every Meal data requests, communication, and feedback in a timely manner.
9. Share necessary Every Meal information more broadly with education site staff, as requested, as applicable.
10. Follow all Every Meal protocol and procedures pertaining to Every Meal bags including, but not limited to, obtaining prior permission from Every Meal before including additional materials and/or communication in the bags.
11. Responsibility for providing volunteers to distribute Every Meal food bags within the education site will be determined by mutual agreement.
12. Promote Weekend Meal Program and collect enrollment forms from the parent(s) or guardian of each student who wishes to participate in the Weekend Meal Program.
13. Use the Every Meal web-based reporting process to report key information on a timely basis to ensure Every Meal's ability to provide food for distribution and track accurate inventory levels.
14. Provide oversight to assure that any and all volunteers assisting with the Program at the education site, including those that may be provided by Every Meal or its partners, are in compliance with all Program, Every Meal, and education site rules, procedures, and policies while on the education site's property.

ENROLLMENT PROCESS



Enrollment forms are the main way Every Meal communicates to families about the Weekend Meal Program. The paper version of the enrollment form is available in English, Spanish, Somali & Hmong. The digital version contains those four languages in addition to Arabic, Karen, Amharic & Pashto, with more languages planned for the future.

Every Meal strongly recommends that an enrollment form be sent home with EVERY child. This gives each family the opportunity to participate. Families with multiple children may receive one food bag per child enrolled at a partner site.

Families can enroll any time throughout the year. We suggest giving families multiple opportunities to enroll in the program. Ideas for giving out enrollment forms are during open houses, conferences, family events, and before/after extended breaks. A sample letter to families can be found in the Resource and Tools section of this Handbook.

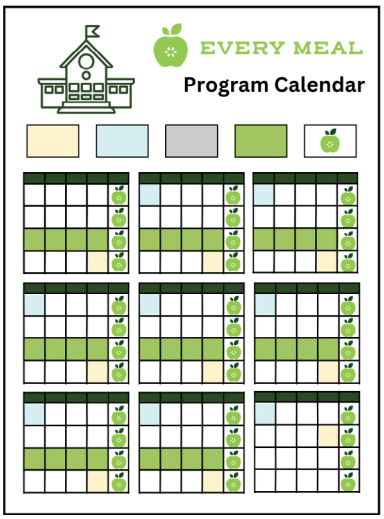
Education sites retain completed enrollment forms for their own records. Every Meal will only ask for the number of students enrolled for each bag type.

Electronic enrollment forms are also available. Contact your Every Meal Program Coordinator for more information. You can access this editable document on the Program Toolkit at: **www.everymeal.org/weekend-meal-program-toolkit**

EVERY MEAL PROGRAM CALENDAR

The Every Meal Program Calendar is a school and district-specific calendar created to help sites and volunteers coordinate distribution logistics. Program calendars are emailed out at the beginning of each school year to both Site and Volunteer Coordinators.

EXAMPLE CALENDAR



Green Apple: Indicates recommended distribution day(s) each week.

Program Start Date: Every Meal is not suggesting a standard start date this year. The Site and Volunteer Coordinators, if applicable, should discuss the best start date for both parties and communicate the confirmed date to your Every Meal Program Coordinator.

Enrollment Numbers Submissions: Once a month, each Site Coordinator submits an update of the number of students enrolled per bag type.

Inventory Submission: After the distribution, Site or Volunteer Coordinators should count and record current inventory. Site Coordinators will submit this inventory along with enrollment numbers.

Delivery Week: The week your site can expect a delivery of food bags from Every Meal each month.

Program End Date: The final distributions for the school year will be the Thursday and Friday before the last week of school. Every Meal will not send additional food for the second distribution, but this will allow schools to distribute any extra food that has accumulated. If your school finishes your supply of food on Thursday, the Friday distribution will not be necessary.

You can access the PDF version of your school's calendar as well as a link and directions to add a digital version of the Program Calendar to your personal calendar on the Program Toolkit at: **www.everymeal.org/weekend-meal-program-toolkit**

EDUCATION SITE DISTRIBUTION VOLUNTEER RESPONSIBILITIES

Responsibility for providing volunteers to distribute Every Meal food bags within the education site will be determined by mutual agreement. In the annual Participation Agreement, Every Meal and each education site have agreed that responsibility for background checks will be allocated as followed:

- If volunteers are provided via Every Meal, then Every Meal is responsible for doing a background check on each person that will be in the education site and will provide only volunteers who have passed that check.

- If volunteers are provided via a third party (a "Community Sponsor"), then the education site will have sole responsibility for doing any background checks that it deems necessary for each person that will be in the education site.
  - The third party will be responsible for any costs associated with the check.

