



Diaper Bank  
of Central Arizona

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Changing Diapers, Changing Lives

# **Partner Agency Handbook 2019**

# **Background**

## **Purpose of a Diaper Bank: an Intermediary**

Diaper banks supply diapers, incontinence supplies, and information & referral services to local communities through collaborative partner agencies, such as crisis nurseries, housing programs, domestic violence shelters, senior centers, and faith-based organizations. This approach limits unnecessary duplication of services, reduces administrative expenses, and works collaboratively to solve a basic human need at the community level for infants, young children, the disabled, and the elderly. If a client needs diapers, they probably have many other needs as well. Local social service agencies that deal with a full continuum of care are best qualified to meet this need and to become Diaper Bank partner agencies.

## **Diaper Bank of Central AZ**

We opened our doors in September of 2013 as a program of Homeward Bound. Our mission to collect and distribute one million diapers annually to local non-profits helping families in need. We have over 30 Partner Agencies that we serve. We receive diapers through sponsorships, diaper drives and grants.

## **The Need for a Diaper Bank**

Access to a sufficient supply of diapers is essential for the health of infants, disabled and elderly, and the quality of life of our communities, but too many individuals don't have the resources to adequately provide for this basic need.

As long as poverty exists, children and adults will need diapers. The need is already great... and it's growing: According to the U.S. Census Bureau survey of 2010, Americans living at or below the poverty line totaled 46.2 million individuals or 15.1% of the population. In Maricopa County, 1 in 4 children live in poverty. According to the Feeding America In Short Supply Survey 48% of families' state delaying a diaper change and 32% stated reusing diapers in order to meet critical household expenses.

Resources for free or discounted diapers are few. Food Stamps cannot be used to purchase diapers, and until recently diaper manufacturers haven't donated diapers, even to crisis nurseries and shelters. The primary goal of a diaper bank is to bridge the gap in available resources for a community's neediest and most vulnerable populations. Diaper banks are in the unique position to efficiently distribute diapers and incontinence supplies to those who need them most.

## **Infant and Children Needs**

A shortage of diapers can lead to serious impacts on the well-being of those in need. Parents without sufficient resources often allow children to wear diapers for too long during the day, or try to clean and reuse disposable diapers, putting children at risk for staph and other infections. The likelihood of abuse increases when a baby is in a household facing the stresses of poverty, and increases even more when that baby is crying due to the discomfort of a soiled diaper and the health issues that can result.

An analysis completed in 2010 by the National Center for Children in Poverty concluded that at current costs, a family of four living in a low cost area would need to earn \$46,836 annually (based on two parents earning

\$11.00 per hour, equating to 221% of the current poverty rate) would spend all but \$375 of their monthly income on housing, utilities, child care, transportation, food, and taxes. That \$375 each month pays for diapers, clothing, personal items, school supplies, haircuts, and other necessities for four people. Diapers for one child cost nearly \$100 per month, leaving working families struggling to provide the most basic necessities.

At the same time, daycare facilities require that parents provide sufficient disposable diapers to meet the needs of their children while in the facility. In order to do so, parents may have to make difficult choices between purchasing diapers, paying bills, or buying groceries.

## **Disabled Needs**

Many disabled people are obliged to wear diapers for a variety of reasons; incontinence and inability to use a bathroom unaided are among the most common. This is a life-long, everyday reality for many disabled persons, and both the prevalence and the frequency of bladder problems associated with many disabilities increase with age.

According to the Cornell University Online Resource for U.S. Disability Statistics in 2010, an estimated 27% percent of the population between 18 and 64 with a disability had incomes at or below the poverty line. These numbers only include people with disabilities who are living independently, either alone or with family - not those who are institutionalized and have greater access to care.

Many diaper banks provide monthly donations of incontinence supplies to their partner agencies because the local community's disabled would suffer decreased quality of life, ranging from constant discomfort due to accidents to being unable to leave their homes. The Diaper Bank of Central Arizona is committed to providing information to disabled adults about the potential to overcome or reduce incontinence, especially for clients for whom mobility is the primary problem.

