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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Expanded Client Survey Assessment: Baltimore City was commissioned by the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC) and conducted by a cross-departmental team at the Maryland Food Bank (MFB), led by:

- Thomas Higdon, Volunteer Program Manager
- Megan Davis, Grants Manager
- Meg Kimmel, Executive Vice President of Programs and External Affairs

The following Maryland Food Bank employees assisted in identifying survey sites, scheduling survey sites, and surveying clients:

- Andrea Appin, Digital Marketing Manager
- Katie Beltz, Director, Client Services
- Jessica Corcelius, Director, Partner Services
- Gwen Eshleman, Front Desk Administrator
- Zanika Ghee, Director of Regional Programs, Central Maryland
- Morgan Glinka, Donor Relations Coordinator
- Kateri Harried, Events and Community Fundraising Manager
- Leah Harvey, Specialist, Partner Compliance
- Brandi Hunter, Network Relations Coordinator
- Tracey Ivison, Sr. Partner Services Coordinator
- Hana Katz-Stein, DSS/CSFP Coordinator
- Sakiera Malone, School Pantry Administrator
- Chris Maynard, Director of Individual and Foundations Relations
- Deonta Sweets, HEART Market Coordinator
- Kelly Wagstaff, DSS/CSFP Coordinator

The following MFB volunteers tested the survey, surveyed clients, and conducted data entry: Mark Cates, Barbara Donohoe, Elba Garcia-Galli, John Hejl, Eric Jacobson, Emily Kirk, Barbara Mansfield, Danita Mitchell, Kate Murphy, Tim O’Hara, Dorothy Sheppard, and Karen Vundla. The following Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health student volunteers surveyed clients and wrote a separate, preliminary report of the survey findings: Raia Contractor, Barret LaRusso, Jennifer Trumbore.

The food bank would like to thank the following food distribution organizations for allowing the MFB team to use their space to survey clients:

- Allendale Apt.
- Amazing Grace Lutheran
- Basilica Place
- Beans & Bread
- C.A.R.E.S
- Cherry Hill Elementary
- Church of the Living God
- City of Refuge
• Edgecombe Circle Elementary School
• First Mount Calvary Pantry and Soup Kitchen
• Fishes and Loaves
• Friendship Outreach Center
• Franciscan Center
• Grace Baptist Church
• Moravia Park Elementary
• Oliver Community Center
• New Life Fellowship

• Our Daily Bread
• Second Shiloh Pantry
• Soul Harvest Church and Ministry
• St. Matthias Episcopal Church
• Stillmeadows
• The Transformation Center (aka Lily’s Place)
• Trinity New Birth Food Pantry
• Walker Co-op
• Waters Tower
• YO! West Baltimore

The Maryland Food Bank would also like to thank the more than 1,000 Baltimore City residents who participated in the survey.
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 2018, the Maryland Food Bank, Inc. (MFB) and Full Plate Ventures, LLC were commissioned by the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC) to produce the report, *Food Rescue in Baltimore City: Assessing Current Landscape and Potential Growth*. The report examines Baltimore City’s food rescue landscape and makes recommendations to key stakeholders (e.g., City government, food donors) on how food rescue efforts may be improved. As part of the research, the consultants conducted a preliminary survey of individuals who receive food assistance at three local food pantries in three Baltimore City neighborhoods. The goal of this survey was to learn more about clients’ satisfaction with and barriers to current food assistance efforts in the City.

This initial survey sample was small – only 40 individuals. This spurred NRDC to commission a second, much larger client survey – this time with a goal of 1,000 Baltimore City clients.

Between April 2019 and June 2019, the Maryland Food Bank (herein referred to as “the consultants”) and a team of volunteers surveyed 1,043 clients at 29 food assistance locations across 17 Baltimore City neighborhoods.

Major findings include the following:

1. There is room to improve the quality and quantity of food distributed, as well as the food’s alignment with households’ dietary needs and cultural beliefs.
2. Transportation continues to be a significant barrier for clients accessing food distribution sites. Disabilities are also a barrier for many; and
3. Word of mouth is the leading source of “advertising” for food assistance in Baltimore City;

In response, the following areas emerged as priorities for collaborative efforts of Baltimore City food distribution points, key stakeholders, and Baltimore City government:

1. Increase food donations, especially of vegetables and proteins
2. Assess ways in which public transit could eliminate/lessen transportation barriers
3. Assess ways to increase education about available government food assistance benefits
4. Increase client outreach efforts to improve/increase access to food assistance
5. Assess ways to address the unique food assistance needs of Baltimore City’s disabled population, as well as other vulnerable populations
6. Assess ways to better align donated food with clients’ dietary needs and cultural beliefs

Ultimately, client surveys will help better inform programming decisions by food assistance organizations to better serve those in need. Findings will also contribute to the NRDC’s “Food Matters” initiative to collaborate with the City of Baltimore to increase food donation, reduce food waste, and increase food scrap recycling in the City.
CLIENT SURVEY: METHOD AND SCOPE
This report includes analysis of 1,043 individuals’ survey responses gathered at 29 survey sites in 17 Baltimore City neighborhoods. Data was collected between April 3, 2019 and June 12, 2019. Analyses were performed using Microsoft Excel. Mapping was done using ArcGIS.

Survey Questions
Through a collaborative effort by the Maryland Food Bank, the Natural Resources Defense Council, and the Baltimore City Office of Sustainability, the survey questions were created based on the survey used in the 2018 Food Rescue report, combined with feedback from volunteers. See Appendix A for the final questions used in the survey.

The questions were uploaded to Survey Monkey, which was used to administer the electronic survey and to collect data from paper surveys (see Administering the Survey). On average, clients needed between five and ten minutes to complete the survey.

Survey limitations
It is important to note data collected for this survey is self-reported. In addition, individual survey respondents may have a different interpretation of the questions and potential answers in multiple-choice/Likert Scale questions, which could have an impact on the results.