Volunteer Coordinator Responsibilities:

1. Share-out our distribution volunteer training video and Best Practices document to all volunteers prior to their first distribution.

2. Train employees and/or volunteers in accordance with policies provided by the education site and outlined in this Handbook by Every Meal.

3. Organize and schedule employees and/or volunteers for weekly food distributions.

Distribution Volunteer Responsibilities:

1. Distribute food bags each week, using the procedures and schedule designated by the education site.

2. Communicate inventory levels and needs to Every Meal on a timely basis to ensure Every Meal's ability to provide food for distribution as needed.

3. Respond to data requests, communication, and feedback in a timely manner.

DISTRIBUTION BEST PRACTICES

Best Practices for Creating a Weekly Distribution List:
To help ensure a smooth and successful distribution, the weekly distribution list should include the following column headers:

- Teacher's name and/or classroom number
- Student's locker number or cubby location
- Student's first name - last names should not be included
- Food bag color (Blue, Green, Orange, Purple, Yellow)
- Grade
- Backpack description
- A "Yes/No" column for volunteers to indicate if the food bag was distributed
- A "Notes" column for volunteers to leave a brief comment relevant to the distribution
- Make sure to start fresh with a new list each year

*An editable version of this document can be found on the Program Toolkit at:
www.everymeal.org/weekend-meal-program-toolkit

Best Practices for Site Coordinators:

- Share this list with anyone who helps with the distribution process: volunteers, teachers, staff, etc.
- Update the distribution list weekly to reflect changes in enrollment. Throughout the school year, families may opt in or out of the program or may simply wish to receive a new bag color.
- **Print a new list each week that is accurate, up to date, and clean from the previous week's notes.**
- Check the distribution list after every distribution. Follow up with staff, students, or families as needed. For example, if a student leaves the food bag in their locker, check in with that student to determine why the bag didn't make it home.

Best Practices for Distribution Volunteers:
Every Meal works hard to ensure that food will be distributed discreetly to children enrolled in the program. It is incredibly important that no student ever be singled out, or feel embarrassed for receiving a food bag. Below are a few ways to help protect the privacy and dignity of those participating in our program:

- **Never write a child's name or identifying information on the outside of the food bags.**
- **Never ask a child to come into the hallway to identify their backpack, especially in front of other students.**
- Teachers who distribute food bags within their classrooms should do so while the classroom is empty such as lunch time or recess.
- If students are in the hallway during a food distribution, volunteers should wait off to the side until students return to their classrooms. Volunteers can also continue with the distribution in another area of the school and return when things have quieted down.
- Questions about the bags from students who aren't in our program should be politely and vaguely answered.
- **Box cutters, pocket knives, etc. are not allowed on school grounds. You may bring child safe scissors or ask the school office for a similar item to assist with opening/ breaking down boxes.**

DISTRIBUTION FAQS

Can additional items be added into the bags?

- No additional item(s) (e.g., additional food, flyers, etc.) may be distributed in ***conjunction with Weekend Meal Program bags unless prior written approval*** has been obtained from both Every Meal and the site. Contact your Every Meal Program Coordinator for more details.

Can't find the correct locker?

- Please continue distribution until all other bags have been passed out. The volunteer can then go to the main office and ask for assistance from school staff in finding the correct location.
- Please avoid interrupting staff or students to ask them to come into the hall and identify the locker.

No backpack in the locker?

- If students share lockers or use open cubbies/hooks, please make a note on the distribution list of "no backpack." The designated school contact can then follow up to determine whether the student is absent, doesn't have a backpack, moved lockers, etc.
- In schools where teachers are responsible for placing the food into the backpacks, the teacher may keep the bag of food and give to the student when they return to school.
- If there is only one student using the locker, one food bag may be left in the locker for the student to take when they return to school.

Already a bag of food in the student's locker?

- Please do not give the student a second bag of food (2 bags can be too heavy for many students to carry!) and make a note on the distribution list. The designated Site Coordinator should then follow up with the student to ensure the food is brought home. Conversations with the parents/guardians may need to take place if this is a recurring issue.

Not sure which is the correct backpack?

- If after a brief search you cannot identify the correct backpack, please skip that child and make a note on the distribution list so that the Site Coordinator is aware of the situation. The Site Coordinator will follow-up with that student separately. We always want to ensure the food is going home with the correct student.

Not enough food on the day of distribution?

- If you are short on food on the day of distribution, call your Program Coordinator or the Every Meal office at 612-568-4003.
- We will do our best to get food to the school as soon as we are able.
- Reference the Program Calendar for the upcoming delivery.

Ran out of a specific bag type?

