Spring and summer weather means thunderstorm conditions, which can present unsafe conditions for neighbors, staff, and volunteers at outdoor distributions.

Because thunderstorms are unpredictable, the food bank will not cancel distributions preemptively if rain or storms are in the forecast, barring serious weather emergencies like widespread, long-forecast flooding.

The following steps represent the safety and protection to be taken by Distributions team staff members onsite at outdoor distributions to enforce safe conditions for distributing food:

1. Distributions will not be cancelled or delayed because of rain alone.
2. Food products should be covered with tarps or canopy tents with weights to try to maintain produce integrity. The primary focus will be on the safety of neighbors, staff, volunteers, and food products that may be lost if severe weather arises at a distribution.
3. If thunder or lightning is heard or seen by staff in the area, staff will suspend the event and ask everyone to retreat to a safe, indoor shelter or their vehicle for at least 30 minutes. A safe, indoor shelter is defined as a building such as a home, school, church, office building, or indoor recreation center.
4. Everyone will shelter in place for at least 30 minutes after hearing thunder and lightning. Staff will continue to watch the weather patterns and reset the 30-minute clock as needed when more thunder or lightning is heard.
5. One staff member will notify vehicles via a sign at the distribution that the distribution is being delayed because of severe weather, if possible.
6. After 30 minutes of clear weather without the visual of a lightning strike or the sound of thunder, the event is safe to resume.
7. The maximum amount of time a distribution will be delayed is one hour and thirty minutes. If severe weather persists for an hour after the first lightning/thunder strike, the distribution will be cancelled.