Two of the survey sites were soup kitchens. This may have affected survey responses, specifically on the Likert Scale questions as questions were more directed to clients who take the food they receive home, as opposed to eating on site.

A small percentage (less than 14%) of clients selected “Does not apply” in the series of Likert Scale questions. This may have been selected if it was the client’s first time attending the food distribution location and they could not yet comment on how satisfied/unsatisfied they were with the food assistance available.

Administering the Survey
Surveys were administered by 32 volunteers from the Maryland Food Bank’s staff and volunteer program, as well as students from the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health. All volunteers were trained by Thomas Higdon, volunteer program manager at the Maryland Food Bank, on technical aspects of the survey process (e.g., how to use the hot spots, Chromebooks, Survey Monkey, how to distribute/track gift cards) and interpersonal skills (e.g., how to interact with clients).

At least one MFB staff member and one non-MFB staff member was present for each survey visit. The food bank prepared “survey kits” for volunteers to sign out, which included three

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1 The Maryland Food Bank tested survey questions on volunteers, and took their feedback to make the questions easier to read and the survey faster to complete (e.g., write questions in plain English, reduce the survey’s reading level)
Chromebooks, styluses, hot spots, paper copies of the survey, pens, and a volunteer script (See Appendix B).

All surveys were administered at food distribution sites during opening hours when clients were picking up food and/or eating food (e.g., at soup kitchens). Volunteers who were able to conduct the survey in Spanish were available, as needed.

During the first half of the survey project, volunteers used Chromebooks to survey clients. However, with only three Chromebooks available, volunteers could only survey three clients at a time, significantly slowing down the process. At the project’s half-way point, the consultants switched from using Chromebook to paper surveys. Using paper surveys allowed volunteers to survey many more clients at a time, which ultimately helped the consultants reach and surpass its goal of surveying 1,000 clients.

Surveys were conducted in private, if space at the distribution site allowed. If there were literacy challenges in these situations, the survey was read out loud to the client and written responses were recorded by a volunteer.

Clients who completed the survey received a $5 gift card to Giant Food grocery stores to thank them for their time. The consultants recommend this as a best practice for future survey work. Before giving the client the gift card, the volunteer surveyor checked the survey for completion. After finishing surveying a site, volunteers input the survey data into Survey Monkey.

Selecting Survey Sites
Survey sites were selected to span different communities across Baltimore City. They range in median household income, percent of households living below the federal poverty line, unemployment rates, and racial diversity, as seen below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey Location</th>
<th>Community and Zip Code</th>
<th>Total Households</th>
<th>Median Household Income$ \text{2}</th>
<th>% of Household Living Below FPL\textsuperscript{3}</th>
<th>Unemployment Rate\textsuperscript{4}</th>
<th>Racial Diversity Index\textsuperscript{5}</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

\textsuperscript{2} U.S. Census Quick Facts.
\textsuperscript{3} Federal Poverty Line, U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, [https://aspe.hhs.gov/poverty-guidelines](https://aspe.hhs.gov/poverty-guidelines). (Numbers were rounded to the nearest whole number).
\textsuperscript{4} American Community Survey. (Percentages were rounded to nearest whole number).
\textsuperscript{5} The Racial Diversity Index, as defined by the Baltimore Neighborhood Indicators Alliance, is “the percent chance that two people picked at random within an area will be of a different race/ethnicity. This number does not reflect which race/ethnicity is predominant within an area. The higher the value, the more racially and ethnically diverse an area.” Numbers in chart were rounded to the nearest whole number.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organization</th>
<th>Location / Description</th>
<th>Phone</th>
<th>Site 1</th>
<th>Site 2</th>
<th>Site 3</th>
<th>Site 4</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Amazing Grace Lutheran</td>
<td>Madison/ East End – Mc Elderry Park (21205)</td>
<td>2,111</td>
<td>$29,975</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>29</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basilica Place</td>
<td>Midtown/ Mount Vernon (21201)</td>
<td>8,834</td>
<td>$47,406</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>64</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beans &amp; Bread(^6)</td>
<td>Harbor East Little Italy (21231)</td>
<td>5,407</td>
<td>$46,666</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>68</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C.A.R.E.S.</td>
<td>North Baltimore, Guilford/Homeland (21212)</td>
<td>6,010</td>
<td>$90,704</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>56</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cherry Hill Elementary</td>
<td>Westport/ Mount Winans/Lakeland (21225)</td>
<td>7,119</td>
<td>$36,645</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>56</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Church of the Living God</td>
<td>Southwest Baltimore (21223)</td>
<td>5,830</td>
<td>$25,427</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>50</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City of Refuge</td>
<td>Brooklyn/Curtis Bay/Hawkins Point (21225)</td>
<td>4,449</td>
<td>$40,275</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>74</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edgecombe Circle Elementary School</td>
<td>Parklane (21215)</td>
<td>4,810</td>
<td>$24,941</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>15</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First Mount Calvary Pantry and Soup Kitchen</td>
<td>Sandtown-Winchester/Harlem Park (21217)</td>
<td>4,660</td>
<td>$25,208</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fishes and Loaves</td>
<td>Lakeland (21230)</td>
<td>2,352</td>
<td>$36,645</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>56</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Franciscan Center</td>
<td>Greater Charles Village/Barkley (21218)</td>
<td>6,404</td>
<td>$39,097</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>67</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friendship Outreach Center</td>
<td>Harford / Echodale (21234)</td>
<td>6,726</td>
<td>$55,808</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>55</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grace Baptist Church</td>
<td>Greater Charles Village/Barkley (21218)</td>
<td>6,404</td>
<td>$39,097</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>67</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moravia Park Elementary</td>
<td>Cedaronia/ Frankford (21206)</td>
<td>9,180</td>
<td>$41,652</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>36</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^6\) This location is a soup kitchen.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organization</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Clients</th>
<th>Incomes</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>New Life Fellowship – Partner</td>
<td>Belair-Edison (21213)</td>
<td>6,070</td>
<td>$39,624</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td></td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Life Fellowship - POTG</td>
<td>Upton/ Druid Heights (21217)</td>
<td>4,189</td>
<td>$20,467</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td></td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oliver Community Center</td>
<td>Greenmount East (21213)</td>
<td>2,908</td>
<td>$26,563</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td></td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Our Daily Bread7</td>
<td>Midtown (21202)</td>
<td>8,834</td>
<td>$47,406</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td></td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second Shiloh Pantry</td>
<td>Midway/ Coldstream (21218)</td>
<td>2,957</td>
<td>$35,273</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td></td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soul Harvest Church and Ministry</td>
<td>Brooklyn/ Curtis Bay/ Hawkins Point (21225)</td>
<td>4,449</td>
<td>$40,275</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td></td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Matthias Episcopal Church</td>
<td>Hamilton – Rosemont East (21206)</td>
<td>5,158</td>
<td>$65,130</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td></td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stillmeadow</td>
<td>Beechfield / Ten Hills/ West Hills (21219)</td>
<td>5,309</td>
<td>$57,572</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td></td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trinity New Birth Food Pantry</td>
<td>Grove Park (21207)</td>
<td>4,095</td>
<td>$53,318</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td></td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Transformation Center (aka Lily’s Place)</td>
<td>Brooklyn/ Curtis Bay/ Hawkins Point (21225)</td>
<td>4,449</td>
<td>$40,275</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td></td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walker Co-op</td>
<td>Chinquapin park/Belvedere (21212)</td>
<td>7,756</td>
<td>$54,249</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td></td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waters Tower</td>
<td>Oldtown/ Middle East (21205)</td>
<td>10,021</td>
<td>$19,127</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td></td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YO! West Baltimore</td>
<td>Upton/ Druid Heights (21217)</td>
<td>10,324</td>
<td>$20,467</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td></td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 1: Client Survey Locations**

