



Rural Remote Food Bank Module 2: Staff and Volunteers

Paid Staff Hiring P1-2

Volunteer Staff Recruitment and Retention P3-4

Advocacy Issues P4

Paid Staff Hiring

1. Recruitment; Job Descriptions; Salary Surveys; Benefits; Organizational Charts

Unique Remote Rural Challenges:

Recruiting qualified food bank employees is a challenge throughout CA due to the relatively low salaries. Rural remote food banks have a very small pool of skilled workers and turnover can be high as employees build resumes and then leave for higher paying jobs. Leadership positions, in particular, are difficult to fill and retain.

Suggested Standards and Best Practices:

The decision to hire staff should have a clear link to the agency's mission and strategic plan. New employees' outlook toward their work should align with the organization's mission. Check with your volunteers. Some food banks have identified volunteers with HR experience to assist with developing policies and procedures; some were paid for their work and others chose to volunteer.

Resources and Contacts:

- Samples of job descriptions, organizational charts and recruitment materials can be accessed from Remote Rural Food Banks.
 - [Anne Holcomb](#), Executive Director Food For People (Humboldt), (707) 445-3166 x302
- [CAFB website](#) and newsletter. Job openings can be posted on [CAFB's website careers page](#). You can also check in with CAFB staff that may be aware of openings within member food banks.
- [Hungernet](#) – accessible for Feeding American affiliates and PDOs, has examples of job descriptions and other resources; if you are unable to access, reach out to an affiliate for info.
- [Insperity](#) – Human Resources outsourcing organization; some food banks purchase benefits at a lower cost through pooled purchasing. Insperity provides full human resource support for organizations with 5-149 employees.
- [California Nonprofits Association](#) has employee insurance plans available.

2. Management and Retention: Administrative functions: Worker's Comp/Insurance; Policy Manual; Dress Code

Unique Remote Rural Challenges:

Retaining qualified food bank employees is a challenge throughout CA due to the relatively low salaries. Remote rural food banks may become incubators for new talent, with staff leaving once they have been trained and have stronger resumes. Remote rural food banks have a very limited capacity to increase salaries or pay competitive wages. New leaders have a significant learning curve; a network of RRFB leaders is critical for support.

Challenge: It is easier to hire task-oriented staff than those with leadership skills and experience. In areas that are attractive to retirees, there is a broader pool of experienced people who may be interested in part time work. It is important to have training and support to develop existing staff. Different rural areas have different demographics for workforce development.

Suggested Standards and Best Practices:

- All food banks should have:
 - a method and timeframe for orientation and evaluation;
 - protocols and systems for required safety training;
 - protocols and systems for warehouse capacity;
 - a method and timeframe for performance evaluations.
- Emerging: Feeding America standards - third party audit for food safety, provided by AIB (American Institute of Baking). Some member food banks are not yet compliant.
- OSHA can be invited, proactively, to give safety advice.

Resources and Contacts:

- Samples available from Remote Rural Food Banks. Samples include, but are not limited to: policy manuals, dress codes, orientation packets, training schedules, illness and injury prevention policies, employee handbooks, safety trainings, discrimination, harassment trainings and performance evaluation forms.
 - [Anne Holcomb](#), Executive Director Food For People (Humboldt), (707) 445-3166 x302

Volunteer Staff Recruitment and Retention

3. Volunteer recruitment; organizational chart; job descriptions; orientation/training; supervision/evaluation; retention; volunteer database software.

Unique Remote Rural Challenges:

- Remote rural food banks have an advantage in recruiting and retaining volunteers due to:
 - a strong community spirit

- poverty is more visible
- it is easier to make direct requests
- volunteers are visible
- retirees are a good pool of volunteers
- Volunteer activity is a good fundraising tool – volunteers share the organization’s strengths (and needs) through word of mouth, do fundraising directly, link to other fundraising options (e.g. girl scouts). Volunteers can have multi-generational impact.

Suggested Standards and Best Practices:

- Dedicated staff and strong systems for recruiting, organizing, coordinating and supervising volunteers.
- Strong orientation and training systems, such as a Volunteer Manual and a New Volunteer Video.
- Work must be ready for volunteers to do when they arrive.
- Tracking system in place to log volunteer hours.
- Recognize volunteers for their contributions.
- Staff are trained and directed to be respectful and hospitable toward volunteers. In addition, they are trained and directed on how to manage difficult volunteers.
- Many food banks that rely heavily on volunteers to provide program support have made the decision to hire (or recruit a volunteer for) a Volunteer Coordinator.
- Toulumne: Volunteers on probation must have no violent crime history. A good relationship with probation dept. staff is critical. Supervised inmate volunteer options are explored, but care must be taken for appropriate times and tasks.
- Tuolumne: children who participate get to stamp their hand and put a handprint on the wall. Children’s activities are scheduled during after school hours; there are no community service volunteers present during those hours.
- Other volunteers used in various counties: law enforcement (sheriff, police, CHP), navy base chaplain and volunteers. However, rural areas tend to have a high population of undocumented people. Using law enforcement as volunteers may scare these populations away and keep them from accessing necessary resources.
- Volgistics – database to track volunteer hours; operated through an iPad, volunteers have a PIN number, clock in and out. Useful tool for volunteer communication and measuring impact.

Resources and Contacts:

- Food For People (Humboldt) has had good luck with utilizing CalWorks and Work Experience clients. Job training and consistent pool of volunteers. Contact: [Anne Holcomb](#), Executive Director Food For People, (707) 445-3166 x302
- Volgistics – database to track volunteer hours. Contact [Anne Holcomb](#), Executive Director Food For People (Humboldt), (707) 445-3166 x302

Advocacy Issues for RRFB Staff and Volunteers

No Advocacy issues have been identified at this time.