

“May the dignity of your fellow be as dear to you as your own.”

- Pirke Avot 2:15

## WHAT DOES “DIGNITY” LOOK LIKE AT THE JFS POLACK FOOD BANK?

### Before COVID-19:

The food bank offered a “consumer-choice” model, meaning that:

- People who needed food came and chose the groceries they wanted—and that were culturally appropriate for them.
- A team of four JFS staff members and more than 75 volunteers helped with food distribution and restocking each month.
- JFS held a large community Food Drive & Sort during the High Holidays.
- More than 2,000 food drive bags of food were sorted, boxed, and labeled by over 350 volunteers.
- All types of packaged food and toiletries were welcome at the Food Drive & Sort.

### During COVID-19:

When COVID-19 became a reality, the food bank continued to operate but with a new delivery system. Social distancing and mask wearing became necessary to protect everyone’s health and safety. It soon became clear that food insecurity would increase tremendously in our community because of factors caused by COVID-19. JFS needed food donations more than ever, and the community stepped up. Smaller food drives throughout the year helped support the food bank, with donations of over 11,200 pounds of food collected to date.

- At the food bank, groceries are distributed in boxes pre-packaged by a limited number of staff and a handful of volunteers (all while wearing masks and socially distancing).
- All pre-packaged food boxes contain a specific list of basic food items, useful for the largest number of people.
- Some bags are delivered directly to people who need them. Others are distributed at the food bank.

This is a fragile time in which we all continue to navigate changing COVID restrictions. Once again, people won’t be able to gather in the same numbers during the holidays—and our annual Food Drive must once again be reimagined to ensure safety for all.

At the same time, we remain aware that many who use the Polack Food Bank remain medically vulnerable and the need for food remains high.

Therefore, for the 2021 JFS High Holiday Food Drive, we turn to our traditional partners and others to collect as much food as possible during the High Holiday period, as in previous years. If you are planning to participate (thank you!) please take a moment to read over the following guidelines:

- Please donate only the specific item(s) requested.
- As always, we cannot accept open packages, perishables, or expired food.
- The opportunity for groups or individuals willing to collect food throughout the year will continue. Ongoing collection allows for a steady flow of needed food into the food bank. Please contact [volunteer@jfsseattle.org](mailto:volunteer@jfsseattle.org) for more information.

MORE ON BACK



# DIGNITY REMAINS THE OVERARCHING VALUE OF THE JFS POLACK FOOD BANK.

## For reflection, discussion, and response:

- How does collecting food during the High Holidays impact your experience and understanding of the holidays, especially this year, as we begin to examine what it means to emerge from the pandemic?
- How has COVID-19 impacted the connections between dignity, food, and health?

## Consider the changes made during COVID-19 to JFS food collection and to food distribution. How do these changes impact the dignity of:

- People who need food?
- JFS staff?
- Community volunteers?

## To respond to these questions or to share other thoughts about your food collection experience, please fill this space with:

- A drawing. A poem. A sentence. A story. Or any response that expresses your thoughts.

## SHARE YOUR THOUGHTS AND EXPERIENCES!

Email a picture of your response or of other reflections on your experiences to [education@jfsseattle.org](mailto:education@jfsseattle.org) to be shared with JFS staff and the community.



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