---

7 This location is a soup kitchen.
The map below shows the self-reported residential ZIP codes of surveyed clients and the zip codes of food distribution points used as survey sites. The green stars represent survey sites and the black circles represent zip codes where clients reportedly live.

**Figure 1: Residential ZIP Codes of Clients and ZIP Codes of Survey Sites**

The sites surveyed include both food distributions within the Maryland Food Bank network and those outside of the food bank’s network. Maryland Food Bank partners represent a variety of the programs offered by the nonprofit, including:

- **Network Partners** – These are the food distribution points (pantries, shelters, soup kitchens, etc.) that the Maryland Food Bank relies on to distribute the food we procure to those who need it most in their communities.

- **HEART Market** – These farmer market style distribution events focus on nutrition and produce distribution to teach children and their families that Healthy Eats are Really Tasty. Generally, HEART Markets operate within partnering MFB K-12 school sites.

- **Pantry on the Go** – Through mobile food distribution events, the Maryland Food Bank partners with community organizations (e.g., schools, retirement homes, faith-based organizations) to provide supplementary food assistance to those most affected by food insecurity. Mobile pantries help bridge the gap between transportation and access to food.
• **The Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP)** – Also known as My Groceries to Go!, CSFP is a federal program administered by the food bank that provides food assistance to low-income seniors in need.

Below is a breakdown of the type of food assistance sites surveyed:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey Sites</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Maryland Food Bank: Network Partners</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maryland Food Bank: HEART Market</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maryland Food Bank: Pantry on the Go</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maryland Food Bank: CSFP Sites</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Maryland Food Bank sites</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 2: Types of Survey Sites*

A concerted effort was made to enlist food assistance sites that are not part of the Maryland Food Bank’s network. Many such locations approached for this study were unresponsive or inactive.

Sites also differed by whether they use a client choice model, a pre-bagged approach, or a combination:

1. As the name suggests, at **client choice** sites clients choose which foods they would like to take home based on preference (both taste and what they have the means to prepare) as well as the dietary needs of their household.
2. **Pre-bagged** programs are those in which volunteers at a distribution site pre-bag food for distribution to clients.
3. A **combination** site operates multiple food distribution points (e.g., a network partner that operates a soup kitchen may also host a monthly Pantry on the Go event) which may have both client choice and pre-bagged distribution efforts, depending on the programming/event.

**Survey Respondents’ Demographics**
The following chart shows how survey respondents self-identified. The column on the right shows the racial breakdown of Baltimore City’s general population based on U.S. Census data. Census data isn’t available for the age breakdowns used in the survey or for number of children in the home.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey Respondent Demographics</th>
<th>% of Respondents who self-identified</th>
<th>Baltimore City’s population (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Race</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African American</td>
<td>72.5</td>
<td>62.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnicity</td>
<td>% of Respondents who self-identified</td>
<td>% of Respondents who self-identified</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>2.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>14.4</td>
<td>30.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pacific Islander</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native American</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>0.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic/Latino</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>5.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multiracial</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Choose not to provide/no reply</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 3: Survey Respondents’ Demographic Information**

Observationally, Baltimore City’s Hispanic/Latino population appears to be underrepresented in this survey. It is unclear, however, if fewer individuals who identify as Hispanic/Latino seek food assistance, or if, in future survey efforts, there is a need to find better ways to target sites that serve a larger Hispanic/Latino population.

**Survey Findings**

Survey findings are analyzed in five main categories: root causes of hunger, satisfaction with current food assistance efforts, barriers to food assistance, access to/outreach about food assistance, and consumption of donated foods.
Root Causes of Hunger
Clients were surveyed on the reason for their visit to the food distribution site in an effort to better understand what resources – beyond food – could be provided by food distribution sites to more holistically assist clients as shown below.

