



Framework for Wellness

Step 1. Recognize health and wellness as a part of your organization's mission, vision, values and strategic plan.

- 2012: Capital Area Food Bank moves into new distribution center. Compared to previous facility, new center has more than double the warehouse space, twelve times the refrigerated space, and two specialized learning spaces, a teaching kitchen and demonstration garden.
- 2013: Capital Area Food Bank develops a [new five-year strategic plan](#) with extensive input from staff and stakeholders. Plan formalizes and extends existing commitment to nutritious food and fresh produce. Second strategic objective is to “contribute to health and wellness as we provide more nourishing food across the Washington metro area.” Supporting objectives speak to how the organization intends to operationalize wellness.
- 2015: [Mission, vision, and value statements](#) revised and simplified to acknowledge the food bank's key role in creating access to healthy, nutritious food.

Step 2. Align your operations with wellness goals, monitor progress and adjust as necessary.

- 2011: Fresh Produce Manager hired to create new sourcing and distribution channels for fresh produce.
- 2013: Departments are reorganized to realize new strategic objectives. Healthy Eating Department disbanded and staff repositioned in larger Partners & Programs Division. Nutritionist and senior staff moved to Food Resources to lead ranking and procurement efforts. Partners & Programs, Operations, and Food Resource Departments produce parallel work plans to meet wellness goals.
- 2014: [Wellness tracker](#) created and the nutritional content of the CAFB's current inventory is assessed as a baseline. Purchased and bulk donated food ranked as wellness or non-wellness by amount of either salt, sugar or fiber.
- 2014: List of foods routinely purchased by CAFB updated to meet new wellness standards and to ensure consistent access to nutritious, low-cost staple foods in high demand by partners.
- 2015: Wellness ranking made visible to CAFB food assistance partners via online menu and partners provided with biannual procurement reports. Partners sourcing 75% or more wellness food and committed to distributing CAFB's low-barrier nutrition resources qualify for [Partners for Wellness \(P4W\) recognition program](#). P4W receive free cold storage and a monetary grant redeemable for wellness food at the CAFB.

Step 3. Solicit buy-in and support for wellness from key stakeholders and make them a part of the process.

- 2013: Retail partners and donors consulted on development of strategic plan.
- 2013+: Existing key stakeholders, including retailers, and new strategic partners experience CAFB's evolution through guided facility tours and other targeted engagement activities.
- 2014: CAFB meets with Shoppers Food Warehouse to discuss large number of bakery donations, especially sheet cake. Shoppers agrees to stop donating sugar-laden bakery items, while still continuing to donate nutritious offerings and agrees to fund the retrofit of a school bus for the CAFB to deliver meals to kids over the summer.
- 2014: CAFB meets with PepsiCo to discuss wellness strategic objective. PepsiCo agrees to no longer donate full-calorie sodas.
- 2016: Giant Foods named inaugural Retailer for Wellness, begins to pilot co-branded CAFB recipe cards in stores located in high-need areas and make planned wellness donations.
- 2016: Grocery store donors are notified about changes to acceptance policy. As of September, CAFB no longer accepting holiday candy, non-bread bakery items, and full-calorie soda.
- 2017: Giant Foods co-branded CAFB recipe cards expanded to all stores in metro area.

Step 4. Reinforce wellness practices through resources, training, and internal and external communications.

- 2013: Recipe card program established to provide partners and clients with simple, nutritious, low-cost recipe to turn the foods commonly found in food bank inventory into healthy meals.
- 2014: Produce guides created as a complement to recipe cards to teach about basic fresh produce preparation and storage.
- 2014: Health Ambassadors train-the-trainer curriculum launched to equip CAFB food assistance partners with the knowledge and tools needed to create health promoting food distributions.
- 2014: Feeding America's Hunger in America study provides data to confirm the powerful connection between food and wellness. 70 percent of households served by the CAFB report purchasing inexpensive, unhealthy food as a coping strategy, 48 percent of households served have/have a family member with hypertension and 22 percent served have/have a family member with diabetes.
- 2015: Wellness talking points created to empower CAFB staff and partners to speak to critical link between food and wellness.
- 2016: Communication plan developed for roll out of new food donation policy which included talking points for staff, overview of policy for retail donors, and letter to partners.
- 2016: CAFB's revision to its food acceptance policy is made public. Policy change is widely reported through international, national, and local press, including [The Washington Post](#), [USA Today](#), [VOX](#), [Civil Eats](#), [The Hill](#), [Food & Wine](#), and [The Guardian](#).