



Community Agreement

MISSION

The Love Fridge is a Chicago-based initiative created to nourish our communities through **mutual aid** by offering solutions to food scarcity and food waste. Powered by kindness, generosity, and most importantly, love, we firmly believe that feeding oneself is not a privilege, but a right.

With food insecurity at an all-time high, keeping our communities fed is now more important than ever. Our volunteers come from all over Chicago, working within their own neighborhoods to collaborate with like-minded partners to place community refrigerators across the city.

These refrigerators, painted by local artists to reflect the communities in which they live, provide neighbors the opportunity to donate food as well as take what they need, ensuring accessible food 24/7.

LAND

We acknowledge our work occurs on the ancestral lands of indigenous tribes, such as the Council of the Three Fires--comprised of the Ojibwe, Odawa, and Potawatomi Nations--as well as the Miami, Ho-Chunk, Menominee, Sac, Fox, Kickapoo, and Illinois Nations. These tribes stewarded and cultivated the land for centuries. On May 28, 1830, President Andrew Jackson signed the Indian Removal Act proposing to relocate indigenous tribes west of the Mississippi River, thereby relocating, displacing and devastating all tribes on the land we understand to be Chicago today.

NOTE

This is a living document. It represents the baseline principles this group has agreed to, and should be regularly re-evaluated in regards to shifts or growth within the group. Much of the language in this agreement has been adapted from the [Chicago Mutual Aid Solidarity Network Community Agreement](#), [Mutual Aid Disaster Relief](#) and Food Not Bombs.

ETHOS

We are committed to providing a joyful, safe and welcoming environment regardless of age, gender, sexual orientation, ability, ethnicity, socioeconomic status and religion (or lack thereof).

We reject saviorism and practice solidarity, not charity.

We commit to mutual aid work as a long-lasting system of community-building. We understand that mutual aid is as ancient as human culture. It is not a fad, it is a way of life.

The Love Fridge is strictly antiracist & antifascist.

We understand that when the government neglects social programs, the non-profit (501c3) industrial complex picks up the slack. We recognize this as an unsustainable cycle that glorifies the charity of the well-to-do, who are in fact the very same people who are poised to benefit the most from a capitalist system and the least incentivized to create radical change. Our mutual aid practice is a direct resistance to this cycle.

We understand the solution to food insecurity is food sovereignty, and will always work toward facilitating that sovereignty in any community we come into contact with.

We work toward sustainability. We work against food waste.

We support the abolition of all forms of incarceration and detention that are used to harm and oppress targeted communities. We support the decriminalization of migration and liberation of all persons.

We practice resistance to hierarchical structures and organizing. We honor each person's strengths and desires by practicing heterarchy: understanding that in any given context, there may be clear leaders and followers, but that in another context the reverse may be true. In all cases this structure does not impart more or less value to each individual or their contributions to the work.

We believe in building individual and collective power without relying on governmental representatives, appealing to authorities, or cooperating with police.

We commit to actively advocating for worker's rights. We believe in the power of the people, and that people should always be prioritized over profit.

While we do accept the sharing of outside resources, we must be careful of whom we lend our name, labor, affiliation, or endorsement. There is no room for personal gain in mutual aid, and it should forever remain non-professional. We aim to form a web of lasting community bonds without need of politicians, corporations, or non-profit groups.

We reject the practice of tying food to political or religious propaganda. Access to food is a human right and should not be contingent upon any particular behavior on the part of the recipient.

Consent and transparency are the foundations of our work and must be incorporated at every level. From complete financial transparency to respecting the boundaries of our community members and allies, we owe it to each other to be open and honest in our communications and practices.

We practice restorative, transformative justice, conflict resolution, and commit to setting time aside to address such conflicts.

We recognize the difference between intent and impact. When someone does or says something that causes harm or supports the values of oppressive systems, it is often not their intention to do so. But when we use our good intentions to deny the harm, more harm is caused. We commit to taking responsibility for any negative impact we have.

We understand that our work is made more potent by the active engagement of the community. We always aim to amplify community members and ensure that they are well represented in the design and implementation of projects. We prioritize the lived experience of the community.

We respect the time, energy, abilities and desires of all volunteers, and understand that not everyone has the same capacity. We understand that time, energy and capacity are elements that can shift in each volunteer's life day to day, and week to week.

We embrace that while no one knows everything, together we know a lot. We practice being humble, and look for what we can learn from each person in the room. We share what we do know, and ask questions for what we don't -- so that others may learn too.

We embrace curiosity and play in ideation and problem solving. We understand that the group makes better decisions when problems are approached with a radical imagination.

PRACTICES

We practice clarity in commitment and expectations. Each person is expected to be honest about their needs, desires, capacity and plans. In the event that a project cannot be completed by the person who ideated it, it is their responsibility to pass it off with clear communication.

We create a system of trust and accountability by ensuring that at least two members of the group are equipped with the information and resources needed to complete a project.

During meetings we “respect the stack”. By “stacking” in group conversation, we ensure both that everyone’s voice can be heard, and that those who may feel more reserved in a group context have the space and time to feel comfortable developing their own voice within the group.

We respect each volunteer’s time and capacity. This manifests in the following ways:

- Appointing a time facilitator for each meeting. In the event that a meeting is not finished by its designated end time, the group must consent to a continuation of the meeting or opt to finish the discussion at another time.
- Using Slack or other virtual means to discuss any decisions that don’t need to be discussed at length during weekly meetings.

When new ideas or initiatives are discussed outside the regular shared channels, we will not come to any decisions alone. All ideas and initiatives should be brought back to the group for feedback and discussion.

We look ahead. While we embrace that many new initiatives come about organically, we also commit to organizing and setting goals for the future on a continual basis.

We look back. We make sure that our communities are impacted positively by the work we’ve done through direct conversation, and identify areas we need to improve upon.

We commit to skill-sharing with each other, and our communities at large.

We commit to working collaboratively with each other, and our communities at large.

We explicitly deny access of information to the following:

- Current or former law enforcement officials, ICE agents, and/or correctional or intelligence officers
- Elected officials
- Any member or former member of a white nationalist or Neo-Nazi organization.

- Landlords known to retaliate against tenants or maintain unsafe living conditions.

While we recognize that some former members of these groups may be rehabilitated over time, we also recognize that we do not have the resources to ensure safe rehabilitation, and therefore prioritize the safety of our collaborators and comrades.