![Chart 1: Self-Identified Reasons forVisit to Food Assistance Site](image)

The survey permitted clients to choose as many options as they felt were accurate to represent their reasons. More than 800 clients (80%) indicated that they visit the food distribution site because they need food.

The second most common reason was that clients’ current benefits were too low: 244 clients (23%) chose this response. This was followed by low wages with 136 clients (13%) choosing this response.

Clients also had the option to select “other” and write in a response. Of the 87 clients who provided a response:

- Five clients intentionally indicated “disabled” as a reason for visiting the food distribution site
- Fourteen clients said they came to volunteer, in addition to getting food assistance
- A few clients suggested that in addition to food, they come for the sense of community:
"For company"
- “Come every week for community”
- “Retired and enjoys being at St. Matthias”
- “Just to have someone to vent with, the volunteers are great”
- “I feel like family when I’m here”

**Client Satisfaction with Food Assistance Efforts**

Clients were surveyed about their level of satisfaction with the food distribution location they were using at the time of the survey. Overall, clients responded that they were satisfied with the hours of the location; the quality and amount of food received, including amounts of protein, fresh produce, and canned or ready-to-eat food; and the shelf life of the food they received as shown below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CLIENT SATISFACTION WITH FOOD ASSISTANCE</th>
<th>Very Unsatisfied</th>
<th>Somewhat Unsatisfied</th>
<th>Somewhat Satisfied</th>
<th>Very Satisfied</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Shelf-Life of Food</strong></td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Amount of Canned Goods</strong></td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Amount of Fresh Produce</strong></td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Amount of Protein</strong></td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Quality of Food</strong></td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Amount of Food</strong></td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Hours at This Location</strong></td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Chart 2: Client-Reported Satisfaction with Food Assistance Efforts, Overall**

“Very satisfied” ratings ranged from 48% to 60% across the various indicators. When “very satisfied” and “somewhat satisfied” responses are combined, satisfaction ratings range from 66% to 74% across all indicators.

The area of greatest satisfaction (“somewhat” and “very” combined) was the quality of food available, with 55% of clients very satisfied with the hours, and 19% somewhat satisfied.

There is, however, room for improvement. “Very unsatisfied” ratings ranged from 13% to 18% across the various indicators. Combined “very unsatisfied” and “somewhat unsatisfied,” dissatisfaction ratings across the indicators above ranged from 21% to 24%.
Specifically, clients were most unsatisfied with the amount of produce and protein available: 24% said they were dissatisfied (somewhat or very) with the amount of protein, and 23% were dissatisfied (somewhat or very) with the amount of produce. In write-in questions, many survey respondents requested a greater quantity and/or more variety of produce and protein, including meat and seafood.

A similar percentage – 23% – said they were very or somewhat unsatisfied with the hours that the food distribution site is open.

Client Satisfaction by Site Type
To further unpack the data for the three indicators needing the most improvement above (hours, produce, and protein), the results were broken down by site type (pre-bag, client choice, and combination). Note that “combination” refers to sites that offer both pre-bagged options and client choice distribution to their clients.

Produce Satisfaction Across Site Types
Overall, clients were most satisfied with the amount of produce they received at client choice sites, and least satisfied at combination sites (sites that offer both pre-bag and client choice).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SATISFACTION WITH PRODUCE BY SITE TYPE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre Bag</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOMEWHA.T-VERY SATISFIED</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOMEWHA.T-VERY UNSATISFIED</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Chart 3: Produce Satisfaction by Site Type**

Clients at client choice were significantly more satisfied with the amount of produce they received than clients at pre-bagged sites. This could suggest that more produce is delivered to client choice sites to begin with, or that having the ability to select food allows to take more of the produce they want.
Where protein is concerned, combination sites had the highest satisfaction ratings, with pre-bag receiving the lowest of the three site types. Again, this could suggest the autonomy to select food increases satisfaction.

**Chart 4: Protein Satisfaction by Site Type**

**Satisfaction with Hours Across Site Types**

Clients were slightly more satisfied with the hours of operation at pre-bag sites than client choice and combination sites as shown below.

**Table 5: Hour Satisfaction by Site Type**
There seems to be most room for improvement with clients’ satisfaction with hours at combination sites, where 27% of respondents reported being somewhat or very unsatisfied.

**Barriers to Food Assistance**
Using a 1-4 Likert Scale, clients were asked if they agree or disagree to the following statements about potential barriers to food assistance:

1. I live with a **disability** that makes it difficult to come here
2. **Transportation** is a barrier to get here
3. Lack of **childcare** is a barrier for me to get here
4. I need information in a **language** other than English
5. I’m unable or unsure how to **prepare** the food I get here
6. The food I get here aligns with my **culture** or my beliefs and
7. The food I get here aligns with my **dietary needs**

![Chart 4: Self Reported Barriers to Food Assistance](image)

**Chart 4: Self Reported Barriers to Food Assistance**

1. **Cultural Beliefs.** Misalignment between cultural beliefs and available foods was identified as the most common of the barriers explored, with 38% of respondents raising this concern. Of those who “strongly disagreed” that the food aligns with their cultural beliefs, 33% were Native American, 32% were White, and 27% were African American.

2. **Dietary needs.** 32% of clients indicated that available foods do not adequately align with their dietary needs. This is an area that can be looked into further to see which particular foods may not be serving dietary needs and in which locations.
Clients were also asked about what dietary restrictions, if any, they have. 24% indicated that they have dietary restrictions, most of which were related to health issues such as a diabetic diet or a heart healthy diet. A few respondents indicated a peanut or shellfish allergy. A few respondents follow a vegetarian or vegan diet or have other dietary restrictions, such as not eating pork, dairy, greens, or spicy food.

3. **Disability.** 30% of respondents indicated that they have a disability that makes it difficult to get to their food assistance site (including 12% who “strongly agree” and 18% who “somewhat agree”.

