POLICY PURPOSE
To establish policies and procedures for the Food for Life warehouse facilities to ensure the efficient operations at Food for Life

POLICY STATEMENT
Food for Life is committed to maintaining efficient and cleanliness standards in regards to the safe collection, storage and delivery of surplus food.

It is Food for Life’s philosophy that:

- Maintaining an efficient warehouse is essential for saving time, resources and provides timely delivery of the food to our recipient agencies and outreach programs
- A clean and efficient warehouse provides the standard to follow for our staff, volunteers and provides an organized presentation to our donors (food and financial) and the community at large
- Preventing bacterial contamination of food is imperative in the collection, storage and distribution of food
- Protection of all employees and volunteers from injuries and occupational disease is a major continuing objective
- Maintaining cleanliness standards and safety is everyone’s responsibility and a condition of employment/volunteerism
- All workers and volunteers must receive adequate training in their specific work tasks to protect the health and safety of themselves and others
APPLICATION OF THE POLICY

The application of the warehouse policies and procedures pertains to the 2258 Mountainside Drive in Burlington. Within this policy last section pertains to the warehouse facility at 111 Prince Charles Drive in Oakville

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1. ROLEs AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Operations Co-ordinator - The Food for Life Operations Co-ordinator is responsible managing the warehousing and distribution activities for Food for Life. This includes inventory control, customer service, shipping/receiving, delivery and pick-up schedules, fleet management, record-keeping and food safety.

All warehouse facilities (includes freezer(s), chiller/refrigerator, bins/containers, main dry storage area, washroom facilities) and transportation vehicles must be kept clean to help reduce the risk of microbial contamination or cross-contamination of food types. Staff failing to follow the food safety guidelines will be subject to disciplinary action. Details regarding specified cleaning instructions can be referenced in the Operations Policy #4 - Cleaning Premises and Vehicles.

2. DAILY CHECKLIST PROCEDURES

It is the responsibility of the Operations Co-ordinator to ensure the following procedures are completed daily at the 2258 Mountainside Drive location as outlined in the following checklist (included as Appendix A):

The operations coordinator should keep a daily check-list ranging from a walkthrough of the
warehouse at the beginning of the day and end of the day to survey for any inconsistencies with the general maintenance of the building. The checklist includes the following:

**Environmental Controls**
- a. Check for leaks with pipes and roof
- b. Doors secured and locked
- c. Confirm freezer & chiller temperatures
  - d. Verify compressors, both freezer and fridge are in working order *(they are located outside the south door in Golden Horseshoe wholesale warehouse space)* and remove debris in the area of the compressors
- e. Verify the green lights are on (left side of freezer door) and re-check if system is in defrost mode when the cycle is completed.

**Operational Controls**
- a. Daily cleaning (Refer to the Food for Life Cleaning Policy)
- b. Equipment (in working order)

3. **FACILITIES**
   - a. Office and Board room
   - b. Warehouse floor
   - c. Freezer
   - d. Chiller
   - e. Storage area
   - f. 111 Prince Charles facility

4. **RECEIVING FOOD (FIRST IN, FIRST OUT)**

   “Being prepared” is a theme at the Food for Life warehouse. Always assume a large donation will be delivered without notice at any time and prepare the warehouse accordingly. The following procedures must be followed to maintain the efficient collection and distribution of food:

   a. Move existing product daily toward the north end of the warehouse, thus allowing ample space near the receiving bay doors for random ‘one off’ deliveries. The warehouse can easily become congested without taking these simple steps. Pushing pallets to the north end of the warehouse also allows for faster unloading of trucks. Keep product that can be moved on a daily basis closer to the shipping doors. Keep product with the furthest best before date to the north end of the warehouse

   b. When receiving product always keep food and non-food items separate (i.e. On occasion GFS will donate kerosene or industrial cleaning supplies which should be segregated from food items).

   c. When placing incoming pallets on the warehouse floor be sure to keep the pallets 18” off the wall (follow a painted line). This preventive measure allows for better pest control management. 10- 12” between pallets is another standard benchmark adhering in providing ample space for moving between pallets as needed.

   d. Weigh all incoming food/product immediately upon receiving. This point cannot be stressed enough. Don’t assume there will be time to do it later. For assorted bulk items
use the pallet jack equipped with a digital scale. Often FFL receive donations of multiple pallets of the same product. Weigh one box and multiply the number of boxes on the pallet. This will always save time when unloading a truck. Keep assorted pallets separate when unloading a truck and weigh after truck is unloaded.

e. Target and Walmart donations: Take an overall weight with the digital pallet jack and then after the volunteers have sorted the food into categories have them weigh each box on the warehouse scale. Submit these weights for data entry.

f. Consider best before dates when storing pallets. Arrange pallets chronologically according to best before dates (oldest to newest).

g. After receiving, perishables should be quickly placed into the chiller. However not all perishables are best suited to the temperature the chiller is maintained at. Example cucumbers will freeze from the inside out at 3 degrees Celsius. When in doubt place perishables in the chiller and research online. Consider the season and the warehouse temperature.

h. After receiving frozen items place them immediately in the freezer (neatly). Maintain clean pallets rows in the freezer. This space is a commodity and should never be cluttered. Do not allow food to fall onto the floor. Remember - first in, first out.