- If you run out of a specific bag type, please supplement with other bag types on-site. We would prefer students take home a different bag type versus no bag at all.
- Inform your Every Meal Program Coordinator of the shortage.

Partial bags or leftover food items found in the hallways or sitting around the school?

- Remaining bag contents can be used to the site's discretion.
- Please contact your Every Meal Program Coordinator to discuss additional options, if needed.

Food bags that have been compromised by pests?

- Please refer to "Food Storage Requirements" on page 9.

Food bags that have damaged items? (e.g. pierced can, punctured bag of rice, etc.)?

- Dispose of the damaged product(s).
- Inform your Every Meal Program Coordinator of the shortage so that we can send a replacement box(s).

Empty boxes?

- Once boxes have been emptied, please break down the boxes and keep them in an organized stack near the food storage location. Every Meal staff will pick these up with the next scheduled food delivery. Typically we can reuse the boxes at least three times – a huge cost savings which means more food to children!

How do I protect student privacy while distributing food bags?

- It is incredibly important to Every Meal that no student ever be singled out or feel embarrassed for receiving a food bag.
- Here are a few things to keep in mind to help protect the privacy and dignity of those participating in our program:
  - **Never write a child's name or any other information on the outside of the food bags.**
  - **Never ask a child to come into the hallway to identify their backpack, especially in front of other students.**
- Lockers and backpacks should have name tags or descriptions on the distribution list so that students don't need to point them out to volunteers.
- If students are in the hallway during a food distribution, volunteers should wait off to the side until students return to their classrooms. Volunteers can also continue with distribution in another area of the school and return when things have quieted down.
- Teachers who distribute food bags should do so while the classroom is empty (lunch time, specialist, recess, etc.).
- Teachers who distribute should also include directions in their sub notes if they are out on a distribution day.
- Questions about the bags from students who aren't in our program should be politely and vaguely answered:
  - "We are just delivering something that was ordered."
  - "We are sending something home to parents."
  - "We are working on a special project."

How does Every Meal handle food allergies?

- Every Meal will try to accommodate the needs of students with severe allergies. Every Meal encourages students and/or families to look through the food items in each food bag to ensure it is safe for consumption. Every Meal is not liable for any illness due to a severe food allergy that occurs as a result of consumption.

Additional comments, questions, concerns?

- Please contact the Every Meal Program Coordinator for your site. We are here to help!
- Not sure who that is?
  - Contact our main office at 612-568-4003. Be ready to share your site/school name and city/district and we will get you in touch with the correct person.

Can I distribute a second bag before long breaks (MEA, Winter & Spring)?

- No, please refrain from distributiong two or more bags during a distribution. Your Program Coordinator calculates your delivery based on a single predesignated distribution day, as seen on your Program Calendar.

SECTION 5:
RESOURCES & TOOLS

Promoting Every Meal at your education site involves communicating to families and staff about the availability of the Weekend Meal Program. This is the first and most important step of getting started each school year.

This section contains the following tools, resources, and ideas for program promotion. All of the following resources are available in the program toolkit.

Page 20 - **Weekend Meal Program Flyer:** Pass this out to staff, post it, highlight the information in a staff meeting. The Weekend Meal Program Flyer is designed to help staff accurately share information about Every Meal program with families.

- The task of enrolling families in Every Meal program should not fall on the Site Coordinator alone.
- Staff should be aware that Every Meal is a resource within their site and be equipped to promote the program to families who may wish to enroll.

Page 21 - **Distribution List Template**

Page 22 - **Distribution Checklist**

Visit our Weekend Meal Program Toolkit at:
www.everymeal.org/weekend-meal-program-toolkit for digital promotional resources in multiple languages, distribution list templates, program best practices, and more.

WEEKEND MEAL PROGRAM FLYER

You can access this editable document on the Program Toolkit at:

www.everymeal.org/weekend-meal-program-toolkit



EVERY MEAL

WEEKEND MEAL PROGRAM

OUR MISSION

FIGHTING CHILD HUNGER THROUGH COMMUNITY AND SCHOOL PARTNERSHIPS

OUR STORY

Every Meal is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization with a mission to fight child hunger through community and school partnerships. We strive to make a difference in children's lives by specifically focusing on food gaps - the times when children aren't at school to access meal programs. Every Meal supports families with programming over the weekends, extended school breaks, and summer.

Providing kids with good food that is nutritious, delicious, and relevant is our focus, and their growth and achievement is at the heart of everything we do.

MEAL PROGRAM

- **Free for all families**
- No qualifications required
- No contact information collected
- Families may participate in the program at **any time** throughout the school year
- Students will receive food bags each week, typically on Fridays

Weekend Food Bag Options: Families may choose from five options structured around the USDA MyPlate standards. All bag types contain 4-5 pounds of non-perishable food, including a variety of fruits, vegetables, proteins, and grains. Bag types are identified by different colors of Every Meal logo.