4. **Transportation.** 28% of respondents indicate that transportation to their food assistance site is a barrier, with 12% of clients who “strongly agree” and 16% who “somewhat agreeing”.

5. **Preparing food.** A modest number, about 16%, indicated that they are unable or unsure of how to prepare the food received. Overall, this is encouraging but points to ongoing needs such as incorporation of cooking demonstrations or recipe cards on location. Of note, several clients mentioned that they knew how to prepare the food because they used to work as chefs or cooks.

6. **Childcare.** Childcare did not appear to be a large barrier to accessing food assistance at the sites surveyed. This could be due to the age of clients (the majority were seniors). However, 14% of clients somewhat or strongly agreed that childcare was a barrier, so there is still room for improvement for this population.

7. **Language.** Just 12% of respondents reported needing information in a language other than English. Improvements could be made by investing in non-English informational material at sites with the highest reported needs.

Clients were also asked which of the following would improve their access to food assistance: More hours and/or days available at this location; Better way to get to this location; Additional pantries/meal programs near my home; Additional pantries/meal programs near my work; The ability to make an appointment and/or reserve food here in advance; and/or other (write in option).

Clients could choose as many answers as they wanted. The chart below displays their preferred methods of improving access to food.
**Chart 5: Self-Identified Ways to Improve Client’s Access to Food Assistance**

The top two most common responses by far were more hours and/or more days available (42% of clients selected this option) and additional pantries/meal programs near my home (selected by 41%).

The majority of clients who selected “other” did not provide a response or they repeated an option that already existed (e.g., more hours). However, there were a handful of specific suggestions for improvement, largely focused on door-to-door delivery options for those who can’t carry heavy boxes of food targeted to seniors; more healthy food; more volunteers to help at the sites; and faster lines at the sites.

Clients were also asked an optional, write-in question about what they would change about the food distribution site or meal program.

Below are some common themes of their responses:

- **No changes:** Many said they were satisfied and wouldn’t change anything about the food distribution site. Others provided suggestions regarding the food distributed through the site or the meal program where they were surveyed or the logistics of that distribution.

- **Improve hours and logistics.** Many suggested increasing the frequency and timing of the food distribution, for example weekend breakfasts, and increasing the hours of the distribution, either by adding more hours or earlier and later hours. Some focused on the organization of the food distribution, requesting faster service, a better organized service, ensuring the events start on time, or more consistency with the days and hours
of distribution. A few answered that the sites needed to be more accessible for the elderly and disabled and closer to transportation.

- **Amount and quality of food.** Most of the suggestions regarding the food were about the quantity, quality, and variety of the food, specifically food in general, meat, and produce. A few suggested more seafood, more fresh bread, more grains, more drinks, more desserts, more healthy foods, more vegan/vegetarian foods, more low sodium or diabetic food, and more cultural foods. In addition, some suggested having more choice in the food, such as being able to pick their own produce, and ensuring the food is not expired. A few suggested resources for sustainable and healthy foods and providing recipes.

**Access to and Outreach about Food Assistance**
Clients were surveyed on both their access to current food assistance (e.g., why did they pick the specific location for food assistance) and outreach efforts around the availability of food assistance.

**Access to Food Assistance**
The survey asked why clients selected this specific location to get food assistance from. Clients could select up to two responses.

![Chart 6: Why Clients Selected Specific Location](chart6)

Nearly 50% of clients said they selected the specific location to get food assistance because it’s close to their home. 14% of clients said the selection and quality of available food was the reason they opted for this specific food assistance location over another. The third most popular response at 11% was that the location has good hours.
The least popular response was that they chose the location because it’s close to their work. This could suggest that work and home are far away from each other, that there’s not enough pantries by their work, or that transporting groceries back home is a barrier.

**Client Frequency of Site Use.** The survey respondents were asked how often they come to the site with 36% answering monthly, 26% weekly, 10% twice a month, 17% daily, and 10% “other”. Of the “other” responses, many indicated they were at the site for the first time, while others indicated that they came as needed or whenever they can.

**Transportation.** When asked how they got to the location at the time of the survey, 52% of clients said they walked. The next most common answer at 34% was driving to the site. 12% took a bus to the site, and 1% used a taxi or rideshare service.

The heavy emphasis on walking suggests that there is very localized level of need, and additional work is needed to understand the geography of those in need relative to existing brick-and-mortar distribution points and mobile distribution services.

The 64% of clients who get to the site by either walking or taking the bus may be limited in the amount of food they can take if they use the same methods of transportation to get back home. In future surveys, it could be beneficial to assess whether transportation affects the amount or type of food clients feel comfortable taking and whether clients use the same methods of transportation to take the food home as they do to get to the site.

**Other Sources of Food.** Clients were also asked about other sources of the food they eat. Clients could choose up to two of the options presented.

![Chart 7: Self-reported Locations where Clients get More of Their Food](image-url)
As shown above, the most common responses were grocery stores (35%) and the food distribution site at which the survey was conducted (30%). Among respondents who chose “other,” the most common response was that they get the majority of their food from family members. 15% of respondents said they get additional food from government food assistance.

**Government Food Assistance.** Clients were asked “what nutrition benefits do you receive?” with the results shown below.

![Government Food Assistance Usage](image)

**Table 11: Government Food Assistance Usage**

50% of survey respondents report using the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) while just 4% participate in Women Infants and Children (WIC). Six percent said they use “other”, including a number who said they use SSI, TDAP, CSFP, unemployment benefits, PAA, medical assistance and disability benefits.

