

**TEMPLATE FOR BOARD/COMMISSION RECOMMENDATIONS**



**BOARD/COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION**

**(Austin-Travis County Food Policy Board)**

**Recommendation Number: (YYYYMMDD-XXX) (XXX is the agenda item number): Preparing Culturally and Medically Appropriate Supply Side Nutrition, Provision and Distribution Access During Disasters, Disruptions, and Emergencies**

**WHEREAS**, food insecurity already disproportionately affects vulnerable populations in Austin/Travis County, creating significant barriers to nutritious food access for individuals and households with limited resources and most acutely during emergencies, significant weather events, or disasters; and

**WHEREAS**, the Austin Travis County Food Plan, adopted by City Council in October 2024, includes the goal of establishing and funding a resilient, inclusive, and accessible emergency food provision system that ensure all community members, regardless of cultural background or medical needs, have access to safe, nutritious, and culturally relevant food during disasters and emergencies (Goal 4); and

**WHEREAS**, it is essential to develop and fund a coordinated emergency food access response plan that ensures that City and County community centers and resilience networks have access to water, culturally and medically appropriate food, proper storage, and inventory management practices (Strategy 4.3); and

**WHEREAS**, having preparedness teams and partners be able to meet dietary needs during emergencies, including culturally relevant and medically appropriate food preparation, and for emergency staff and volunteers to have training in such (Strategy 4.4); and

**WHEREAS**, it will be necessary, as part of the preparedness ecosystem, to work with community partners to have a real-time inventory management system to track emergency food availability, expiration dates, and replenishment needs to ensure a steady supply during emergencies while minimizing food waste (Strategy 4.5) and

**WHEREAS**, it is essential and critical to create a diverse and reliable food supply by establishing partnerships with a wide range of local suppliers and develop contingency plans for food supply chain disruptions, including alternative sourcing strategies (Strategy 4.6); and

**WHEREAS**, there is a significant need to create mechanism that improves emergency response and preparedness for major power outages that impact the food supply at all stages of the food system (Strategy 4.7).

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Austin-Travis County Food Policy Board recommends the following actions:

1. Establish Pre-Existing, Prepared Trusted Community Partners
  - o Build upon Mass Care's ecosystem survey, identify key partners to establish preexisting procurement relationships through Austin Finance Online
  - o Prioritize integrating procurement partners who offer and provision diverse, culturally and medically appropriate nutrition that can be sourced during emergencies
  - o Prioritize HUB partners for provisioning and distribution into communities to reflect the diversity of populations often most affected by emergencies, outages, and disasters, and in need of culturally relevant and medically appropriate nutrition
  - o Develop a *Prepared Trusted Partner Program* to enroll, outfit, offer permit waiver, Austin Energy rebate, pre-purchase or store product supply, or targeted City or County fee abatement to allow the organization incentive to pre-prepare as a Prepared Trusted Partner
  - o Provide priority opportunities to these *Prepared Trusted Partners* to support or help lead (as SMEs) Mass Care-directed activations and EOC-level emergency events
2. Create Priority Access Trusted Sites to Reduce Barriers to Emergency Nutrition and Water Access
  - o Develop a *Trusted Community Site Partner Program*, to include the City's Resilience Hubs, existing City community centers, adding County community centers, and City emergency sheltering contractors, and
  - o Establish a network of CBO locations, school sites, and/or other key distribution points in targeted, disproportionately affected communities as *Trusted Community Site Partners* already embedded and trusted within the impacted communities
  - o Offer appropriate Austin Energy rebates (equipment or process), modified site permitting and other pre-preparation outfitting to align with FDA and USDA food safety or City of Austin Environmental Health requirements to serve as a Trusted Community Site
  - o Offer select, targeted Trusted Community Site Partners the ability to access culturally relevant or medically appropriate nutrition as required by their community or condition.

Commented [1]: See above comment for "Whereas." Need to add "Resolved" pertaining to 6.1 Food Retail and 6.6 school meal and summer food service programs.

3. Increase Awareness of Emergency Nutrition Access:

- o Develop and distribute through city and county departments and organizational groups multilingual materials on access to culturally relevant or medically appropriate nutrition availability during emergency periods
- o Create culturally responsive nutrition education materials
- o Ensure accommodation for individuals with disabilities in all emergency, disaster, and outage related nutrition assistance-in-sheltering program communications

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Austin-Travis County Food Policy Board encourages the City Council to:

- Allocate dedicated funding to expand and enhance existing emergency food and water preparedness from cultural and medical appropriateness provisioning and distribution, targeted community site engagement, and targeted access and needed nutrition awareness that may drive resident sheltering access
- Establish a cross-departmental working group to implement and monitor progress
- Develop transparent reporting mechanisms to track program effectiveness and community impact after emergency event and across collective events to gauge mobilization, access, impact, and response.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that these recommendations align with the city's commitment to equity, health, and community support, recognizing that access to nutritious food is a fundamental human right.

Date of Approval: \_\_\_\_\_

Record of the Vote: \_\_\_\_\_

Attest: \_\_\_\_\_

