

FLORENCE FOOD SHARE'S EXPANDED HOURS

Florence Food Share is a private, non-profit emergency food box pantry whose mission is to alleviate hunger in West Lane County, Oregon. Florence Food Share is affiliated with the Oregon Food Bank and FOOD for Lane County, and has been distributing emergency food boxes in the Florence area for more than 25 years. An agency of United Way of Lane County, Food Share serves approximately 600 low-income households per month with food for 3-5 days per person, free of charge. Each year our organization distributes approximately 600,000 pounds of food; over half of which is donated to us locally through food drives and retail and individual food donations.

With 1,109,000 Oregonians receiving food boxes in 2013, food insecurity is a major problem in this state (Oregon Food Bank statistic). Specifically in Western Lane County, the numbers of families requesting food boxes has increased 13% over the past 5 years (Florence Food Share statistic). Florence Food Share has experienced an 8% increase in outgoing food boxes over the past year (Florence Food Share statistic). These statistics clearly show an ongoing need for the services of our pantry, and that we are a valuable resource to those in need in our community. Florence Food Share anticipates a continued increase in our clientele for the foreseeable future, based on these statistics.

Florence Food Share's volunteers are at the heart of our operation, and we couldn't keep our doors open without them. Working in the pantry and in our 10,000 square foot raised bed garden, our volunteers contributed over 11,500 hours during the 2013/14 fiscal year.

With 150 volunteers from the community, we are currently able to keep our doors open 5 days a week, for a total of 21.5 hours per week. During our open hours, our pantry is full with clients, nearly non-stop. In fact, on a regular basis new individuals visit the pantry after hours, asking for food boxes. We are experiencing an unprecedented need for additional open hours to better fulfill our mission of feeding those in need. Because of the upsurge in clients, we are also in need of more food to keep our pantry full in order to successfully feed all those who come to us for service.

It is time and extremely necessary to expand so that we can adequately serve those in need. Florence Food Share is proposing to increase our open pantry hours in order to be more accessible to those families that work, and to accommodate the increase in clients overall. In addition to being open every weekday morning, Food Share is also open on two afternoons, from 4 – 6 p.m. We feel that being open an additional four hours per week on a Saturday morning, would accommodate the increase in clients, at a time when they can come into the pantry. These additional hours will increase our ability to fulfill our mission of alleviating hunger in Western Lane County.

Because we run on an almost entirely volunteer basis, this capacity building will have a minimal financial impact. Our lights will be running an additional 4 hours per week, and we will need to expand one staff member's hours an additional 4 hours per week in order to supervise the volunteers that work in the pantry. We will utilize current volunteers and continue to recruit more volunteers through various media.

The capacity building will also include an increase in food acquisition purchased through our local food bank, Food for Lane County. Food Share is able to receive food from Food for Lane County at a greatly reduced rate. Their charge to us equals approximately 80 pounds of food for each dollar spent. We distribute approximately 47,000 pounds of food each month, which equates to approximately 505 pounds per open pantry hour. If we were to be open an additional 4 hours per week and operated at the same capacity that we currently do, that would equate to an additional approximate 2,020 pounds of food per

week needed. At a food acquisition cost of 80 pounds per dollar, this equals approximately \$25.25 more per week, or an additional cost of 1,313 per year for food acquisition.

The total cost of this project for one year is approximately \$6,000. This amount will pay for additional staff time, electricity, a short term advertising budget (to advertise our expanded hours) and the food we expect we will need in order to support these additional pantry hours and the additional clientele that is expected as a result.

Effectiveness of this project will be measured in additional numbers of people that visit our pantry during these new pantry hours. Food Share currently has a tracking system in place that we will continue to use during these expanded hours. We count every person that comes into our pantry, as well as track how many people in the family of the visiting client, for total clientele served. In this way, we are able to have an accurate count of people served. Based on our current clientele count of an average of 1,800 individuals per month, we estimate we will see an additional 335 clients per month, or an 18.6% increase in our client base.

The expanded hours will change Florence Food Share in that it will enable us to better fulfill our mission of alleviating hunger in Western Lane County. An additional outcome may be that we see an increase in donations from the community, as they are made aware of our expanded efforts to serve those in need in our community. We believe this capacity building project will help Florence Food Share reach a new and very much needed level of operating effectiveness.