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CONTACT: Pat Morgan, Municipal Court Manager

PHONE: 552-6175 for news media; 552-6180 for questions from the public

E-MAIL: pmorgan@ci.missoula.mt.us

FOOD FOR FINES DAY COMING DEC. 9

In the spirit of community benefit, Missoula Municipal Court will accept nonperishable food items for payment of fines on one day only, Thursday, Dec. 9. The food will go to the Missoula Food Bank.

Municipal Court staff tried the idea for the first time in 2007 and found it was a great benefit to the Food Bank.

Some rules apply:

- The maximum donation is five nonperishable food items; each will receive a \$5 credit with a maximum \$25 credit.
- For people who are not current with their monthly fine payments, a \$25 payment on past due fines will be required before the court staff is able to credit any amount for the food donation.
- The food credit will apply to December payments only. January payments will be due as scheduled.
- The credits may only be applied to fines. Food donations may not be applied to victim restitution payments or to court fees such as surcharges.

The Food for Fines program will run on Thursday *only* from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. at Municipal Court in City Hall at 435 Ryman St.

The program comes at an important time of year and has the potential to leverage hundreds if not thousands of meals, said Nick Roberts, Missoula Food Bank development director. It's also a chance to highlight the crucial partnership between nonprofits and local government.

"At its best, local government is a genuine embodiment of service to our citizens and community," he said. "Food for Fines is a creative and unique representation of this service – one that Missoula Food Bank is appreciative of not only for the important food collected but for our municipal

leaders' recognition of and response to individuals and families in our community who need our help."

Questions from the public can be answered at the main court number, 552-6180.

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Ginny Merriam, Public Information/Communications Officer
Office: 552-6007 Cell: 546-7692