

KEYS TO GREATER COLLABORATION AND IMPACT TO BETTER THE LIVES OF OLDER ADULTS

SEVEN COMMON COLLABORATION MODELS

There are seven common examples of effective partnership models between Feeding America network food banks and Meals on Wheels America members.



1. MEAL PARTNERS

Meals on Wheels program secures quality product donated from the Feeding America food bank to supplement their meal program.



2. SUPPLEMENTAL FOOD PARTNERS

Feeding America food bank provides boxes or bags of food to be delivered to recipients as a supplement to Meals on Wheels meals.



3. FOOD PURCHASE PARTNERS

Feeding America food bank purchases food; Meals on Wheels partner purchases or receives that food to be provided to recipients for free, optional donation or purchase.



4. COMMUNITY COALITION PARTNERS

Local Meals on Wheels and Feeding America food banks partner to make an impact for people in their community.



5. OUTREACH AND BENEFITS ASSISTANCE PARTNERS

Local Meals on Wheels and Feeding America food banks partner to increase access to benefits for eligible clients.



6. ADVOCACY PARTNERS

Meals on Wheels America, Feeding America and local affiliates partner to elevate the voices of the people we serve, advocating for policy solutions that strengthen federal nutrition assistance programs at the local and national levels.



7. ORGANIZATION INTEGRATION

A local Meals on Wheels program and Feeding America food bank integrate formally to form a single organization to maximize their impact in their community.

PARTNERSHIP GUIDE



Feeding America food banks and Meals on Wheels America member senior nutrition programs share a common vision for every senior to have access to the food they need to stay healthy. Food banks and senior nutrition programs often have complementary strengths and strategies that make partnerships appealing and mutually beneficial.

Feeding America and Meals on Wheels America have studied successful examples of on-the-ground partnerships to determine effective models for collaboration, challenges, lessons learned and keys to success. By working together, we can solve senior hunger and ensure that one day every older adult has access to the food they need to stay healthy and strong.

GUIDANCE AND PARAMETERS FOR WORKING TOGETHER

GET INTRODUCED

The first step is getting to know one another. Find contact information for the local Meals on Wheels programs by typing in your zip code or searching by city and state: mealsonwheelsamerica.org/signup.

Find contact information for the Feeding America food bank(s) in your community by typing in your zip code or searching by city and state: feedingamerica.org/foodbank.

SUMMARY OF KEYS TO SUCCESS

Meals on Wheels America and Feeding America studied successful examples of on-the-ground partnerships to determine challenges, lessons learned and keys to success. Across several partnerships, three keys to success are: alignment of organizational goals, willingness and flexibility, and constant communication.

GOAL ALIGNMENT

- In one example, the Feeding America food bank has made an organizational commitment to distribute more produce and nutritious food. The Meals on Wheels program is also committed to providing more produce and nutritious food.

FLEXIBILITY AND WILLINGNESS

- Feeding America food banks often receive bulk amounts of product. Meals on Wheels programs often secure more food from food banks when they are adept at taking and working with almost any and all product the food bank has to offer – finding ways to innovate and plug foods into “ghost recipes” to make unique, nutritious and tasty meals.
 - » Some Meals on Wheels agencies leverage “ghost recipes,” approved flexible menus that they can plus various ingredients into and still meet nutritional requirements while providing interesting and appetizing meals to their clients.

CONSTANT COMMUNICATION

- Partnership is easier when staff from both parties are regularly engaging – not only in matters directly related to the partnership, but also participating in and interacting at the same community meetings or other events.

DOWNLOAD THE FULL PARTNERSHIP GUIDE

For more information, links to additional resources or to get in touch with any of the individuals or organizations highlighted in this case study, please visit www.mealsonwheelsamerica.org/feedingamericapartnership.