



ANTI-HUNGER PLAYBOOK

Ohio's 134th General Assembly

A LEGISLATOR'S GUIDE TO ADDRESSING HUNGER





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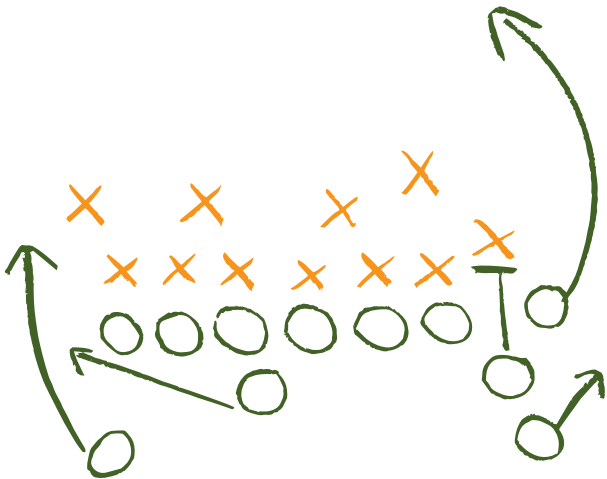
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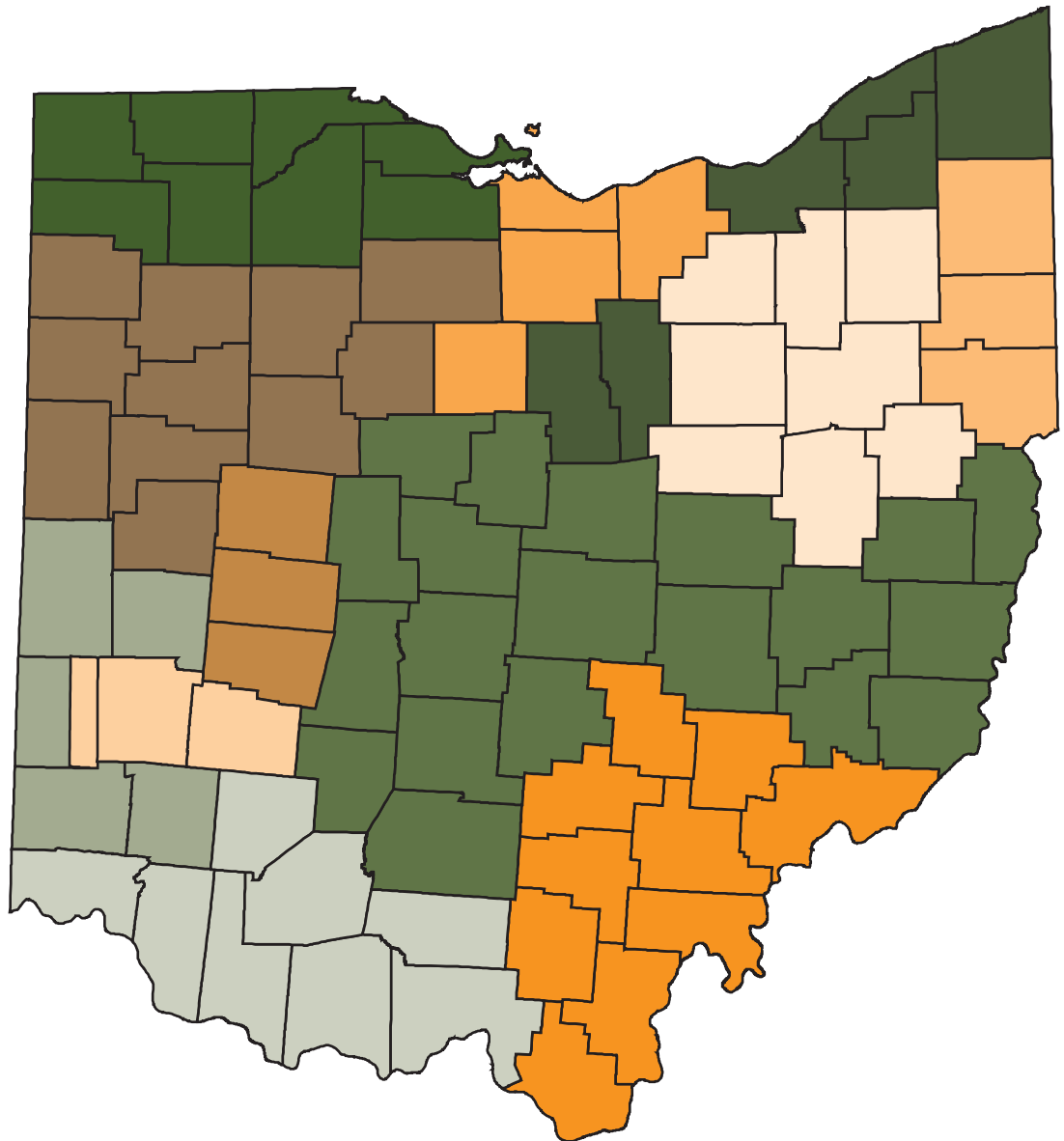
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OHIO'S 12 FEEDING AMERICA FOODBANKS & MEMBERS OF THE OHIO ASSOCIATION OF FOODBANKS