**Reasons for not receiving government food assistance.** Clients not receiving government assistance where asked why they don’t receive that assistance.
WHY CLIENTS DON’T RECEIVE GOVERNMENT FOOD ASSISTANCE

$I'm$ not sure if I am eligible  I know I’m not eligible  They’re not worth the effort to apply  Other

![Chart](chart.png)

**Chart 12: Self-Reported Reasons Why Clients Don’t Receive Government Food Assistance**

The biggest reason why clients don’t apply for food assistance (identified by 46% of respondents) is that they are unsure if they are eligible to apply. This suggests that more outreach needs to be done by groups like the Maryland Food Bank’s SNAP Outreach team or Maryland Hunger Solutions to better educate clients about their potential eligibility. An additional 5% of clients said the benefits are not worth the effort to apply, suggesting the need for further outreach/education.

Of the 9% who selected “other,” common responses included: “never tried,” “never applied,” and “don’t qualify.” There were a few clients who said their recertifications lapsed, they missed their recertification, or they are in the process of applying for government food assistance.

**Outreach Efforts**

To better connect current and future clients to food assistance, clients were asked how they first learned about food distribution locations. Word of mouth was the most commonly selected channel through which clients learned of food assistance, chosen by 76%. This may suggest that:

1. Clients don’t have access to formal communication channels and/or food distribution sites are not using formal channels to publicize this information, or

2. Clients live in tight-knit communities where people are looking out for one another, including the sharing of information about food assistance.

When asked if they knew anyone who needed food assistance but was not getting it, 48% of respondents answered “yes.”

When asked “what’s the best way to let others know about this location”, clients again stressed the importance of word of mouth. The chart below compares how those responses compared to how respondents themselves learned of food assistance opportunities:
Of those who selected “other,” a common response was walking by the location and noticing people receiving food. Though the ability to set up the food outside would vary greatly given site layout, space, staff comfort, safety and, of course, weather, food being set up outside (like at some Pantry on the Go events) could be a method to draw new clients to the site.

Another popular response was “I live here.” These respondents are likely individuals who receive CSFP boxes from MFB-partnering retirement homes/senior living communities. Print advertisements could work well for these locations.

These findings indicate the potential for these clients to use word of mouth as a tool to inform and connect others to food assistance.

**Consumption of Donated Food**

When survey respondents were asked about how much of the food they receive they actually consume, 63% answered “We consume all the food”, 28% reported “We consume nearly all the food”, and 8% reported “We consume only a little of the food.”

![Chart 9: Client Food Consumption](image)

The vast majority of client report that they eat all or nearly all of the food they receive, suggesting that there is very limited food going to waste once it reaches clients.
Among the small percentage of clients who report receiving food they don’t eat, a variety of approaches were used to handle that food:

![Chart 10: Use of Uneaten Food](chart.png)

**Chart 10: Use of Uneaten Food**

At 77%, the most common way to handle food they themselves do not eat is to “give it to someone else.” 5% of respondents say they “compost” it while 3% say they “throw it in the trash.”

Of the 16% who selected “other,” many respondents indicated that they do not have any extra food. Those that did said they donated it to other organizations or saved it for later by freezing it, suggesting that the food was not going uneaten.

**Recommendations**

Maryland Food Bank has developed the following recommendations based on the survey’s findings:

1. **Develop a Plan to Source and Distribute More Nutritious Food.** Slightly more than half of the survey respondents said they were satisfied (somewhat or very) with the amount and quality of the food they receive; however, this also means that nearly half are dissatisfied with the amount and quality of food they receive. Specifically, clients want more produce and protein.

An abundance of peer-reviewed literature shows that food insecurity has been associated with a range of chronic illnesses across all ages, including diabetes, obesity, hypertension, high cholesterol, and cardiovascular risk factors. In fact, many survey respondents indicated they themselves have these health problems, including diabetes, hypertension and other cardiovascular disease, and allergies.
Providing higher-quality food that meets clients’ dietary needs is essential to their health as produce and protein are a necessary part of the diet. In addition, providing nutrition education/information on how to eat a healthy and sustainable diet could be helpful to the clients.

To provide more nutritious food, the following actions should be taken:

- **Develop strategic plan for expanding food rescue city-wide.** The plan should aim to expand donations from Baltimore City businesses and institutions and to strengthen the food rescue system so that it is more efficient, effective, and responsive to community needs, and better able to secure and distribute healthy foods, specifically including fresh produce and quality proteins.

- **Obtain a City-wide food sourcer.** The sourcer’s role should be dedicated to cultivating donations of fresh produce, protein and other healthy foods. The sourcer could also play a crucial role in educating food donors about what foods are most needed and those that are less appropriate for donations (e.g., desserts, candy, sugar-sweetened beverages).

2. **Assess how public transportation can better serve those accessing food assistance programs.** Close to one-third of clients indicated that transportation was a barrier to receiving food assistance. More than 50% walk to their food assistance location, while 12% took a bus to the site and nearly one-third drove a car.

It is possible that walking adversely affects the amount of food clients take home. In the smaller 2018 survey, half of clients said it takes between 10-20 minutes to walk to the food assistance site. 8% of clients reported needing more than 30 minutes to reach food assistance.

It is worth exploring with Baltimore City transportation officials ways that public transit could better serve residents accessing food assistance programs, especially those with disabilities (as well as ways that assistance locations could be better aligned with public transportation). Johns Hopkins School of Public Health suggested creating a map of food distribution sites and public transportation routes, with the cost of each public transit trip shown on such a map to begin that conversation.

For clients with disabilities and senior residents who reported difficulty carrying food (e.g., CSFP boxes), technology such as online ordering and delivery services may be useful in addressing some of the transportation barriers observed.
3. **Assess expanded outreach about government food assistance.** It was noted that 43% of the survey respondents do not receive any additional nutritional benefits. Of those, almost half (46%) are not sure they are eligible and 5% feel they are not worth the effort to apply. We’re not surprised by these findings: studies have shown that many eligible Marylanders forego this form of food assistance due to lack of awareness of their eligibility, difficulty with the application process, and/or perceived social stigma.

