

How Ohio's State Flexible American Rescue Plan Act Funds Can Help Mantain & Build Resilient Basic Needs Infrastructure

The Ohio Association of Foodbanks represents a statewide network of 12 regional foodbanks and 3,700 food pantries, soup kitchens, and hunger relief programs. On behalf of our statewide network, we are respectfully requesting a one-time \$183 million investment of state flexible ARPA recovery fund dollars to ensure our network is well-equipped for ongoing and future food and economic crises.

How exactly will this investment be used?



To build, renovate, and expand foodbank warehouses and facilities to store and distribute more wholesome food, accommodate commercial kitchens and repack areas, and make spaces more versatile for wraparound services.



To improve and expand the hunger relief network's transportation fleet, including through the purchase of semi-tractor trailers, box trucks, and vans, to increase capacity for perishable food logistics and delivery programs.



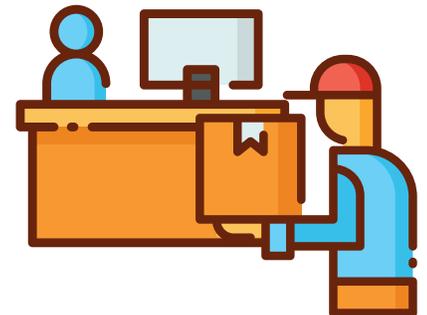
To establish neighborhood-based markets in high-need and underserved communities, offering extended hours and a robust variety of food and personal care items to meet ongoing food and basic needs budget and access shortfalls.



To purchase food and personal care items during a time of continued high need, declines in retail and manufacturer donations, and rising prices to maintain adequate access to a variety of foods and basic hygiene products.



To purchase critical logistics equipment for regional and local storage and distribution of foods, such as forklifts, warehouse racking, refrigerators, and freezers, especially for community-based food pantries and hunger relief programs.



To recover the cost of retaining essential staff through premium pay, to hire new staff to meet the increased workforce need, and to facilitate onsite workforce development and reentry programs in food and supply chain services and logistics.

Why is this investment needed?



Ohio's hunger relief network provides take-home groceries, meals, and personal care items to nearly 1 million Ohioans each month. Not only have foodbanks and their local partners become the de facto grocery stores in many communities, but they were also one of few social service providers to remain open and working harder than ever from day one of the pandemic. Everything from food to fuel to labor is more expensive due to supply chain pressure, public health mitigation strategies, and increased volume.

Ohio communities are counting on their foodbanks to be resilient to help them weather whatever current or future crises occur and regain and maintain basic food and economic security. To do so in the short- and long-term, Ohio's foodbanks and hunger relief organizations need investments in their physical and human infrastructure.

How will I know the results of this investment?



The Ohio Association of Foodbanks and our statewide network have long been committed to transparency and detailed accounting of the public and private investments that donors, funders, and taxpayers contribute to our missions and the essential services we provide.

Every ARPA dollar invested will be tracked. Every pound of food purchased, transported, and delivered will be reported. Ohioans and stakeholders will know how many people were served, what equipment is purchased, what staffing investments are made, and more. Most importantly, the return on investment will be evident every day in more food secure and resilient communities.

How can I learn more about this request and others?

Please contact Sarah Kuhns at skuhns@ohiofoodbanks.org or 614-515-7142 to setup a meeting with the Ohio Association of Foodbanks to learn more.

We strongly encourage you to visit your local foodbank to see firsthand the strain they are experiencing on their supply chains, their infrastructure, and their workforce.

We also join Advocates for Ohio's Future in calling for an open, thoughtful, and transparent process for considering future ARPA investments.

For more information about Ohio's 12 Feeding America foodbanks, their 3,700+ partner programs, and the breadth of critical and essential services they have provided without pause for decades, please visit ohiofoodbanks.org.