

Summit Lake Paiute Tribe

Food Pantry Policy

These policies and procedures were adopted by the Summit Lake Paiute Tribal Council by Resolution SL-35-2023 on October 21, 2023 and revised by Resolution SL -_49 – 2025 August 13th, 2025

A. Introduction

Food insecurity and hunger are very real problems in the United States. Hunger hurts, it damages mental and physical health, it lowers performance in school and at work, and the strain it causes can tear families apart. Hunger contributes to many social ills, from domestic violence to drug use to theft- you may have once heard someone self-righteously claim that they would never steal anything, only to have someone else counter with “but what if your family was hungry?”, causing the original speaker to sheepishly admit that in that instance they might indeed resort to doing something desperate. Reducing the prevalence of hunger can cause a ripple of positive changes throughout our community.

B. Finding Food

Charity food distribution programs are remarkably adaptable. Donations, Purchasing, Food Banks, and Grants will be the primary sources of food for the Summit Lake Food Pantry.

1. Donations will continue to come primary from all donating facilities and continue weekly. Additional donations will be accepted from other agencies dependent upon the items and will be case by case.
2. Purchasing will be from the Coronavirus State Fiscal Recovery Fund (CSFRF) grant and the remaining allocation from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) for items that we do not receive through donations or food banks.
 - a. Buying in bulk is the preferred method for items purchased.
 - b. Purchasing items will allow more control over what food is received and when.
 - c. Grants would allow us to receive or purchase specific food items as detailed in the grant regulations.
3. Food Banks are nonprofit organizations that deal primarily with food manufacturers and distributors, cleaning products in quantities that would overwhelm most individual charities. Using a Food Bank will allow SLPT to acquire and distribute at least five times more than any other means.

C. Food Handling

Summit Lake is responsible for storing food in a manner that will keep it safe for our clients to eat. Key Standards for food storage space should be adhered to as below:

- Intact room with a lock to assure that the food only goes to screened individuals
- No broken windows, cracks in walls, ceilings, and floors to prevent pest contaminations)
- No evidence of pest contamination
- Clean
- No chemicals or cleaning supplies stored with food
- No food on the floor (whether it is packaged or not)

- Thermometer in each refrigerator or freezer, with a log documenting safe temperature
- No flaking paint or other physical hazards
- Pantry or storage area should smell clean, no mold, mildew, or chemical smells

Spoilage is another area of concern; some products received from donations or food banks will be either outdated or close to it. While you should examine all goods carefully before they are offered to clients, a product being past its code date does not necessarily mean that it is unsafe to eat.

D. Hours and Intake

1. Pantry hours will be open Monday through Friday; hours will be posted on SLPT website and posted on pantry door and closed on weekends and holidays. Check the website for up-to-date operating hours.
2. Intake will be in person with a designated pantry representative and adult household member. Families will ONLY be allowed to pick up for their household, Families that live outside of Reno Sparks may call ahead if someone is picking up for them.
 - a. Clients will be required to fill out an intake application for the first visit, and have all intake forms filled out before picking up food
 - b. Some applications/questions may be more extensive than others depending upon grant requirements and are subject to change without notification.
 - c. Intake applications may also require proof of various bits of information.

E. Distribution Methods

Depending upon inventory the SLPT Pantry may operate in one of two ways as detailed below without notification to the membership.

1. Standardized Food Box/Bag Pantry will be prepacked boxes/bags of food given to the clients. This would ensure 'fairness' to every client as they would receive no more or less than other clients.
2. Client Choice Pantry allows the client to choose their own food.
 - a. A pantry list of food which will detail items available. The client will select the food, and the designated pantry representative will package the items.
 - b. Certain items may be marked with allowable quantity per family size.
 - c. Clients will not be able to leave their food list with pantry staff to pick up later, due to refrigerator and freezer storage space.
 - d. Members will be allowed to pick up once a week for grant funded food items and as needed for Food Bank of Northern Nevada, Catholic Charities and other donated food items.
 - e. Members are limited from the grant funded item to three (3) meats, three (3) frozen meals and two (2) boxes of cereal and one (1) box of chips. Shelves in the lobby with food are donated items and clients may take as much as they want.

F. Pantry Delivery

Pantry Delivery may be accommodated for various reasons such as medical inability to physically attend the pantry or COVID-19 positive or exposure, elders in and outside the Reno Sparks area that residence 15 miles or more, including Schurz and Winnemucca areas. Any other reasons can be discussed and determined by the designated pantry representative.

G. Zero Tolerance

The Summit Lake Paiute Tribe has a zero tolerance for clients abusing the pantry, not adhering to the pickup item signs, SLPT Food Pantry Policy, or hostility/harassment towards the designated pantry representative. Clients who exhibit this behavior may be suspended for up to 3 months from the pantry, clients will not be allowed in or outside the pantry for any reason until the suspension is over. After the 3-month period the incident will be reevaluated to determine if further action will be needed. If there is a second offence the client will be suspended from the pantry indefinitely. The suspension will begin when you receive a certified letter or hand delivered.