Food Pantry
Food Safety
Self Assessment Guide

NEW YORK STATE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
Division of Nutrition
Hunger Prevention and Nutrition Assistance Program
Name of Agency__________________________________________

Review Conducted   ___  ___  /  ___  ___  /  ___  ___

Assessment verified during foodbank site visit or program review   ___  ___  /  ___  ___  /  ___  ___

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SECTION A.    Dry Storage
SECTION B.    Refrigerator and Freezer Storage
SECTION C.    Repacking
SECTION D.    Work Plan must be completed if any “no”
responses

Keep clothes, cartons and garbage away from pantry foods.
### SECTION A. DRY STORAGE (Critical)

1. Check appropriate boxes. Any item meeting criteria below must be discarded.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item Found?</th>
<th>Date Discarded</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
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- Cans with ends that give when the other end is pushed.
- Cans that bulge or swell.
- Home-canned goods or goods appearing to be home-canned.
- Cans that leak.
- Cans with no label
- Cans with open, incomplete or miswelded seams.
- Cans with rust that cannot be wiped off.
- Cans with very sharp dents or dents that prevent stacking.
- Cans with dents on their seams and/or rims.
- Cans with dirt under pull tab.
- Cans, jars or bottles with popped-up safety seals.
- Bottles or jars with loosened lids.

**NOTE:** When in doubt if there is a problem with a can or bottle, throw it out.

**Contents should be emptied before can is thrown away.**
2. Take a look at all the packaged items - noting which have a single layer of packaging (no inner bag) and those which have two layers of packaging (inner bag/outer box). Record your findings.

For foods with a **single layer** of packaging (e.g., sugar, flour, pasta), discard any that have:

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- Breaks, tears or other openings.
- Signs of contamination (e.g., stains, off-odors).
- Taped repairs made to the package prior to your getting it.

For foods with a **double layer** of packaging (e.g., cereals, Hamburger Helper) throw out any if:

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- The inner packaging has any breaks, tears or other openings.
- The inner package shows signs of contamination.
  (look for insects, insect parts, moving objects)
- The inner vacuum packs have lost their seals.

**NOTE:** If you have any doubt, discard the entire package. If the inner package is unbroken and only the outer package is broken, repair package with tape.

3. Are all cleaning supplies and other toxic materials:

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- Stored away from food?
- Clearly labeled?
- Stored only in original containers?
- Used according to directions?

4. Is there any sign of spillage of any of the toxic materials?

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5. Pesticides are applied by licensed pesticide applicator only

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6. Rodent bait stations are covered and placed away from food storage areas?

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SECTION A. DRY STORAGE (General)

1. General storage guidelines for both food and non-food items in your dry storage area:
   - Is everything stored on shelves, racks or platforms at least 6 inches above floor? (no food on floor)
     - Yes ☐   No ☐
   - Is everything stored away from the walls?
     - Yes ☐   No ☐
   - Is everything stored away from ceiling?
     - Yes ☐   No ☐
   - Are heavy packages stored on lower shelves so that shelving does not tip over?
     - Yes ☐   No ☐

2. Is the storage room fairly dry and well-ventilated?
   - Yes ☐   No ☐

3. Are canned goods removed from cartons to shelving as much as possible to prevent insect or rodent nesting?
   - Yes ☐   No ☐

4. Have empty cartons and other trash been removed from the storage area?
   - Yes ☐   No ☐

5. Is area free from insects or rodents? (e.g., insect webbing, flour spills, rodent droppings, tracks, and gnawing marks)?
   - Yes ☐   No ☐

6. Does an exterminator come to the pantry on a regular basis?
   - Yes ☐   No ☐
   - If yes, how often? __________________________

**NOTE:** Pesticides should never be used by pantry staff (see critical section).

7. Do you use a first in, first out system of storage so that older stock is distributed before newer?
   - Yes ☐   No ☐

8. Is a written food inventory sheet or card used to keep track of what foods are on hand and/or what is needed?
   - Yes ☐   No ☐

9. Is everything in your storage area labeled and dated so that the contents and storage date can be seen?
   - Yes ☐   No ☐

**HINT:** Date food as it comes in so that you know what to distribute first.

10. Are conditions likely to harbor pests corrected (floors, walls, ceilings are free of holes, screens are installed during fly season, doors are not propped open, etc.)
    - Yes ☐   No ☐

Boxes attract pests.
SECTION B. REFRIGERATOR AND FREEZER STORAGE (Critical)

1. Is there a thermometer in each refrigerator and freezer being used? □ Yes □ No

2. For each refrigerator, check and record temperature now

   RECORDED TEMPERATURE*

   ____________________________________ time
   ____________________________________ date

3. Is the food temperature below 40 degrees F? □ Yes □ No

   If yes, good! If no, throw the food out.

4. For each freezer, check and record temperature now.

   RECORDED TEMPERATURE*

   ____________________________________ time
   ____________________________________ date

5. Are refrigerators and freezers free from odors? □ Yes □ No

   This might be a sign of spoiled foods, foods not covered tightly enough, etc.

6. Bacteria from raw food must not contaminate ready-to-eat or prepared foods:

   Are ready-to-eat foods stored separate from raw foods (e.g., thawing chicken) so that juices and drippings will not accidentally fall into the other foods? □ Yes □ No

   If ready-to-eat foods are contaminated by drippings, dispose of food!