The supplies distributed by the Diaper Bank through our partner organizations is part of a larger continuum of services that not only supports Central Arizona's older adults remaining in their own homes, but also contributes to their dignity and quality of life. If not for the Diaper Bank's monthly incontinence supply donations to our partner agencies, many of our community's elderly would be unable to leave their homes due to fear of embarrassment, and would live in compromised comfort even while at home.

# **Providing Diapers to our Partner Agencies**

## **Regular Distribution**

The Diaper Bank of Central Arizona supplies diapers through community partner agencies rather than providing them to individuals, because anyone needing help with incontinence supplies also needs other support, as well. Our Partner Agencies are very diverse in the programs that they provide and have case management to help clients become self-sufficient.

## **Emergency Distribution**

The diaper need in Central Arizona far exceeds the resources that are currently available. Therefore, the Diaper Bank of Central Arizona allows up to 10% of every partner agency's diaper distribution for emergency distribution. Clients receiving diapers on an emergency basis do not need to receive temporary or ongoing casework. However emergency distribution clients should still be included on annual reporting documentation.

## **Self-Sufficiency Model vs. Self-Sustaining Model**

The Diaper Bank of Central Arizona understands that every client situation is unique, and as a result, we strive to provide each individual and partner agency the support needed to achieve a maximum level of self-sufficiency.

Certain clients are never expected to become fully self-sufficient. Individuals who may fall into this category are seniors, and the physically and mentally disabled. As such, these persons typically thrive with ongoing case management geared toward the client's highest possible level of independence.

Common forms of assistance for those utilizing a self-sustaining model include, but are not limited to:

- Healthcare advocacy / management.
- Economic balancing of fixed income against living & healthcare expenses that could include incontinence supplies.

## **Purchasing Diapers for your Partner Agency**

Many programs choose to provide diapers to their clients regardless of the supplies provided by the Diaper Bank of Central Arizona. Often this requires purchasing of supplies. Partner agencies that are interested in purchasing diapers using the Diaper Bank of Central Arizona's bulk purchasing agreement are encouraged to contact the Diaper Bank directly for more information.

# The Partner Agency Application and Renewal

## Criteria for Selection of New Organizations

The Diaper Bank does not provide free diapers to every organization in need. Selection criteria have been chosen to establish a truly collaborative and long term relationship. The following are minimum criteria:

- 501(C)(3) status as defined by the IRS;
- In good standing with national affiliates or parent organization (if applicable);
- 80% of clients anticipated to receive diapers fall below the federal poverty line;
- Case management system provides a minimum of 30 days to no less than 90% of clients;
- Has three years of 990 filings posted publicly.

Additional selection criteria to be considered by the selection committee:

- Demographically reflective of the community;
- High quality of casework;
- Excellent community reputation;
- Agency limits duplication of services; and
- Agency's anticipated request does not exceed the Diaper Bank's ability to meet a community wide need.

## Supplies

There are hundreds of different diaper/incontinence products, with every manufacturer setting end-user size specifications for their own products. The Diaper Bank's annual inventory is a product of donations and therefore specific materials may not always be available. Diaper drives additionally bring in a variety of products that are then distributed to you. Every effort will be made to meet requests, however the need is great and the supply is limited. Child diapers from Size 1 to Size 5 are prioritized in inventory. We do get premature, pull ups, adult diapers, tampons, bed pads, wipes, etc., however it is currently sporadic and varied. Keep in mind that the diaper need in the valley is high and the Diaper Bank is focused on meeting emergency needs of no more than five days and strive to meet at least 25% of your total request.

## Diaper User Reporting and Demographics

The Diaper Bank of Central Arizona strives to represent the community that we serve. Therefore, we require our partner agencies to provide us with your diaper user statistics on a regular basis. We use this information to communicate with funders, vendors, and in all communication materials with the public. In order for us to better serve you and the communities we all help, you must properly represent your needs to the Diaper Bank as changes occur. Your responsibility of keeping us updated is ongoing.

Detailed information about Federal Poverty thresholds may be located online through the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. These thresholds vary annually. Since the Diaper Bank seeks to serve only the most vulnerable members of our community, all Partner Agencies are asked to certify that no less than 80% of its diaper users fall below the Federal Poverty Line. Partner Agencies with concerns about this requirement should speak with Diaper Bank staff directly.