Blue Bag — Tailored for East African dietary preferences, this bag is pork-free and may contain items such as tuna, spaghetti, black-eyed peas, corn flour, fava beans, and tomato products.

Green Bag — Tailored to offer the widest variety of food items, this bag may contain items such as chicken, tuna, pasta, rice, mac and cheese, chili/soup, and varied vegetables and fruits.

Orange Bag — Tailored for Latino dietary preferences, this bag may contain items such as rice, black beans, pinto beans, corn flour, fideo pasta, enchilada sauce, chipotles in adobo, and diced chiles.

Purple Bag — Tailored for Southeast Asian dietary preferences, this bag may contain items such as rice, rice noodles, coconut milk, bamboo shoots, curry paste, green beans, and mandarin oranges.

Yellow Bag — Tailored with all ready-to-eat items which require little or no preparation, this bag may contain items such as dried fruit, tuna salad, chicken salad, sunflower seeds, granola, oatmeal, and soups.

Site Coordinator: **Email:** **Phone #:**

DISTRIBUTION LIST TEMPLATE

You can access this editable document on the Program Toolkit at:
www.everymeal.org/weekend-meal-program-toolkit

Reference the Distribution List Template as an example of a well-crafted distribution list. This template is available in an editable version in Microsoft Excel and Google Sheets.

EVERY MEAL
FIGHTING CHILD HUNGER

TODAY'S DATE: ___October 17, 2025_____
SITE COORDINATOR: _____Mr. Yang_____

	Blue	Green	Orange	Purple	Yellow	Total Students Enrolled
Total number of students enrolled per bag type (bags needed):	3	2	1	2	1	9

Distribution Staff/Volunteer Responsibilities		Site Coordinator Responsibilities						
Bag Placed Y/N	Distribution Notes (Site Coordinator to follow up with students/families as needed)	Bag Color	Student's First Name	Last initial if needed	Locker Number	Teacher's Name or Classroom Number	Grade	Backpack Description
Y		Blue	Mohammed			Room 209	3	Grey Jansport
Y		Orange	Whitney			Room 209	3	Tie-Dye Rainbow
Y		Yellow	Hugo			Room 209	3	Red and Blue Superhero
N	Bag already in locker	Purple	Xiong		402	Room 32	1	Black Power Rangers
Y		Purple	Alejandro		62	Room 33	1	Green and Grey Camo
Y		Green	Kevin	H		Miss Hanks	K	Bright Blue Nike
Y		Blue	Kevin	J		Miss Hanks	K	Orange with Lightning Pattern
N	No backpack in cubbie	Green	Nadia			Miss Hanks	K	Dark Blue with Puppies
Y		Blue	Vanessa			Miss Hanks	K	Pink Sparkly Princess

Inventory AFTER Today's distribution is completed: Blue __16_ Green: _1__ Orange: _23_ Purple: __7_ Yellow: _0_
Please consult your Every Meal Program Calendar for the dates you should check inventory

DISTRIBUTION CHECKLIST

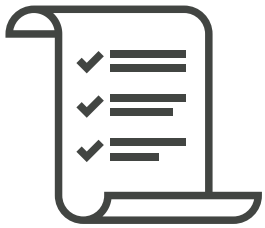
Use to ensure all steps are completed for a successful distribution.

Distribution Volunteers

- [ ] Distribute food bags to participating students
- [ ] Make notes on distribution list (unable to identify a backpack, student already has food bag in locker, etc.)
- [ ] Return distribution list to Site Coordinator
- [ ] Ensure food is stored at least 4" from the wall and 6" off the floor in the Every Meal box
- [ ] Break down empty boxes and stack in a pile
- [ ] Rotate varieties when 3 students or less are enrolled for a bag color (use Variety Tracker)

Site Coordinator

- [ ] Submit enrollment & inventory numbers to your Every Meal Program Coordinator monthly as indicated on your Program Calendar.
- [ ] Maintain an accurate and updated distribution list
- [ ] Review volunteer notes on distribution list and follow up with students, families, and staff as needed
- [ ] Submit inventory to your Every Meal Program Coordinator when indicated on your Program Calendar



CONTACT US

EVERY MEAL
FIGHTING CHILD HUNGER

Office
2723 Patton Road, Roseville, MN 55113

Phone
612-568-4003

Website
www.everymeal.org

Email
info@everymeal.org

Follow us on social media!
Stay up to date on all things Every Meal. Learn about our impact on child hunger, volunteer opportunities, partnerships, what our team is up to, and more! Follow along at:

@everymealorg

Every Meal

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