

Isolation and Quarantine Food Program-Information for Municipalities

Need: Food security is a top concern for a subset of households in quarantine or isolation due to COVID-19. This is especially prevalent in low-income communities and communities with high infection rates. Communities and households are experiencing two primary barriers to food access: 1) availability of food supplies and 2) transportation/delivery. *Meeting food access/basic needs is key to the ability of individuals and families to safely maintain isolation/quarantine.*

Response: The MA COVID-19 Command Center has established the *Isolation and Quarantine (I&Q) Food Program* to address food insecurity among individuals and households in isolation and quarantines. This program includes:

- 1) Shelf-stable **food boxes** that can be stored by municipalities and delivered as needed.

Examples of box contents (may vary based on availability):

Item	Servings*	Meals*
Canned Vegetables (Two 14-15 oz. cans)	7	0.5
Apple Sauce (6- 4 oz. or 23 oz jar)	6	0.5
Rice, 16 oz. bag	10	3.0
Beans (dry), 16 oz. bag	13	3.0
Lance Peanut Butter Crackers (8 of 6 crackers per pack)	8	0.8
Two packs of Instant dry milk (2 packs makes 2 quarts)	8	0.0
Flatbread (10 - 4 inch rounds per pack)	10	2.0
Pasta, 1 lb.	6	1.0
Pasta Sauce, 24 oz. can (with meat as much as possible)	0	0.0
Peanut Butter, 16 oz. jar	14	3.0
Clam Chowder (condensed), 15 oz. can	3.5	1.0
Oats and Honey Granola bar, 2 pack (3 packs)	6	0.5
	92	60

***Meal count based on average family size of 4



- 2) Geographically relevant grocery store **gift cards** for online ordering and delivery and/or purchasing by someone outside the household (available in February, more information to come).

How to Request Food Boxes

Step 1. The Emergency Management Director (EMD) will submit requests using the current webEOC process. Towns should consider the following when requesting boxes:

Addressing need for the next 2-4 weeks -Assume that 6% of people in I/Q will need food support, with one box serving 1-2 people/week (see Best Practices below for more information).

Step 2. MEMA will collaborate with the EMD on pick up/delivery.

Step 3. Municipalities re-order boxes as needed.

Municipal Requirements

- Program oversight and coordination at the municipal level (i.e. health dept. staff person, public health nurse, EMD) including an assigned program manager/local contact.
- A closed referral process to identify those in I&Q with food security needs based on:
 - Limited financial resources/unable to work due to isolation or quarantine
 - No friend or family support to purchase and/or deliver food
- Inventory tracking/data collection (see Best Practices for more detail).

Need Help? Please contact your MEMA Local Coordinator for any supply-chain questions. If you need further assistance contact Jhana Wallace, Food Security Coordinator: 617-230-4487 or MAfoodsecurity@mass.gov

BEST PRACTICES/INFORMATION FOR MUNICIPALITIES

1. Whenever possible, try to rely on existing processes and infrastructure to identify need, store and distribute supplies, and maintain records.
2. Identify who will be making referrals for the boxes. If not the MA COVID-19 Contact Tracing Collaborative, who in your city/town?
3. Make sure to identify a storage location that is safe from pests and accessible to whomever will need it (including evening and weekend hours, if possible).
4. Set up a clear process to deliver supplies. If support is needed, collaborate with other agencies and organizations in your city/town. The Food Security Coordinator can assist in identifying partners.
5. ***Make sure verbal or written permission is secured to share people's contact information.*** Keep this information as private as possible by limiting those with access.
6. **Screen people for SNAP eligibility at DTAConnect.com/screening.** It only takes 15 seconds! If potentially eligible, connect households with Project Bread's FoodSource Hotline to apply over the phone: 1-800-645-8333. Also, **screen households for WIC eligibility** and direct them to their local WIC office: Mass.gov/WIC.
7. Follow up with households to assess need for more food boxes.
8. Be proactive in ordering-think about supply needs based on the following:
 - One box is meant to be enough shelf stable food to support TWO people for ONE week. Boxes are best used alongside other resources providing food, so for example one box plus other add-ins may be enough for two people. The MEMA Regional Managers/Local Coordinators can assist with determining quantity of boxes.
 - Re-order when there is ¼ of inventory remaining.
9. Determine how many boxes to deliver to a household by considering:
 - Presence of children and/or other household members.
 - Other resources that might supplement the boxes.
10. Make sure to keep track of the following for reporting purposes:
 - Total number of boxes disseminated to households.
 - Total number of households served.
 - Total number of people served.

Reminder: Always use a contactless delivery system and maintain COVID-19 safety protocols.