Local organizations who do SNAP outreach, like Maryland Hunger Solutions and the Maryland Food Bank, should explore collaborative efforts to create a plan to educate more food-insecure residents about their eligibility for government food assistance.

4. **Work with food distribution sites to assess the potential for increased advertising and visibility.** Most clients found out about the food distribution site where they were surveyed by word of mouth. There may be room for food distribution sites to increase advertising through signage, social media and other channels that would complement word of mouth.

Appropriate communication methods may vary by site due to factors such as age of clients. Maryland Food Bank could share information with sites about which communication methods may be most useful for that site. The sites could use this information to increase the number of clients they reach, and if implemented alongside SNAP-Ed (SNAP-Education) efforts, could also increase awareness of SNAP eligibility.

5. **Find means to support ongoing surveys.** The food bank knows that the need for food assistance is different in rural, suburban, and urban communities across the state, and expects that responses to this type of survey would differ from Cambridge to Cumberland. The food bank recommends finding the means to replicate surveys across the state as a way to increase the effectiveness of food distribution programs statewide.

6. **Assess ways to address the unique food assistance needs of Baltimore City’s disabled population, as well as other vulnerable populations.** For disabilities that affect mobility, determine if more can be done to expand mobile food delivery through organizations like Meals on Wheels or Moveable Feast. There are also meal delivery options for SNAP recipients to explore, like Full Cart, an app through which clients can order a box of nutritious food to be delivered to them within three days.

7. **Assess ways to better align food with clients’ dietary needs and cultural beliefs.** More survey work could be done to gather feedback from clients on what foods they would prefer based on their dietary needs and cultural beliefs. Pantry coordinators and on-site meal providers could also do more to provide food that better fits the needs of
their clients. This will require the availability of different types of food which supports the recommendation for a Baltimore City food sourcer to bring new and under-represented types of food into the food assistance system.

Conclusion

Over the past 40 years, the Maryland Food Bank has worked to provide food assistance to the one in five Baltimore City residents most in need. The findings of this survey show areas of client satisfaction and dissatisfaction and barriers to receiving food assistance that clients continue to face. The food bank believes food assistance solutions must include the voices of those who rely on the system.

These findings can inform and improve food distribution programs working in Baltimore City and should be translated into strategic programming to reduce food insecurity in the City. The food bank is willing to continue that process and is grateful for the opportunity to conduct this survey. The consultants will partner with NRDC to support dissemination of the survey findings, making sure that this analysis reaches key stakeholders within and beyond the food assistance community.
Appendix

Item A: Survey Questions

ADMINISTRATIVE QUESTIONS

1. Name of Survey Location: Completed by food bank staff.

INTERCEPT SURVEY QUESTIONS

2. What prompted you to come here today? Circle all that apply.
   - Need food
   - Changes/delays in benefits or social assistance
   - Current benefits are too low
   - Debt
   - Delayed wages
   - Dietary restrictions
   - Family breakup
   - Homeless
   - Low wages
   - Natural disaster
   - Relocation
   - Sickness/medical expenses
   - Unexpected housing expenses
   - Unexpected expenses (non-housing)
   - Unemployed/recently lost job
   - Other:
     __________________________
     __________________________
     __________________________
     __________________________

3. Why did you choose this specific location today? Circle up to two options.
   - It is close by my home
   - It is close by my work
   - Good hours
   - I come here for other services
   - The selection/quality of food
   - It’s the only place I know of to get food assistance
   - Other:
     __________________________
     __________________________
     __________________________
     __________________________

4. How did you first find out about this location? Circle one option.
   - Word of mouth
   - Internet/Social media
   - Print advertisement (e.g., flyer)
   - Sign out front of location
   - Other:
     __________________________
     __________________________

5. How did you get here today? Circle one option.
   - Car
   - Walk
   - Bus
   - Train
6. **How satisfied are you with the following?** Please check a box in one column for each line.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Very unsatisfied</th>
<th>Somewhat unsatisfied</th>
<th>Somewhat satisfied</th>
<th>Very satisfied</th>
<th>Does not apply</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The <strong>hours</strong> at this location.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The amount of food I get at this location.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The quality of food I get at this location (e.g., it doesn’t go bad fast).</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The amount of <strong>protein</strong> I receive (e.g., meats, fish, eggs, etc.).</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The amount of <strong>fresh produce</strong> I get here (e.g., fruits, vegetables).</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The amount of <strong>canned food/ready-to-eat food</strong> I get here.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The shelf-life of the food I get (e.g., it doesn’t go bad fast).</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
7. **How much do you agree with the following statements?** Please check a box in one column for each line.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
<th>Mostly disagree</th>
<th>Mostly agree</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I live with a disability that makes it difficult to come here.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation is a barrier to get here.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of childcare is a barrier to get here.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>I need information in a language other than English.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I’m unable or unsure how to prepare the food I get here.</td>
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<tr>
<td>The food I get here aligns with my culture or beliefs.</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The food I get here aligns with my dietary needs.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

8. **What would improve your access to food?** Circle all options that apply.
   - More hours and/or days available at this location
   - Better way to get to this location
   - Additional pantries/meal programs near my home
   - Additional pantries/meal programs near my work
   - The ability to make an appointment and/or reserve food here in advance
   - Other:
     - __________________________________________________________
     - __________________________________________________________

9. **Do you have any dietary restrictions?** Circle one option.
   - No
   - Yes
     - **If yes, please describe:**
       - __________________________________________________________
       - __________________________________________________________

10. **How often do you come here?** Circle one option.
    - Daily
    - Weekly
    - Twice a month
    - Monthly
    - Other: _____________________________________________________
11. **Where do you get most of your food?** Circle the top two options.
   - This location
   - Grocery stores
   - Gas station / convenience store
   - Discount store
   - Specialty store/small grocer
   - Government food assistance programs
   - Farmers markets
   - Community gardens
   - Other food pantries

