

Eligibility for a client to visit the furniture bank begins with a referral from one of The Mustard Seed (TMS)-approved Referring Agencies: TMS will not accept referrals from agencies or organizations that have not entered into a signed agreement with The Mustard Seed of Central Florida and been approved by TMS. This policy is in place to help TMS better serve those who need TMS's Furniture Services.

Steps to becoming a TMS-approved Referral Agency are listed below (more details can be found on the TMS website MustardSeedFLA.org) hover over "Need Services?" -> Then hover over Furniture Program, then click on Become a Referring Agency:

- 1) Have a supervisor fill out this application.
- 2) Be an eligible agency and provide the required documentation.
 - **Nonprofit agencies:** 501(c)(3) determination letter and DR-14 tax exemption letter
 - **For-profit companies:** valid business license
- 3) Send the above documentation (1 and 2) to Referrals@MustardSeedFLA.org.
- 4) Optional - Attend a TMS Referral Agency training session: these are held at TMS once a month. Please contact TMS at Referrals@MustardSeedFLA.org to let us know who is coming.

TMS reserves the right to deny any organization at its discretion.

If approved as a TMS Referring Agency, some key steps for referring clients are as follows (more details are provided in the training and the TMS guidelines that will be sent to you):

- A. Your agency, *with* the client, must fill in, sign, and date the Client Referral Form and the Client Checklist.
- B. Family unit definition approval is at the discretion of TMS. If you have questions, please call TMS.
- C. Client Referral Form tables: when filling in the tables for requested items, you must follow the TMS Furniture Guidelines for what is allowed for a family of their size.
- D. **A HOME VISIT IS REQUIRED BY YOUR AGENCY** as the Referring Agency, or a TMS case manager. This is to establish precisely what a client needs (and will fit) so that TMS may better serve them. The only exception to the home visit is if the client is moving from a shelter or are an uninsured victim of disaster.
 - a. Please see the Home Visit and Form Completion Guidelines for specific information on what needs should be documented during the home visit.
- E. Your agency should confirm that the client has (a):
 - a. Legitimate need for TMS's services, (i.e. personal tragedy, natural disaster, etc.)
 - b. Steady source of income, (i.e. child support, disability, etc.)
 - c. Keys to a permanent, stable, place of habitation
 - d. ID's for each adult (passport, driver's license, or state id) AND social security card (18 and older)
 - e. Birth certificates or passports for each child (under 18). The only exception is for current pregnancy.
- F. Instruct the client on The Mustard Seed's procedures, including calling to schedule an appointment, having identification as stated above, as well as the fees the client has to pay (documented on the Client Referral Form).
- G. **YOUR AGENCY MUST SEND THE COMPLETED AND SIGNED CLIENT REFERRAL FORM AND CLIENT CHECKLIST TO TMS at Referrals@MustardSeedFLA.org**
 - a. **If the Agency is paying any part of the fees**, then the documents (or letter of guarantee on agency letterhead) must also be received by TMS BEFORE the client is allowed to make their appointment. Please communicate this to your client and let them know when the forms have been sent to TMS.
- H. If the client is planning to pickup their own furniture, verify that the client has their own source of transportation (or can rent transportation) that is **NOT** an SUV, car or van: the vehicle (or hitched trailer) they bring **MUST** be capable of holding all items in one trip: multiple trips to pickup are not allowed.
- I. Inform the client that TMS does not hold items. TMS has these items available for clients when they are donated to the TMS facility: beds, dressers, dining sets, dish sets, towels, bedding and household items. Availability is based on what is available at the client's appointment time: if the items are not available during the time of their visit, they may not return at a later date.



- J. TMS's Furniture Services is intended to be a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. These services are for establishing and securing a better home atmosphere for those who have experienced a natural or personal tragedy. There are exceptions to this rule so please verify if your client has previously received furniture from TMS: if they have received Furniture before, contact the Director of Operations, Alexandra Jones, to determine if their circumstance qualifies for an exception (Referrals@MustardSeedFLA.org).

Client Hours at The Mustard Seed

Clients may be seen by appointment only, starting appointment times are Monday through Friday (9AM-3PM). For clients picking up their own furniture – appointment start times are from 9am-11:15am. For clients having their furniture delivered by TMS, appointment start times are from 1:00pm-3:00pm.

Organizational Donations

The Mustard Seed acts as a location for donations to be collected and distributed to clients in need. TMS relies upon the donations of furniture and household items to operate effectively. TMS requests your organization refer the following donations, if they are not immediately needed by your organization: clothing, household items, and mattresses.

Web Site

TMS would be pleased to list your agency as a Referring Agency on our website. If you would like to be listed, please check the box after the signature section below. This will include the contact information you provide on the next page (except email addresses – they are not listed on the website).

Collaboration

By signing this agreement, your organization is entering into a partnership with The Mustard Seed of Central Florida, Inc. (TMS) as TMS Referring Agency. This contract, if approved, will qualify your organization to help clients by performing the home visit and helping them with the paperwork, to TMS for assistance. It is your organization's responsibility to verify that the clients have met the standards for need established by TMS (listed in the Addendums below). Your organization agrees to help TMS by abiding to this contract. This will ensure that TMS is helping the clients in Central Florida who need help the most. Due to the dire circumstances of the client, we request that your organization not charge for your organization's home visit or processing of the paperwork.

Forms Available in English and Spanish

- **How to Become A TMS Furniture Client:** handout for potential clients, includes the definition of who may qualify.
- **Client Referral Form and Warehouse Rules:** your agency needs to review and fill in these forms with Furniture Clients that your agency is referring to TMS for Furniture Services.

Forms Available in English only

- **TMS Furniture Guidelines:** the standards for your agency to follow when filling in the Client Referral Form tables for requested furniture and items.
- **Home Visit and Form Completion Guidelines:** standards for home visit, and specifics on your agency's meeting with the client.

The Mustard Seed reserves the right to change its policies at any time, with notification, to your organization.

Organizational Contact

Please contact TMS if the signee below and/or the website contact below changes (Referrals@MustardSeedFLA.org). TMS will send you a new Application.



Please make sure the information below is **legible**. This contract must be signed by your organization’s Executive Director, President, etc., and is valid for one year.

Organization Name _____

Organization Address _____

Organization City, State, Zip _____

Organization Phone # _____ Fax # _____

Organization Email _____

Organization Website _____

Signed _____ Date _____

Name _____ Title _____

- Languages our organization supports
 - English? yes / no
 - Spanish? yes / no
 - Other (fill in): _____

- By checking this box, I acknowledge that our organization would like to be listed on The Mustard Seed’s website as a Referring Agency for the general public.

Contact Information for the Website (if different than above):

Name: _____ Phone #: _____

Physical address: _____

NOTE: Please pass on the referral information to ALL staff members in your organization that may be referring clients to us. Thank you!

TMS Approval or Denial: _____ Approved / Denied Date: _____
Director of Operations

TMS OFFICE USE: Received By _____ Entered By _____ Date _____

AGENCY INITIALS: _____ DATE: _____