

ORDINANCE NO.: 5358

AN ORDINANCE to amend Secs. 10-393 and 10-394 of the Code of Ordinances of the City of La Crosse to include definitions and an exemption for community pantries on private property.

THE COMMON COUNCIL of the City of La Crosse does ordain as follows:

SECTION I: Section 10-393 is hereby amended to read as follows:

Sec. 10-393. - Definitions.

Community stand means a small cabinet or structure for distributing free food and other essential items.

Community fridge means a refrigerator for distributing free food items.

Community pantry means a more general term that refers to a publicly accessible community fridge or a community stand that allows community members to share food freely, reducing waste and addressing food insecurity.

SECTION II: Section 10-394 is hereby amended to read as follows:

Sec. 10-394. - Exemptions.

The provisions of this article shall not apply to the following:

(10) A community pantry located on private property with the following provisions:

- a. Notification to the La Crosse County Health Department and compliance with health codes.
- b. Provide a safe and sanitary structure to house the community pantry and protect it from the weather and animals.
- c. Compliance with any permit and zoning requirements for accessory structures.
- d. Provide an approved and permitted source of electrical connection; no extension cords unless on a temporary basis.
- e. Provide daily monitoring and cleaning of the property and surrounding area.
- f. Provide signage to identify the program and contact information.

SECTION III: Should any portion of this ordinance be declared unconstitutional or invalid by a court of competent jurisdiction, the remainder of this division shall not be affected.

SECTION IV: This ordinance shall take effect and be in force from and after its passage and publication.

_____/s/_____
Shaundel Washington-Spivey, Mayor

_____/s/_____
Nikki M. Elsen, City Clerk

Passed: 1/8/2026
Approved: 1/12/2026
Published: 1/17/2026