12. **What nutrition benefits do you receive?** Circle all options that apply.
   - SNAP
   - WIC
   - None
   - Other: 

13. **If you do not receive nutrition benefits, why not?** Circle one option.
   - I do receive nutrition benefits
   - I’m not sure if I am eligible
   - I know I’m not eligible
   - They’re not worth the effort of applying
   - Other:

14. **Do you know someone who needs food assistance who is not getting it?** Circle one option.
   - Yes
   - No

15. **What would be the best way to let other people know about this location?** Circle one option.
   - Word of mouth
   - Internet/ Social media
   - Print advertisement (e.g., flyer)
   - Other:

16. **How much of the food obtained from this pantry do you and/or your family members typically consume?** Circle one option.
   a. All
   b. Nearly all
   c. Only a little of it
17. What do you do with any extra food you cannot eat? Circle one option.
   d. Give it to someone else
   e. Compost it
   f. Throw it in the trash
   g. Other: ____________________________________________________________

18. If you could change one thing about this food pantry or meal program, what would it be?
   ____________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________

19. Which would best describe how you identify? Circle one option.
   • African American
   • Asian
   • White
   • Pacific Islander
   • Native American
   • Hispanic/Latino
   • Multi-racial
   • Choose not to provide
   • Other: ______________________

20. What is your age? Circle one option.
   • 18-29
   • 30-40
   • 41-50
   • 51-60
   • 61-70
   • 71-80
   • 81-90
   • 90+

21. How many children under the age of 18 are there in your household? Circle one option.
   • 0
   • 1
   • 2
   • 3
   • 4+

22. What is your zip code? Please write the number clearly. _______________________

Thank you!
Item B: Volunteer Script

Set-up

1. Ask the point of contact (POC) at the location how you should survey. Some sites will ask you to survey clients while they are waiting in line. Other sites will ask you to survey clients after they get their food.
2. If the POC wants you to survey after the clients get their food, ask if they would like to ask the clients to participate in the survey as part of their process or if they prefer that you make the approach when the client exits.
3. Regardless of who is approaching the clients, let the POC know that you need to setup and that you will contact them when you are ready for the clients. They should not announce your presence until you are ready!

Survey Process

1. Inform the client about the survey.
   a. Their responses will be used to improve the food safety net in Baltimore.
   b. It voluntary - refusing will not affect their benefits.
   c. It’s anonymous – the site will not see their responses.
   d. They will be compensated for their time with at $5 gift card from Giant.
2. Get consent.
   a. Do they have any questions?
   b. Are they willing to participate?
   c. Thank you!
3. Review survey and instructions with the client.
   a. Each question must be answered.
   b. Most questions allow only one answer. Some allow more than one. So be sure to read the question to see the number of allowed responses.
   c. Be sure to give a response for each line in the boxes on pages 2 & 3.
   d. When writing a response, please print.
   e. If you need any assistance completing the survey, just ask!
4. Review completed survey – did they
   a. Did they answer every question and part of question? Be sure to review carefully the boxes on pages 2 & 3.
   b. Did they circle more than one response for any question requiring only one response?
   c. Can you read their written comments, especially the zip code in the final question?
   d. If necessary, give the survey back to the client to address any problems.
5. Give them a gift card.
   a. Only give a gift card if they have a properly completed survey.
   b. Record the last four digits of the card in the first column of the tracking form.
   c. Ask the client to initial in the third column of the tracking form.
   d. Remind the client that their participation is important.
   e. Thank the client!
6. Return the completed surveys, gift card tracking sheet, and unused gift cards to Thomas Higdon.
Script

[While some sites will bring you clients, you may need to make the approach at some locations.]

Hi - My name is __________, I am a volunteer with the Maryland Food Bank.

We’re surveying individuals at food pantries and meal programs across Baltimore City. The results will be used to help improve access to healthy food.

Would you be interested in participating in the survey? It takes about 10 minutes and you will receive a $5 Giant gift card for your time.”

[If Yes, proceed to next section. If no, thank them and move on to another client.]

Thank you. I just need to review a few details about the survey with you.

Have you taken this survey before at this or another location?

[If yes] Thank you for your support. However, these are the same questions you’ve already answered so we have your responses. Again, thank you for your help!

[If they ask for a gift card anyway] I’m sorry, we only have a limited number of gift cards – one for each person’s responses.

Your responses are anonymous. We will not ask for any personal identifying information.

Your participation is voluntary, and you may decide to withdraw from the survey at any time. However, to receive the gift card, you do need to complete the survey.

Your participation in the survey will not affect your eligibility to receive food or any other benefits at this or any other location.

Do you have any questions about the survey?

[If yes, try to answer the questions. If you cannot answer their questions say] I’m afraid I don’t know the answer to that question. However, if you contact Thomas Higdon, at the Maryland food Bank, he may be able to answer that for you. Here is his card.

[If no, point to the stack of Thomas Higdon’s cards] If you do have any questions or concerns about the survey in the future, you can contact Thomas Higdon, the Volunteer Program Manager at the Maryland Food Bank.

Would you like to participate?

[If yes, read the following instructions. If no, thank them for their time.]

Thank you! Let me just give you a few tips that will help you complete the survey.
First, every question requires an answer. Some questions have multiple parts (show boxes on pages 2 & 3). Be sure to answer each part.

Second, most questions only allow one response. But some questions allow you select several answers from the choices offered. So be sure to read the entire question before answering.

Third, when writing in the survey, please print your Responses.

Finally, if you need any assistance, I will be right here.

[Clients should answer the survey themselves. However, you may need to read and answer the questions for some clients. Take your cue from the client. If you read the questions to the client, please read all the possible answers. In an early volunteer training, we discussed different options, but the final decision was to read all the possible answers to the client.

Be sure to thank the client and give them a gift card after the survey is completed.]