7. Are potentially hazardous foods* kept in a refrigerator (below 40 degrees F)? □ Yes □ No

   If potentially hazardous food is outside a refrigerator for more than 2 hours it must be disposed of.

   *NOTE: Potentially hazardous foods are extra-sensitive to contamination and need special care when being stored and handled. Germs will more easily grow and multiply in them than in other foods. These include:

   • raw and cooked meats, poultry, fish
   • eggs and egg mixtures (raw and cooked)
   • fresh milk and milk products (raw and cooked)

   To be on the safe side, handle all foods with special care.

8. Are foods received from approved sources:

   Are pasteurized milk/milk products used? □ Yes □ No

   Are meats and poultry from officially inspected plants? □ Yes □ No

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*NOTE: Thermometers should be checked at the beginning and end of every day the pantry is open. The refrigerator temperature should stay at or below 45°F and that the freezer temperature should stay at or below 0°F. The time and temperature should be recorded on a check sheet kept in a visible location on the refrigerator and also initiated by the worker.
SECTION B. REFRIGERATOR AND FREEZER STORAGE (General)

1. Do refrigerators and freezers look clean? For example:
   - Are they free of mold, debris, food husks, etc.? (including gaskets)
     - Yes  No
   - Are the shelving and walls clean?
     - Yes  No
   - Is the area free of spills?
     - Yes  No
   - Are there any other problems?
     - Yes  No
   If yes, describe problem: ____________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________

2. Is there enough space in refrigerators and freezers so that air circulates around stored food? For example:
   - Food stays on shelves (does not tumble out) when the door is opened.
     - Yes  No
   - Shelving is free of linings (e.g., aluminum, paper towels) that block air circulation.
     - Yes  No
   - If the unit has a fan, is it working?
     - Yes  No
   - Are door seals tight?
     - Yes  No
   - Are there any other problems?
     - Yes  No
   If yes, describe problem: ____________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________

3. How are foods stored in refrigerators and/or freezers?
   - Are they stored in their original containers?
     - Yes  No
   - Are they stored in clean, sanitized, tightly covered containers?
     - Yes  No
   - Are other methods of storing perishable foods used?
     - Yes  No
   If yes, specify: ____________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________

Cover, label, date

4. Are open door periods kept to a minimum so that the:
   - Temperature in the refrigerator stays at or below 40 degrees F?
     - Yes  No
   - Temperature in the freezer stays at or below 0°F?
     - Yes  No
SECTION C. Repacking of Food (Critical)

1. Does your pantry repackage any food? □ Yes □ No
   
   **If no, please skip this section and proceed to SECTION D.**

2. Are foods adequately protected from contamination during repacking? □ Yes □ No
   
   Are the bags or containers used for repacking food approved for food use? □ Yes □ No
   
   Are food pantry workers sent home or assigned to non food contact jobs if they handle food when ill with a disease transmissible by food? □ Yes □ No
   
   Are food pantry workers sent home or assigned to non food contact jobs if they have infected cuts or burns on their hands? □ Yes □ No

3. Do food pantry workers wash hands, generating lather, before repacking, as often as needed to avoid contamination, for example:
   
   At the start of the workday? □ Yes □ No
   
   After using the bathroom? □ Yes □ No
   
   After smoking? □ Yes □ No
   
   After touching the face, nose or hair? □ Yes □ No
   
   In between direct hand contact with raw and ready-to-eat/prepared foods? □ Yes □ No
   
   Whenever hands are soiled or become contaminated? □ Yes □ No

4. Are plastic gloves worn when touching ready-to-eat foods directly? □ Yes □ No

5. Are utensils (i.e., scoops, spoons, etc.) used when handling food? □ Yes □ No

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SECTION C. Repacking of Food (General)

1. Are foods repacked in a clean, dust-free room? □ Yes □ No

2. Are food workers wearing clean outer garments and effective hair restraints? □ Yes □ No

3. Are food workers eating, drinking or using tobacco while repacking? □ Yes □ No

4. Are repacked products labelled with a list of ingredients, name of food and cooking instructions (if appropriate)? □ Yes □ No

5. Are work surfaces being cleaned and sanitized prior to processing food? □ Yes □ No
SECTION D. Workplan (Critical)

**CRITICAL Food Safety Issues**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>PROBLEM</th>
<th>WORK PLAN</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>SECTION A. Dry Storage</strong></td>
<td>How will pantry correct problems?</td>
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<td>Who will correct problem?</td>
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<td>Date problem resolved <em><strong>/</strong></em>/___</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>SECTION B. Refrigerator and Freezer Storage</strong></td>
<td>How will pantry correct problems?</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>SECTION C. Repacking</strong></td>
<td>How will pantry correct problems?</td>
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### SECTION D. Workplan (General)

#### GENERAL Food Safety Issues

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<tr>
<td><strong>SECTION A. Dry Storage</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Can problem be corrected?</td>
<td>Yes ☐ No ☐</td>
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<tr>
<td>If not, why?</td>
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| **SECTION B. Refrigerator and Freezer Storage** |                            |
| Can problem be corrected?          | Yes ☐ No ☐                 |
| If not, why?                       |                            |

| **SECTION C. Repacking**           |                            |
| Can problem be corrected?          | Yes ☐ No ☐                 |
| If not, why?                       |                            |