

What Is Westside Food Bank?

About Westside Food Bank is an independent, non-governmental, 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation founded in 1981, which provides food to social service agencies on the Westside of Los Angeles County. Our food often enables low-income people to stay in their homes, deterring the problem of homelessness, because it saves them from having to make the agonizing choice between paying for rent or food when they can't afford both. Receiving our food also enables our 70 member-agencies to devote more of their own resources to other ways of helping clients achieve self respect and economic independence.

The Food Bank acquires as much food as possible through donations, but we must still purchase approximately half of our food from wholesale merchants at the best volume prices we can obtain. Purchasing food allows us to consistently provide our member agencies with the most nutritious food possible. The Food Bank also receives produce from a statewide "Farm to Family" distribution program. Our Extra Helpings Westside Program, which recovers food that would otherwise be thrown away from bakeries, restaurants, caterers and food suppliers, provides about one third of the food we distribute. Thanks to the economies of scale and our efficient operation, we can acquire five pounds of food for each donated dollar.

Westside Food Bank is proud to be a member of the Westside Shelter & Hunger Coalition which is committed to ending local hunger and homelessness through service coordination, public education, and advocacy. The Westside Shelter & Hunger Coalition is a program of Community Partners. The Coalition's new Strategic Plan was made possible by a generous grant from the Jewish Community Foundation of Los Angeles .

Whom we serve: Westside Food Bank supplies food to the food assistance programs of social service agencies in Santa Monica, Venice, Culver City, West Los Angeles, West Hollywood, Inglewood, and the LAX area. Through the services of our member agencies, our food reaches the most vulnerable members of these communities, including:

- Children in preschool, after-school, and day-care programs who don't get enough to eat at home and whose health, academic performance, and general well-being are threatened by hunger.
- Unemployed, under-employed, and working poor people who need help making ends meet.
- Seniors on fixed incomes and the frail elderly.
- Women and children living in domestic violence shelters.
- Homeless individuals who are without the basic necessities.
- The mentally ill, the disabled, and those with chronic illnesses who need assistance.
- Veterans who may face the challenges of readjustment, ill-health, or poverty.