



## SAFE FOOD DONATION

# Guidelines for Individuals

During a crisis, many people wish to help by donating food. These guidelines are for members of the public that wish to donate food to charitable organizations or directly to the public. If you are a restaurant, food market, or other food business with a Public Health Permit that wishes to donate food, please see our guidelines for donating food at <http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/eh/LACFRI/>



### What can be donated by individuals

You can donate non-perishable, unopened, packaged foods.

#### Examples of foods that may be donated:

- Canned and jarred foods (i.e., vegetables, fruits, pasta sauce, and soups)
- Raw fruits and vegetables
- Dry goods (i.e., pasta, rice, and instant potatoes)
- Snacks (i.e., granola bars, dried fruits, cookies, chips, etc.)
- Bottled and canned beverages (i.e., water, fruit juice that doesn't require refrigeration, soft drinks, and energy drinks)
- Shelf-stable milk or plant-based milk alternatives like soy or almond milk



### What cannot be donated by individuals

Perishable foods that require refrigeration and foods prepared in a private home cannot be donated by an individual. These foods need to meet the requirements for temperature control and safe food handling and any mishandling could result in a foodborne illness.

#### Examples of foods that may **NOT** be donated:

- Meat, poultry, and seafood unless it meets the requirement above as a packaged food item that does not require refrigeration
- Canned food that is swollen, dented, or rusted as dangerous bacteria may be growing inside
- Any packaged food that has been opened
- Frozen foods
- Foods prepared in a private home, unless permitted as a Microenterprise Home Kitchen Operator or Cottage Food Operator

For any questions regarding these guidelines, please contact Environmental Health at [ehmail@ph.lacounty.gov](mailto:ehmail@ph.lacounty.gov) or (888) 700-9995.

[1/17/2025]