5. STORAGE AND HANDLING OF FOOD

In all our operations and our programs, Food for Life is committed to meeting the food safety standards which are contained in:

a. Food Premises, Ontario Health Protection and Promotion Act;

b. “Food Safety guidelines for Food Banks” published in 2011 by the Halton Region Health Department; and

c. “Safe food Handling Program” published in 2010 by Food Banks Canada.

Copies of all documents are available in the warehouse. All Food for Life staff members have received their Food Handler Safety Training from Halton Public Health

a. General Food Storage Guidelines
   i. All food storage areas must be clean, with no holes in the walls, ceilings or floors. There should be no gaps around the windows or floorboards that could allow entry of rodents or insects.
   ii. A thermometer must be positioned in each cooler and freezer and temperatures must be recorded twice a day.
   iii. Hand washing signs must be present at all hand washing stations.
   iv. Non-food articles such as cleaning products, detergents, soaps, pesticides and other toxic materials must be stored in a separate storage area.

b. Pest Control
i. Food storage areas are particularly susceptible to rodent and insect infestation. A visual inspection of the warehouse is completed at least monthly, with prevention and treatment at least quarterly or as needed.

ii. All copies of Pest control service reports should all filed and available to the Halton Public Health if required.

iii. The exterior perimeter of the storage location must be kept free of tall grass, untended shrubbery, or debris to reduce the possibility of harboring pests. Contact landlord regarding untended shrubbery.

6. FOOD DISTRIBUTION AND TRANSPORTATION

a. Preparing food orders for delivery and pick up:
   i. Refresh Members and the Food offer.
      - As the week comes to end, review the amount of product made available in the warehouse for Monday’s Food Offer to ReFresh Foods member agencies.
      - Take a clipboard and walk the warehouse, chiller and freezer in preparation of the food offer.
      - The Food offer is sent by email to member agencies Monday morning by 9:00 am
      - Refresh Members agencies are required to submit their food order no later than 12:00 pm on Tuesdays.
      - Having all food orders in by noon on Tuesday allows the operations co-ordinator to divide the product equally between all member agencies and ensure the Food for Life truck benefits through the week.

   ii. Preparing pallets for delivery and pick-up.
      - Product must be prepared prior to the FFL/Refresh driver’s arrival to the warehouse.
      - Picked orders are prepared the afternoon before or prior to the driver’s arrival at the warehouse the next day.
      - The Operations Co-ordinator should load the trucks within a 15 minute maximum turn-around-time. This is accomplished by:
        - Constructing a pallet in anticipation of that particular day (a Sunday delivery is going to be lighter than a Tuesday).
        - Start by building a pallet (Taking care to place heavier products on a pallet first) on the warehouse floor, then move onto the chiller.
        - Gather the weights accordingly prior to the driver’s arrival.
        - Leave pallet in the chiller until truck arrives. Set aside frozen product in the freezer but don’t remove food from the freezer until the truck arrives thus ensuring the frozen food isn’t compromised.
        - When the driver arrives help load the truck. Both the FFL and ReFresh trucks follow set schedules and by ignoring any of these steps the truck will fall off their schedules. The same guideline applies
to the ReFresh truck. When it comes to produce or bulk items, get a total weight, then load that product on the truck.
- Provide instructions to the driver on the breakdown how much of any given product is distributed to each member.
- Community agencies picking up from the warehouse must call ahead and arrange a suitable time that works with the operation coordinator’s schedule. No exceptions to this rule.

