**Overview of Food Banks Canada National Standards of Excellence:**

**What are the Food Banks Canada Standards of Excellence?**

Food Banks Canada Standards of Excellence is the framework that will set the foundation for the network to thrive. The standards cover six key areas regarded as fundamental to enable the food banking network’s proficiency to provide best service delivery to communities, these include:

1. Governance & Administration
2. People Management
3. Financial & Legal
4. Client Service & Care
5. Public Engagement & Fundraising
6. Food Operations & Food Safety

**Why were the Food Banks Canada Standards of Excellence created?**

The food banking network has long acknowledged a need for the development of a set of standards that would create performance benchmarks of a well-run organization, while promoting transparency and accountability to the public. The standards are not intended to be punitive but rather to focus on continuous improvement across the network.

**How were the Food Banks Canada Standards of Excellence created?**

Through a lengthy and in-depth process, involving a National Standards Committee, the Food Banks Canada Board, Provincial Associations and pilot participants, the standards were developed, reviewed, and tested.

**How were the Food Banks Canada Standards of Excellence tested?**

35 organizations signed up to be involved in piloting the standards, 10 Provincial Associations and 25 food banks. These 25 food banks included representatives from every province and included a mix of small, medium, and large organizations. All pilot participants were given the opportunity to provide feedback which led to a number of changes to the standards as well as identifying areas where greater support is needed.

**Who has to complete the Standards of Excellence?**

All food banks within Food Banks Canada network. The Standards of Excellence are voluntary for First Nation and territorial food banks.

**The Accreditation Process:**

* All affiliates will be required to participate as of January 2024, with the goal of having the majority of the network accredited by March 2025.
* Beginning in January 2024, food banks will be able to submit an application through the online Network Portal. Once an application is submitted, it will be reviewed, and a Food Banks Canada representative will follow up on any questions or areas where further work is required. Once a food bank receives accreditation, they will be accredited for five years and required to submit an annual self-review through the Network Portal.
* Accredited food banks will receive an Accreditation Completion Package that will include the Food Banks Canada Standards of Excellence logo, which the organization can then display proudly throughout the organization and on its website and social media channels. The package will also include information on how to promote accreditation to clients, stakeholders, and the media.”
* Accreditation Cycle (5 years)
	+ Accreditation granted for 5 years, but each food bank will be required to submit a report annually reconfirming it is in compliance with the standards. (no proof required)
	+ Each year 20-25% of food banks will be required to do a full review. If selected, they would be required to submit all proof points for review. This may include a physical site inspection. (full review would be once every 5 years)
	+ To onboard this accreditation cycle, a number of food banks will be selected for full review in year 1, then year 2, and so forth.

If you have any questions, please contact Peter.Thomas@salvationarmy.ca