

Letter: Food Bank respects privacy of patrons

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FOOD BANK RESPECTS PRIVACY OF PATRONS

The Food Bank of Contra Costa and Solano and our partner agencies are a community-based network that provides food to people in need, no matter what their legal status. Working with our partner agencies, government organizations and the philanthropic community, we make food available to people through the community agencies we serve and the direct food distributions we operate.

Unfortunately, the current political climate has caused confusion and fear for the people we serve, especially in immigrant communities. I ask your help in making the community aware that as a private non-profit organization, the Food Bank is not obligated to report the legal status of anyone we serve and will not share personal information with immigration authorities. We track the number of people we serve so we can inform the community about hunger, but we will never share the names of the people who receive food from our organization.

The Food Bank also conducts outreach to enroll more people in the Cal Fresh program, our nation's most effective response to hunger. When Food Bank CalFresh outreach staff provide application assistance, we send that information to the appropriate county department. At this point, no changes have been made to the CalFresh program's structure or eligibility criteria. If people have questions about their eligibility, we encourage them to contact the Food Bank directly.

We continue to serve over 190,000 people each month who need food assistance. We are concerned that rumors and misperceptions are preventing people from getting the help they need. It is important people understand we respect their privacy as we help them get the food assistance their family needs. The Food Bank is part of a community that cares for each other. Please help us fight hunger in service of our neighbors in need.

Larry Sly, executive director of the Food Bank of Contra Costa and Solano