



Overview of the Community Perspectives' Recommendations

The Community Perspectives' Recommendations (CPR's) are a set of identified changes to increase accessibility at food banks, specifically for those that would like to go but feel they can't for a myriad of reasons. In 2019, Northwest Harvest along with six participating BIPOC-centered or-led community organizations hosted listening sessions to learn from community members (specifically, African American, African Born, and Asian American) about what prevented them from accessing food banks. With the assistance of the organizational hosts, we reviewed the key findings presented and ultimately landed on the below 9 recommendations. While the listening sessions were focused on the above-mentioned populations during a pre-pandemic time, we believe that these recommendations apply to all emergency food providers and are still relevant in many ways. You can read the full report [here](#).

Our goal, as Northwest Harvest, is to see as many of the below recommendations implemented as possible and to share with the communities we heard from how implementation has gone and the changes we have been able to assist or witness.

It's highly recommended to lead any community initiative like the ones listed below in partnership with BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Color) -led or centered organizations, growers and/or gardens, interpreters and translators.



COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVES' RECOMMENDATIONS (CPR'S):

- 1. Add pop-up and/or delivery services to locations where focus populations already congregate.**
 - Partnering with health foundations, clinics, or credit unions may assist in implementing new services or programs.
- 2. Increase access for all by reducing intake requirements.**
 - This is especially important for new immigrants and/or refugees who may not have IDs or other requirement forms.
- 3. Increase access for all by expanding food bank hours and increasing the number of times shoppers can visit your food bank.**
 - Partnering with health foundations, clinics, or credit unions may assist in implementing new services or programs.

4. Source culturally relevant foods.

- Find out what your shoppers need and want for their culture, health and/or religion.
- Create a nutrition policy focused on how your food bank will receive—through donations or purchases—such items. You can learn more about creating nutrition policies at www.foodshopperequity.org via the creating nutrition policies lesson series.

5. Prioritize translation and interpretation for services and materials.

- Hire and retain staff and volunteers that represent the community and speak their languages.
- Ensure all your intake documents are in your most prevalent languages, not just English.

6. Build and maintain a customer advisory group to consistently engage with their shoppers.

- Customer advisory groups should be representative and inclusive of all food bank shoppers and should accommodate diverse languages as needed.
- You can learn more about creating customer advisory groups at www.foodshopperequity.org via the Creating Healthy Food Environment Video Series – Lesson 1.

7. Provide ongoing anti-racist trainings and other learning opportunities specifically around microaggressions.

- Utilize an anti-racist assessment tool to understand what you do well and where there are opportunities for growth. You can find a self-guided anti-racist assessment tool here (<https://tinyurl.com/2dhw97kt>)
- For example, hold monthly lunch and learns with volunteers on different race equity topics.
- Partner with diversity, equity and inclusion subject experts to assist in your trainings.

8. Create a community resource area.

- This can be a physical room to meet with an individual to discuss needs. It could also be a bulletin board to share local services.
- Provide access to resources such as housing, healthcare, transportation, and other services for shoppers which could also include connecting shoppers to gardens, cooking classes and other expertise in the community.

9. Continuous implementation of quality control measures to reduce and eliminate expired or rotten foods.

- Gaps exist between shoppers' expectations and the control of food banks receiving close to expiring produce.
 - Encourage staff and volunteers to go through fruits and vegetables to remove rotten foods more frequently.
 - Staff and volunteers track and dispose of expired food.

