Supporting Student Success Outside the Classroom: 
*Serving Homeless and Food-Insecure Students*

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Bill Emerson Good Samaritan Act of 1996

The Act was created to encourage food donations to nonprofit organizations by minimizing liability.

1. Protects good faith food donors from civil or criminal liability
2. Federal protection across state lines
3. Protects donations given to 501©3 non-profits
4. Includes section for gross negligence or intentional misconduct

Missouri Politician (R) 1938-1996

Why the Emerson Act is important?

Each year, 14 billion pounds of food is sent to landfills.

Meanwhile, nearly 30 million Americans are at risk of hunger.

Before passage of the national law, potential donors most often cite fear of liability as the reason they refuse to donate to feeding programs.
Who does the law protect?

1. Protects good faith food donors from civil and criminal liability
2. Gives uniform federal protection to donors who may cross state lines
3. While exceptions are made for gross negligence, the law protects:
   a) individuals,
   b) corporations,
   c) partnerships,
   d) organizations,
   e) associations,
   f) governmental entities,
   g) wholesalers,
   h) retailers,
   i) restaurateurs,
   j) caterers,
   k) farmers,
   l) nonprofit agencies, and more ...

What type of food does the law protect?

The Emerson Act provides protection for food and grocery products that meet all quality and labeling standards imposed by federal, state and local laws and regulations even though the food may not be "readily marketable" due to:

1. appearance,
2. age,
3. freshness,
4. grade,
5. size,
6. or other conditions.
Chancellor’s Office: Vision for Success

It lays out a vision for success, framed as a series of seven commitments (pg. 19)—including concrete steps that the Chancellor must take.

The “Vision for Success” that was embraced by the system’s board of governors in July 2017 calls on campuses to assist students with:

1. food,
2. tutoring,
3. childcare,
4. transportation
5. or other support,
6. and to work with county and social service agencies to help students access the services they need.

Chancellor’s Office: Seven Core Commitments

The California Community College system made these seven core commitments in order to realize its full potential in meeting the future workforce needs of California:

1 - Focus relentlessly on students’ end goals.
2 - Always design and decide with the student in mind.
3 - Pair high expectations with high support. (pg. 29-32)
4 - Foster the use of data, inquiry, and evidence.
5 - Take ownership of goals and performance.
6 - Enable action and thoughtful innovation.
7 - Lead the work of partnering across systems
Timeline at Citrus College

1. **August 2016**: Received Foundation Innovation Grant ($1,500)
2. **September 2016**: Conducted Homeless Survey
3. **October 2016**: Purchased 500 toiletry kits for distribution (available in the Health Center, Student Life Office, and in Counseling)
4. **November 2016**: First “Resources for Homeless Students” committee mtg.
5. **December 2016**: Began marketing efforts and formal system to replenish pantries
7. **May 2017**: Received Foundation Innovation Grant ($2,500)
9. **January 2017**: Completed the “Student Guide to FREE & Low-cost Resources”
10. **February 2018**: Received approval to proceed with 4th campus food pantry in remodeled Campus Center
11. **March 2018**: Invited CalFresh to host an information/sign-up booth at Student Resource Fair
12. **Spring 2018**: Hosting weekly mobile food pantries on campus with CalFresh booth at each event.

What we found in our survey

1. 584 (5% percent) students responded
2. 3% were currently homeless
3. 13% had been homeless in last 2 years
4. Top needs were
   a) Food
   b) Water
   c) Toiletries
5. Top recommendations were
   a) More food pantries
   b) Provide a list of resources near campus (i.e. shelter, medical, food)
   c) Provide personal counseling services
Start promoting services you already have

Available Services
1. 3 campus food pantries
2. Showers
3. Free bus passes
4. 211 directory
5. Resource guide

Started Promoting via …
1. Student Portal
2. Student email accounts
3. Employee email accounts
4. College social media outlets
5. Department presentations

You already do great work, so promote it!

Citrus College Food Pantries

Mobile Food Pantry
• Serves approximately 250 people during each visit
• Provides approximately 30 pounds of food per student
• Provides frozen meat, which we cannot provide in our campus food pantries

Campus Food Pantry
• The three campus food pantries serve approximately 70 students per week.
What we learned ...

1. Promoting services to students and employees ensured that they were used
2. Giving employees information empowered them to help and created less work for one office (Dean of Students/Student Affairs Office)
3. Once the word was out people came to help staff the mobile food pantry and contributed with food donations for the campus food pantries
4. Toiletry kits are not in high demand at our campus
5. We need to create an emergency book program using foundation money through our bookstore (students will only be eligible once)

What we learned - continued ...

• Our students were not embarrassed once we removed the stigma and sent out regular emails about the resources on campus.
• Our current campus food pantry locations, while welcoming, make students feel uncomfortable (VSC, Foster Kinship, Health Center). We need a more neutral location.
• Our Foundation Office’s 501C3 status did not have the required language for the mobile food pantry to work with us, so we worked around this with a local charity to have them host the mobile food pantry on our campus.
501(c)(3) Status ...

The L.A. Regional Food Bank asked that the Foundation’s Articles of Incorporation be amended in order for them to continue providing mobile pantry services.

The articles need to state who will benefit from the services (i.e. needy) provided by the nonprofit corporation, the services can include “education” however it should also include distribution of food and/or other items.

Below is an example of recommended language to include in the Foundation’s Articles of Incorporation regarding the purpose of the corporation.

One of the primary purposes (or in addition to) of the corporation is ...

• To provide relief to the poor, distressed and underprivileged in our community; to advance education, and/or provide food to promote social welfare by carrying on activities to provide support for low to moderate income households.

Goals and next steps ...

1. Establish an emergency fund
2. Establish an emergency book purchase program
3. Add additional food pantry in Campus Center (neutral location)
4. Institute Homeless/Hunger Awareness Week ([southwestern college](http://news.swccd.edu/2017/11/southwestern-college-hosts-hunger-homelessness-awareness-week/]). Consisted of daily free breakfast for students; a clothing and toiletry drive; a financial literacy workshop; and a community forum with their local Assemblymember.
5. Work toward adding a drop-in center for homeless students (WiFi, coffee, microwave, water bottles, toiletry bags, etc.)
Questions?