

Client Assistance Requirements

This document provides essential guidelines for referring agencies to assist social service professionals, schools, and churches in providing households with referrals to the Mustard Seed Furniture Bank.

1.1 One-Time Assistance

Assistance is available only once per lifetime, except in fire cases.

Additional requests may be considered on a case-by-case basis for extenuating circumstances, requiring additional documentation.

1.2 Residency Requirement

Proof of address is required for one of the following counties: Adams, Allen, DeKalb, Huntington, Noble, Wells, and Whitley

Indiana residency is preferred.

1.3 Financial Need

Services are intended for individuals unable to afford necessary items.

1.4 Home Visit

A home visit by referring agency staff is mandatory before referral submission. A virtual home visit may be conducted in lieu of an in person visit. The Mustard Seed Furniture Bank does not want to duplicate items already found in the home or replace useful and useable items that already exist in the home.

1.5 Referral Validity

Referrals are valid for 60 days or two appointments. Failure to attend an appointment within this period requires a new referral.

1.6 Translation Services

The Mustard Seed Furniture Bank is not able to provide translation services. We ask the referring agency assist with making the appointment in the cases where English is not available to the client. The Client Responsibility Sheet will be provided in English, additional languages may be available on request.

1.7 Eligible Situations for service

- Domestic Violence
- Documented Mental/Physical Disabilities
- Recent Homelessness
- Underemployment
- Uninsured Flood or Fire Victims (via American Red Cross only)
- Completion of Substance Abuse Program
- Children without beds (ages 2-17, twin size only)
- Veterans
- Seniors (65+)
- Aging out of Foster Care

- Leaving Incarceration (typically referred by Parole Officer)

1.8 Referral letter: Client Information Required

1. Date
2. Names, Gender, Age, and Birthdate of all household members
3. Complete Home Address (including county, city & zip code)
4. Client's Telephone Number
5. Brief Description of Client's Situation (related to eligible situations)
6. Duration of Residency in the area: Proof of address in one of the counties we serve is required.
7. Processing Fee Responsibility (\$30.00 fee, who pays?)
8. Specific List of Needed Items (no generalizations)
9. Signature of Referring Agency Personnel (include contact details- phone and email)

1.9 Referring Agency Notes & Responsibilities

Provide complete and accurate Referrals: Mustard Seed staff will contact you for corrections if needed.

Visit the Mustard Seed: All referring agency staff should make a visit to the Mustard Seed Furniture Bank to better understand the process and become knowledgeable about all that is available:

Your clients will get better outcomes and more complete service provision if you able to write a complete referral letter with items needed.

Proof of current address is required. You may provide a copy of the lease in electronic form: Please email or print a copy to provide to the Mustard Seed.

Client Responsibility Sheet: Provide to client at the home visit.

Items Not Available at the Mustard Seed: NO TVs, computers, major appliances, air conditioners, or medical furniture.

Small Appliances: Limited availability; items like crockpots, toasters, and coffee pots may be provided (limited to 1-2 per household). Microwaves are rare and available only on the day of service (no holds).

Behavioral Expectations from clients: Threats or physical violence may result in service denial.

Lobby and Warehouse Access: Households may bring family or their support team for their visit. However, only the primary client will be allowed in the warehouse to make furniture selections. No children are allowed in the warehouse.

Furniture Pickup: Staff will prepare furniture; clients must assist with loading.

Transportation: Clients must arrange for one trip for all items. Please ensure that clients understand that the Mustard Seed does not deliver and that they are responsible to secure help in the form of friends and family with trucks/trailers or by renting a moving truck.

Closure Notifications: Announcements will be made on local ABC, CBS, and NBC stations.

Client Furniture Selection Guidelines

Clients will be allowed to enter the warehouse and to select from a limited selection of items which are on their item list in the referral letter. Kitchen & Bath items, mattresses, bed frames and kitchen tables will be pre-selected by Mustard Seed Staff. **Additional Selections:** No additional items can be added during the visit.

Item Limits per Household

Items limits are based on availability and the ability of the Mustard Seed Furniture Bank to provide to every household with the same level of service.

Towels & Linens:

Towels: 1 per individual

Hand Towels: 1 per 3 individuals

Kitchen Towels: 1 per 3 individuals

Hot Pads: 2 per household

Small Appliances (ie. coffee maker, mixer):

Limit: 1-2 per household (limited supply)

Furniture:

Dresser: 1 per family (additional shelving or cupboards may be selected if needed)

Loveseat: 0-2 person household (can also be selected by larger households)

Sofa: 3-5 person household

Sectional: 5+ person household (must confirm space availability)

Living Room Chair: 1 per household (0-3 persons),
2 per household (4+ persons)

End Table/Side Table: Limit 2 per household

TV Stand/Sideboard: Limit 1 per household

Dining Table: Based on household size (number of seats should match household members)

Lamps: Limit 2 total (1 table and 1 floor lamp, or 2 table lamps; 1 floor lamp max)

Rugs: Limit 1 (large or small)

Beds:

Single Adults: Twin or full-size bed (king size if available and space is confirmed)

Partnered/Married Adults: Queen or king-size bed (space confirmation required)

Decor & Miscellaneous:

Limited Items Area: 1 item type per household

Home Décor Area: Up to 20 items

