

# Best Practices of Mobile Pantries and Distributions



## About Me:



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- Mobile Distribution Manager for St. Mary's Food Bank (~4 years)
- Previously the Agency Specialist for Northern Arizona for SMFB (~4 years)
- Led a team of volunteers in April 2020 that served just under 2,000 Households in Tuba City, AZ in just under 3 hours
- Experience in Volunteer Management, Development, Sustainable Program Planning & Tools

# What is a Mobile Pantry?

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A **Mobile Pantry** or a **Mobile Distribution** is a Community Food Distribution, often hosted by an organization like a Church, Community Center, School.

Mobile Pantries are scheduled to visit that location at a regular cadence, usually either monthly, twice per-month, or weekly.

Usually, Mobile Pantries are single day, same-day distributions. With very little, to no leftovers after the distribution ends.

“You cannot control what happens to you, but you can control your attitude toward what happens to you, and in that, you will be mastering change rather than allowing it to master you.”

-Brian Tracy

# 5 Plans of Mobile Pantries

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1. Plan on where you are hosting your Mobile Pantry
2. Plan on who is helping you host your Mobile Pantry
3. Plan on how you're telling people about your Mobile Pantry
4. Plan on what you need for your Mobile Pantry
5. Plan on how you're going to change your Mobile Pantry next time

# Plan on where you are hosting your Mobile Pantry

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## 5 Key questions:

- Do you have a map of your Mobile Pantry set up?
  - What's your entrance point? What's your exit point?
  - Is it the same entrance point for the Semi-Truck?
- What's your maximum capacity? (Ex: When do you hit the street?)
  - What are your backup plans if you have a rush of cars?
- Where do your volunteers enter & where do you want your volunteers to park?
- If a vehicle breaks down in line, what do you do?
- What happens if there is “weather” the day of your distribution?



Valle, AZ (1/2-mile South of HWY 180 on HWY 64)- South of Valle Airport

35.643354 -112.140922











Lot 1- 1527' = 77 cars single file, 144 double lane- 4 cones needed

Lot 2- a. Straight across, gate to gate, 438' = 22 cars- 4 cones needed

b. Staging lanes, 350' x 200' = 10 lanes @ 17 cars each = 170 cars

Lot 3- a. 690' x 175' = 8 lanes @ 34 cars each = 272 cars

b. use half lot, 370' x 175' = 8 Lanes @ 18 cars each = 144

Lot 4- Cars will be divided into 4 lanes. This is where intake will happen, and cars are lined up to enter the loading zones

If you do not want to move the parking blocks and grate the middle of lot 3 we can reduce the lanes and only use the bottom half of the lot.

# Plan on who is helping you host your Mobile Pantry

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## Key questions:

- How many volunteers do you want? How many volunteers do you need? How many volunteers can you use if you're forced to?
- What are the key areas that you need volunteers? What are some areas that you want volunteers?
- It's 48hrs before your distribution, do you know who is supposed to be there to help you at your distribution?
- Is there anyone who can help you before and/ after your distribution?

# Plan on how you're telling people about your Mobile Pantry

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- Social Media
- Calendars
- Flyers for the next month
- Radio Ads
- Newspaper Ads
- Textblasts
- Phone Trees & Phone Banks
- Street Signs
- Welcome Flags/Banners

# Plan on what you're going to need to complete the distribution?

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Key questions:

- What's the weather looking like?
  - Too hot– what happens?
  - Too cold– what happens?
  - Too wet– what happens?
- How many households are you expecting?
  - What about in the summer?
  - What about in the winter?
  - What about the week of Thanksgiving?
- How many units of each item do you give per household?
  - What happens if I don't have enough? Too much?
- How many bags and boxes do you need?
- How are you getting the food from the pallets to the vehicle?



# Plan on how you're going to change your Mobile Pantry next time

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Key questions:

- What went well/what didn't go well?
- How would you change it for next time?
- Were all my key volunteers fully utilized throughout the distribution?
- What do you wish you would have known?
- Did all of your volunteers have a meaningful experience?
- If you had 30 more minutes leading up to your distribution, what would you have done differently?

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-Brian Tracy

# Thank You!

