



Greater Chicago Food Depository

2018 Advocacy Agenda

In alignment with our **2020 strategic plan “Nourishing Our Community”**, the Food Depository’s vision is that **everyone in our community will have access to nutritious food to live stable, healthy lives**. We believe the **path to a healthy, hunger-free community** compels us to engage and educate a diverse network of stakeholders. We must raise awareness of the everyday presence of hunger among our neighbors and put forward solutions that inspire our community to action and our supporters to continue to invest in us. **We believe we can end hunger through our collective action.**

Our advocacy to end hunger is rooted in the Food Depository’s support of three broad goals:

- **Goal 1:** Expand access to nutritious food
- **Goal 2:** Strengthen and encourage community-based responses to ending hunger
- **Goal 3:** Inspire and engage our community to lift its collective voice to end hunger

FEDERAL PRIORITIES

- **Ensure the Farm Bill Reduces Hunger:** Advocate for a Farm Bill Reauthorization that protects and strengthens SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program), increases funding for The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP), and strengthens food donation policies and incentives.
- **Protect and Strengthen Hunger Relief Programs:** Support sufficient annual funding levels and oppose any cuts to vital hunger relief programs including SNAP, WIC, the Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP) and the Commodities Supplemental Food Program (CSFP).
- **Preserve Access to Health Care:** Ensure low-income households continue to have access to Medicaid and the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP).

STATE PRIORITIES

- **Protect and Improve Access to SNAP:**
 - Urge the state to apply for a waiver of the SNAP time limit on able bodied adults without dependents (ABAWDS) for all areas of the state that are eligible.
 - Encourage implementation of the Elderly Simplified Application Project (ESAP) Waiver to streamline SNAP access for older adults and people with disabilities.
 - Secure permission to collect telephonic signature for community-based organizations in Illinois to facilitate benefits outreach staff taking SNAP/Medicaid applications via phone.
- **Improve College Student Food Security:** Increase access to SNAP and other food resources for low-income college students and explore opportunities to increase outreach to low-income students.
- **Breakfast After the Bell Implementation:** Support and promote the implementation of Breakfast After the Bell models with the goal to increase school breakfast participation across Illinois.
- **Establish an Illinois Hunger Relief Tax Checkoff:** Creation of a “tax checkoff” to raise additional funds to support statewide hunger relief efforts as part of the state income tax filing process.
- **Increase Access to Meals for Older Adults:** Add meals as a funded service under the older adults Medicaid Home and Community Based Services waiver and protect funding in the state budget for home delivered meals.
- **Healthy Local Food Incentives Fund:** Eliminate the sunset date and secure funding for implementation.

LOCAL PRIORITIES

- **Cook County Food Access Task Force:** Facilitate opportunities for Cook County government to further address hunger. Key focus areas include identifying funding streams for medically tailored meals and exploring opportunities to increase access to supports for people involved with the criminal justice system.
- **Improve WIC Participation:** Work with the City of Chicago and Cook County to identify local opportunities to improve access to and retention of WIC benefits.