

EMERGENCY FOOD AND SHELTER NATIONAL BOARD PROGRAM (EFSP)

LOCAL BOARD MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

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LOCAL BOARD MEMBERSHIP: Where, in your community, there are affiliates of the six national voluntary organizations represented on the National Board, those organizations **must** be invited to sit on the Local Board. These national voluntary organizations are American Red Cross; Catholic Charities, USA; National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A.; The Jewish Federations of North America; The Salvation Army; and, United Way Worldwide. The highest ranking county official must be invited to represent local government in lieu of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) member.

The enabling legislation and National Board guidelines also mandate Native American representation on the Local Board. The report for the authorization reads as follows "Requires local program boards within 30 days of enactment, to include within their Board a member of an Indian Tribe when it administers program funding in a locality or a portion of the locality, which is located on an Indian Reservation".

In addition, each funded jurisdiction is required to have a homeless or formerly homeless individual serve on their Local Board. This individual should be selected carefully and be someone who can contribute to the Local Board's discussions and decisions. If no homeless or formerly homeless individual can be found to serve, a former recipient of emergency services may be substituted. A homeless advocacy group may be invited to serve this roll *only if* none of those noted previously are available to serve.

In jurisdictions where affiliates of National Board agencies do not exist, other appropriate groups and individuals should be invited to sit on the Local Board. Care should be taken to have at least eight members including local government, a homeless representative, and community based organizations (non-profit and voluntary) that have experience/knowledge of community need and resources. If there is no Catholic Charities, a comparable group or a priest could serve. In the case of The Jewish Federations of North America (JFNA), if no local Jewish Federation exists in a given jurisdiction, the Board must first check with JFNA to identify local JFNA-affiliated Jewish organizations to serve. Please check their web site www.jewishfederations.org or you may call the JFNA Washington at (202) 785-5900. If none are available, then a comparable group or synagogue representative may be asked to serve. The National Council of Churches is a Protestant and Christian Orthodox group and could be represented by a local ecumenical or interfaith organization including community ministries.

Local Board membership is not honorary. If a member regularly cannot attend meetings, that member must be replaced by the member's designated agency. If a member must be absent from a meeting, the member's organization may designate an alternate.

EXPANSION OF THE LOCAL BOARD: Annually, the designated members of the Local Board are encouraged to expand your Board -- whether to substitute for designated agencies which do not exist or refuse to serve, or to provide more comprehensive representation of the affected jurisdiction. **Care should be given to involve groups/individuals who have an awareness of the hunger/homeless needs of the community.** For example, a church ministerial alliance or food bank might be appropriate to assist in the decision-making process. A community volunteer who is active with local hunger/homeless coalitions would be another good choice.

Another example of creative expansion would be enlisting technical representatives from local utilities who would be aware of what assistance was already available to prevent utility cut-offs. A utility representative may also be helpful in assisting Local Recipient Organizations (LROs) to obtain the proper documentation from the utility company.

When expanding, a Local Board should also consider including minorities and agencies serving the special emphasis groups mentioned specifically in the authorizing legislation: elderly, families with children, Native Americans, veterans, and the mentally and physically disabled. In addition, the jurisdiction should be geographically represented. Local Boards should recruit widely and consider setting up panels as appropriate (i.e., needs assessment, allocations, appeals).

In designing the EFSP, Congress created a unique public-private partnership which brought the voluntary sector and the government together to address critical human needs in the areas of hunger and homelessness. When expanding, Local Boards should carefully cultivate this public-private partnership.

WHO SERVES FOR AN AGENCY: The organization invited to participate designates its representative (through its legally designated governing body or officer). Representation is open to volunteers or professionals, and the Local Board may not insist that a particular person represent an organization.

LENGTH OF SERVICE: Since each award phase is new, the Local Board is a new entity in every phase. The convener of the Local Board must ask each agency to designate or redesignate a representative every program year.

If an individual is replaced by an agency, that person may not continue to serve as a representative of that agency.