b. **TRANSPORTATION**

Food for Life maintains a fleet of three refrigerated trucks. All trucks are maintained frequently (regularly scheduled maintenance is scheduled in consultation with the Operations Co-ordinator and the drivers) and it is the responsibility of each driver to maintain the cleanliness of their truck. Details regarding specified cleaning instructions can be referenced in the Operations Policy #4 - *Cleaning Premises and Vehicles*. The following procedures are following when preparing trucks for delivery:

i. **Preparing trucks for delivery during the week**

- Careful attention must be paid to all three trucks daily starting with a driver walk-around and check-list.
- Each driver is responsible for pick up, delivery and temperature control logs that confirm truck temperatures are kept in the ‘safe zone’ (4 degrees Celsius and under). These logs are submitted weekly to the Operations Co-ordinator.
- The drivers are expected to gather weights of all food they pick up that is being circulated on the same day. Those weights are also submitted to operations.
- Food that has not been redistributed will be weighed at the warehouse.
- The driver’s duties also range from monitoring the conditions of drop sites to ensure they comply with FFL standards to maintaining good relationships in the community.
- The FFL brand is on regional roads and beyond seven days a week. The drivers in essence are the face of FFL and they must understand their role as ambassadors. The trucks are cleaned thoroughly (interior and exterior) weekly. Food is kept off the floor of these vehicles by using shelves, bins or pallets.
- The Operations Co-ordinator must consider the cost of doing business when it comes to collecting and delivering food. Perhaps, establish a mandatory minimum when it comes to ordering food or consider the geography of a member agency. If a group is only making very small orders and they’re in our backyard encourage those members to pick up directly from the warehouse. Or amend the delivery schedule so that if the FFL truck is in their neighborhood throughout the week FFL will make the delivery instead of Refresh.
ii. **Truck schedules** - The Operations Co-ordinator maintains the truck schedules and updates weekly. The Operations Co-ordinator consults with the Manager of Food Solicitation, staff drivers and the Outreach Program Manager on confirmation of food donors pick-ups, timing of scheduled pick-ups and deliveries and the addition of new delivery sites.

iii. **Volunteer Drivers** – The mission of FFL is enhanced by the active participation of the community. To this end, FFL seeks the involvement of volunteers at all levels of the organization and within all appropriate programs and activities. Food for Life uses volunteer drivers for the weekend driving schedule. The volunteer driver schedule is prepared by the Operations Co-ordinator and sent to the volunteers during the third week of the month: i.e. if you’re looking to fill dates in July 2013 the blank calendar should be sent no later than June 20th. The Operations Co-ordinator keep notes detailing volunteer vacations, shift preferences, updated contact address and student volunteer hours.

7. **HEALTH AND SAFETY**

Protection of all employees, volunteers and visitors to the warehouse from injuries is imperative in the safe collection and distribution of food. For further reference on Health and Safety see Operation Policy # 2 *Occupational Health and Safety Policy*. The following procedures are to be followed regularly:

   a. All individuals picking up product from the warehouse must remain in the main section of the warehouse. Warehouse staff will prepare your delivery and deliver the product to the dock or main garage door for pick-up. Unless on tour of the facility, only FFL staff members are allowed into the staging area, chiller or freezer. On occasion, under the discretion and supervision of the Operations Co-ordinator, food donors can deliver the product to the chiller.

   b. There is no Smoking in the warehouse.

   c. No consuming food in the warehouse.

   d. No one may operate any warehouse equipment unless the individual is properly trained (i.e. the motorized pallet jack is to be used by a trained employee or volunteer)

   e. All visitors to the warehouse must wear appropriate footwear (closed-toed shoes).

   f. There are no returns of food once the food has been delivered from the warehouse. The individual or agency that received must distribute the food once it leaves the warehouse. FFL cannot guarantee food safety beyond our quality control.

8. **RECORD KEEPING**

See weighing policy
9. **GENERAL WAREHOUSE RULES and EQUIPMENT**
   a. Hours of operations - The warehouse receives donations and provides pick-ups between 9:00 am – 3:00 pm.
   b. The main warehouse line is 905-635-1106.
   c. The electronic pallet weigh should be used only used for weighing

10. **MAINTENANCE OF THE 111 PRINCE CHARLES DRIVE FACILITY**

The **driver** who collects and distributes food at the 111 Prince Charles Drive facility is responsible for maintaining the cleanliness of the 111 Prince Charles Drive. The cleaning requirements at 111 Prince Charles facility are as follows:

**Bins/Containers**
1. The containers/bins and the lids must be cleaned with soap and water every as needed.
2. All containers and lids must be inspected for cleanliness at the end of the day and wiped down prior to use.
3. All containers/bins must be cleaned if a spill has occurred during the course of day.
4. All containers/bins are to be checked that they are good repair.

**Freezers**
1. The freezers at the 111 Prince Charles facility must be drained and be cleaned with soap and water twice a week (Wed and Friday).

**Refrigerators**
1. The refrigerators should be inspected at the end of day and wiped (clean spills on add needed basis) and vacuumed weekly

**Floor**
The floor should be swept of debris weekly