



welcome!



Changes on the horizon

Beginning November 1, VEAP will be updating our food distribution model to better meet growing community needs and ensure equitable access for all participants.



A close-up photograph of several triangular slices of watermelon. The slices are arranged on a light-colored surface, showing the vibrant red flesh, dark seeds, and the green rind. The lighting is bright, highlighting the texture of the fruit.

What's changing?

- Participants will now receive **one appointment per month**. One appointment per month for everyone ensures a fair and consistent experience.
- *NEW Friday Pilot!* Supplemental food option will be available every Friday from 9:00 AM to 11:00 AM offering a pre-packed box of fresh and shelf-stable items.

With food insecurity on the rise and food resources becoming increasingly limited and difficult to source, offering one appointment per household ensures **equal opportunity** to receive food.

The new Friday distribution adds a **low-barrier option** for those needing additional support. This model will also allow VEAP to **serve individuals more efficiently**.



Why the change?

- Second and third pantry shifts on Fridays will be closed
- New first shift volunteer pantry roles have been changed
- Home deliveries will still take place from 9:00 to 11:30 AM
- The Dar Al Farooq Mobile Pantry will continue
- VEAP will close to the public at noon on Fridays



What this means

- We are planning a soft roll-out due to uncertainty of demand
- Participants will be informed as they make appointments
- Broader public messaging in 2026
- Staff will be on hand Fridays to support volunteers
- New volunteer role descriptions in Get Connected



What to expect



What's in a Friday box?

- Boxes are designed to supplement monthly pantry visit and provide fresh, healthy options and will include:
 - Perishable items (like fresh produce, or dairy when available)
 - Shelf-stable pantry staples (such as rice, pasta, or canned goods)
 - Surplus or seasonal extras (depending on what donations we have that week)

What do I tell participants?

- Stay kind and calm: changes are tough, but compassion matters.
- Acknowledge first (“I understand this feels hard...”)
- Keep language consistent: fairness, flexibility, more options.
- Redirect to other choices: Express Service, Mobile Pantry sites, Friday Boxes, and Home Delivery.



What to say

“Why is VEAP doing this? I used to come twice a month.”

Because so many people need food support, we had to make sure everyone gets an equal chance. Now everyone has one monthly pantry appointment. But you can still receive Express Service Monday-Thursday at any time during business hours, visit a Mobile Pantry site, come on Fridays for a pre-packed box, or ask about Home Delivery if that works better for you.



What to say

“I won’t have enough food with just one appointment”

We understand it may feel like less. Each monthly appointment gives a full selection of groceries, plus you can:

- Receive express services Monday – Thursday without an appointment at Door 4
- Visit one or more of our Mobile Pantry sites
- Come on a Friday for a pre-packed box of shelf-stable items and produce
- Ask about Home Delivery if transportation or mobility is difficult.



What to say

“Other pantries aren’t doing this. It’s not fair.”

Each pantry sets its own system. At VEAP, because demand is so high, this change helps us serve all households fairly. We’ve created an extra way to access food with our Friday Boxes, and we still have our Express Service, Mobile Pantry sites, and Home Delivery. This change wasn’t easy, but it’s about fairness: making sure long-time visitors and new families all have the same access.



We're here to help

If you need help explaining this information to participants or are getting stuck with someone, please don't hesitate to find a staff member.

More FAQs and talking points at:

veap.org/new-friday-distribution-model/



Before we move on to role-specific information...

**What questions and
concerns do you have?**

Friday Volunteer Shifts

8:45am - 12:00pm*

- Phone Intake

*shortened shift

8:15am - 11:30am

- Friday Check-in
- Friday Pack and Prep
- Friday Loader
- Friday Parking Lot Guide

**Friday food delivery will be available in the morning,
and Mobile Pantry at Dar Al Farooq will still take place*





Appointment Scheduling

- Review how many appointments the household has had this month or has scheduled, to align with one appointment per month
- How to handle requests for additional food appointments (flags)
 - Households can still be referred to Social Services
 - Additional food flags will be time-limited, not open ended
 - Provide additional food resources
- ClientTrack review of Appointment Checker screen

Scenarios

1) *What if someone shows up in the Lobby for their appointment, and THEN we discover they had two appointments this month?*

- If someone has an appointment on the books we won't turn them away, even if it was our mistake
- Get staff support

2) *What if someone becomes upset or escalated while I'm talking to them?*

- Stay calm and polite even if they don't
- De-escalation strategies include listen to their concern, reflect back to them ("I know this is so frustrating", "I hear you that this is a really upsetting situation", etc)
- Look for a solution such as other resources
- Get staff support



Scenarios

3) How to help someone who uses food delivery and needs more food?

- Is transportation the barrier?
- Can they use a proxy?
- Other resources such as Meals on Wheels, Help At Your Door, Minnesota Aging Pathways (formerly Senior Linkage Line), Disability Hub MN (formerly Disability Linkage Line)



What questions do you have?