## Assistance with Reporting Data

Reporting data can be confusing, especially if you do not track information regularly for grants. Therefore, the Diaper Bank offers training sessions for \$25 should you need them after reading through the data reporting information and examples.

## **Agency Site Visit**

We request site visits so that the Diaper Bank may better understand the needs and programs of partner agencies. In addition, they allow the Diaper Bank to ensure agreement requirements are met. Site visits may be made by community leaders, Diaper Bank employees, board members, or donors. We will schedule site visits with you; you will be notified as to who will be conducting the visit.

## **Hosting Diaper Drives for the Diaper Bank**

When hosting a diaper drive for the Diaper Bank, third-party fundraising rules apply. We appreciate your efforts in assisting in meeting this need. The more diapers we can receive and distribute, the more assistance from grants we may be able to get in order to get more diapers. In addition we request that you contact us beforehand so that we may promote your diaper drive shamelessly and schedule when the diapers will be received by the Diaper Bank. Drives on behalf of the Diaper Bank differ from drives for Partner Agency needs in the way that *all* diaper supplies collected are to be counted and delivered to the Diaper Bank for redistribution to all agencies instead of kept by partner agency.

## **Hosting Diaper Drives for Partner Agency Needs**

The Diaper Bank is aware that 100% of the needs of agencies are not being met and therefore understands the need for hosting internal diaper drives. However, in support of the collaborative agreement the Diaper Bank requests the following considerations be made:

- Please turn in unneeded product to the Diaper Bank for distribution to other agencies.
- Promote the Diaper Bank collaborative relationship in solicitation materials.
- Inform the Diaper Bank the drive is underway.

## **Separation Policies**

If an agency no longer wishes to be a partner with the Diaper Bank they must contact the program manager and provide accurate statistics to date based on diaper users served. Reminder that even if you separate from the diaper bank, any donations/fees are not refundable. The Diaper Bank reserves the right to remove an agency from its recipient list if the agency does not adhere to the terms of this agreement, any of this application found to be mis-stated, due to lack of resources, or for any other reason. Written notice will be provided to you in the event we will no longer provide diapers to your agency. In the case agencies fail to meet agreement items the recipient agency may be required to pay a penalty equal to the amount donated in kind from the Diaper Bank of Central Arizona.

## Diaper Distribution

The Diaper Bank receives requests for about 4 million diapers annually but is only able to meet about a quarter of those needs due to resources. Distribution allotments are made with considerations including number of diapers requested, number of agencies requesting diapers, and the inventory of diapers on hand.

### Pick Up Procedures

1. We will send an email a couple weeks prior to the quarterly distribution event to rsvp and request for volunteers to help participate in the pulling and staging of diapers. We are 100% volunteer run and appreciate your help
2. All orders may be picked up at 405 N. 75<sup>th</sup> Ave. Suite 176 Bldg 3, Phoenix, AZ 85043.
3. Our inventory is constantly fluctuating and every effort is made to fill orders as requested. Volunteers routinely staff the warehouse and should not be asked to adjust orders. Any concerns regarding orders should be submitted in writing to the program manager.
4. Reminder: Please ensure an appropriately sized vehicle is available to pick-up the requested order and that you bring enough staff or volunteers to help you load the diapers. We will have some volunteers present, however it is best for you to be prepared.
5. To receive the diapers, your representative will be asked to **sign and print their name** to indicate that your agency has received its order.

### Missed Appointments and Rescheduling Pick Ups

It is very difficult for us to distribute diapers outside of our scheduled pickups due to being 100% volunteer staffed. With this in mind, if you miss your appointment, the products set aside to fulfill your order will be forfeited and returned to inventory. Please contact us via cell no later than your scheduled pick up time and the diaper bank may be able to set aside the order for a later pick up. If you anticipate a scheduling conflict, please plan ahead internally and ask a staff member or volunteer to cover your pick-up time and contact us. It is the agency's responsibility to rsvp and plan accordingly to make pick ups; the diaper bank is not required to provide agencies with alternative pick up dates.