



## Food Security Resources for Washington State Tribes, Tribal Organizations and Tribal Community Members

### Washington State Department of Agriculture's (WSDA) Food Assistance

For more information, contact Kim Eads, WSDA Food Assistance program manager, at [keads@agr.wa.gov](mailto:keads@agr.wa.gov) or 360-725-5651. General information can be found on our webpage: [agr.wa.gov/services/food-access](http://agr.wa.gov/services/food-access)

**The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP)** is a USDA supplemental food program that provides USDA commodity foods to lower-income families.

WSDA works with 19 TEFAP contractors (community action programs, food banks, etc.) to provide food to 500 subcontractors (local food pantries, meal programs and tribes) across the state. Tribes and tribal organizations can enter into an agreement or be sponsored as a temporary site with the TEFAP contractor or a TEFAP subcontractor best aligned with their geographic location and/or needs.

This program serves on average 155,326 households and 447,002 individuals each month. Client eligibility is based on 185 percent of the federal poverty level. Foods include a variety of fruits, vegetables, juices, dairy, potatoes, cereal, rice, and protein items based on availability.

**Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP)** is a USDA supplemental food program that provides USDA commodity foods to lower-income seniors (60 or older). Monthly income must not exceed 130 percent of the federal poverty level.

WSDA works with CSFP contractors to provide food to CSFP sites in a limited number of counties. This program has a set number of clients authorized by USDA. In our state this program is at full capacity, serving 6,004 seniors each month in a select number of counties.

Each year WSDA can request additional caseload and add new CSFP contractors. Tribes that are not presently a CSFP contractor may notify WSDA Food Assistance by Aug. 1, 2020 to apply to become a contractor starting in 2021, if additional caseload is made available by USDA.

The food packages provide clients with almost 28 pounds of critically needed food each month. Participants receive real food, not food vouchers. The focus is on nutritional supplementation and provides a variety of fruits, vegetables, healthy juices, dairy, potatoes, cereal, rice, and protein.

**Emergency Food Assistance Program - Tribal (EFAP-Tribal)** is a WSDA-managed, state-funded program that supports local food banks and food pantries, as well as tribes and tribal organizations. It provides funding to help reduce hunger for lower-income Washingtonians and tribal members, including the homeless.

### Key Contacts

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In order to receive EFAP Tribal-funded food or food vouchers from a tribe or tribal organization, state law sets a minimum requirement that clients simply declare they lack the resources to feed themselves and their families. Tribes may have additional requirements such as that the client live in a certain geographic area or they may access services only so many times a year. Tribes may not discriminate against any class of people, although Indian preference is allowed.

The funding is flexible and may be used for the purchase of food, food vouchers, operational costs, nutrition education and equipment purchases or repairs. Tribes that operate voucher programs provide food vouchers to people who are in need of food. The vouchers are then exchanged for food at grocery stores.

Tribes may apply on their own or partner with other tribal contractors or subcontractors. WSDA awards two-year contracts using state general funds at the beginning of the state's fiscal biennium. The legislature requires that EFAP-Tribal funds be available to all federally recognized tribes, as well as non-federally recognized tribes that are registered as 501(c) 3 nonprofit organizations. Currently, EFAP-Tribal supports 31 tribes, including 18 that apply through Small Tribes Organization of Western Washington (STOWW) or South Puget Intertribal Planning Agency (SPIPA).

Due to COVID-19, WSDA has allowed additional flexibility for tribes operating voucher programs to switch, all or in part, to a food distribution model for tribal members that provides food instead vouchers. An additional \$142,500 in COVID-19 EFAP-Tribal funding has been added for state fiscal year 2020.

## United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Tribal Food Programs

For more information, visit [fns.usda.gov](https://fns.usda.gov), United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Food and Nutrition Service (FNS), and search for Food Distribution Program. Or contact Katie Clifford, USDA-FNS-Western Region Office, senior program specialist, at [katie.clifford@usda.gov](mailto:katie.clifford@usda.gov) or 415-437-8655.

**Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR)** provides USDA foods to income-eligible households living on Indian reservations and to Native American households residing in designated areas near reservations. Households cannot receive both FDPIR and Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) in the same month. In our state USDA distributes both food and administrative funds to participating Indian tribal organizations (ITOs) to operate FDPIR. FDPIR now offers traditional foods including bison, blue cornmeal, wild rice, wild salmon, and catfish.

**Disaster Household Distribution (DHD)**, Subject to USDA Food and Nutrition Service approval, ITOs and state agencies that have an agreement with FNS may provide donated foods from current FDPIR inventories to households needing food assistance due to a disaster, including COVID-19. Households receiving Disaster SNAP (D-SNAP) benefits are not eligible to receive DHD in the same month.

As of April 10, FNS had approved DHD for the Quinault Indian Nation and Small Tribes of Western Washington (STOWW) to serve the following tribes:

- Nooksack
- Muckleshoot
- Cowlitz
- Upper Skagit
- Swinomish
- Suquamish
- Lower Elwha Klallam
- Jamestown S'Klallam
- Puyallup
- Tulalip
- Sauk-Suiattle
- Snoqualmie
- Stillaguamish

As of April 13, FNS had approved DHD for South Puget Intertribal Planning Agency (SPIPA) to serve the following:

- Nisqually Tribe
- Confederated Tribes of the Chehalis Reservation
- Squaxin Island Reservation
- Skokomish Reservation
- Port Gamble S'Klallam Reservation

Households can receive DHD, TEFAP, CSFP, FDPIR or SNAP (not both), as well as other FNS programs such as WIC and/or school/childcare meal programs.

## Other Resources and Contacts to Respond to COVID-19

**Washington Food Fund** is a temporary effort to gain private and public support for COVID-19 related hunger relief efforts. WA Food Fund is a relief fund that supports food banks and pantries across the state so they can maintain their food supply. Three Washington-based organizations working on the frontlines of food insecurity — Food Lifeline, Northwest Harvest and Second Harvest — will use these funds to distribute food to hundreds of food banks across the state, from our cities to our most rural communities.

**Governor's Office COVID-19 Food Security Coordination Team Tribal Liaison**, Lou Schmitz, Public Health Emergency Preparedness and Response, American Indian Health Commission (AIHC) for Washington State, 206-949-3541 or [lou.schmitz.AIHC@outlook.com](mailto:lou.schmitz.AIHC@outlook.com)

**State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC) Tribal Liaison**, Dean Johnny, Washington Emergency Management Division: Office; 253-512-7000 or Mobile; 253-331-8064 or at [DisasterReservist.hsdr11@mil.wa.gov](mailto:DisasterReservist.hsdr11@mil.wa.gov)