 **Akron-Canton Regional Foodbank**
Dan Flowers, President & CEO

 **The Foodbank, Inc.**
Michelle Riley, CEO

 **Freestore Foodbank**
Kurt Reiber, President

 **Greater Cleveland Food Bank**
Kristin Warzocha, President and CEO


 **Mid-Ohio Foodbank**
Matt Habash, President & CEO


 **SE Ohio Foodbank & Kitchen**
Andrew Mayle, Executive Director


 **Second Harvest Food Bank of Clark, Champaign, & Logan**
Tyra Jackson, Executive Director

 **Second Harvest Food Bank of the Mahoning Valley**
Michael Iberis, Executive Director

 **Second Harvest Food Bank of North Central Ohio**
Juliana Chase-Morefield, Executive Director

 **Shared Harvest Foodbank**
Terry Perdue, Executive Director

 **Toledo Northwestern Ohio Food Bank**
James Caldwell, President & CEO

 **West Ohio Food Bank**
Tommie Harner, CEO



A LETTER FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Congratulations on your election to the 134th Ohio General Assembly!

Food insecurity is a symptom of larger, systemic issues: poverty, income inequality, insufficient wages, racial inequity, weakened social safety nets, rising housing costs, food access gaps, and much more. The COVID-19 pandemic has severely exacerbated these issues for millions of Ohioans. To respond effectively, we need the public, private, and charitable sectors working together on the same team.

Ohio has a remarkable history of bipartisan support for effective public-private partnerships that alleviate and prevent hunger. State legislators like you can be champions for the hundreds of thousands of Ohio families that rely on foodbanks for help each year. We're proud to have worked with legislators on both sides of the aisle to develop and implement proven, **win-win** programs and sound policies.

This playbook gives you the information you need to use your influence to raise awareness about the issue of hunger, pass legislation that strengthens our response to hunger, and work with state agencies to ensure effective policies are in place.

We look forward to working on your team to promote the nutrition and well-being of all Ohioans as we work to recover from the ill effects of COVID-19 and to refocus resources on vulnerable populations.

Sincerely,

Lisa Hamler-Fugitt
Executive Director
Ohio Association of Foodbanks
lisa@ohiofoodbanks.org



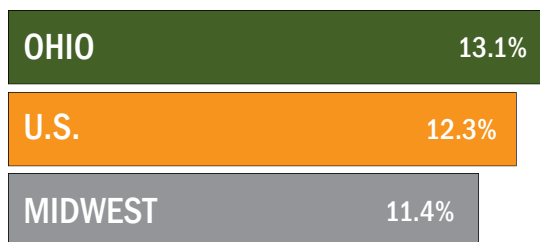
THE OPPONENT: HUNGER IN OHIO

Nearly 1.5 Million Ohioans Lived in Poverty in 2019¹

More than ten years after the end of the Great Recession, Ohio's poverty rate remained over 13 percent. Black Ohioans were nearly 2.5 times more likely than white residents to live in poverty.

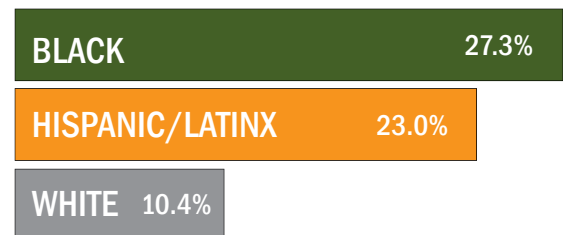
Ohio's poverty rate is the highest of any state in the Midwest region.

Nearly 1 in 5 Ohio kids lived in poverty in 2019, including more than 1 in 4 kids under 5.



Poverty rates for racial minorities in Ohio demonstrate significant racial inequity.

Two in five people working full- or part-time, year-round, in Ohio in 2019 still lived in poverty.

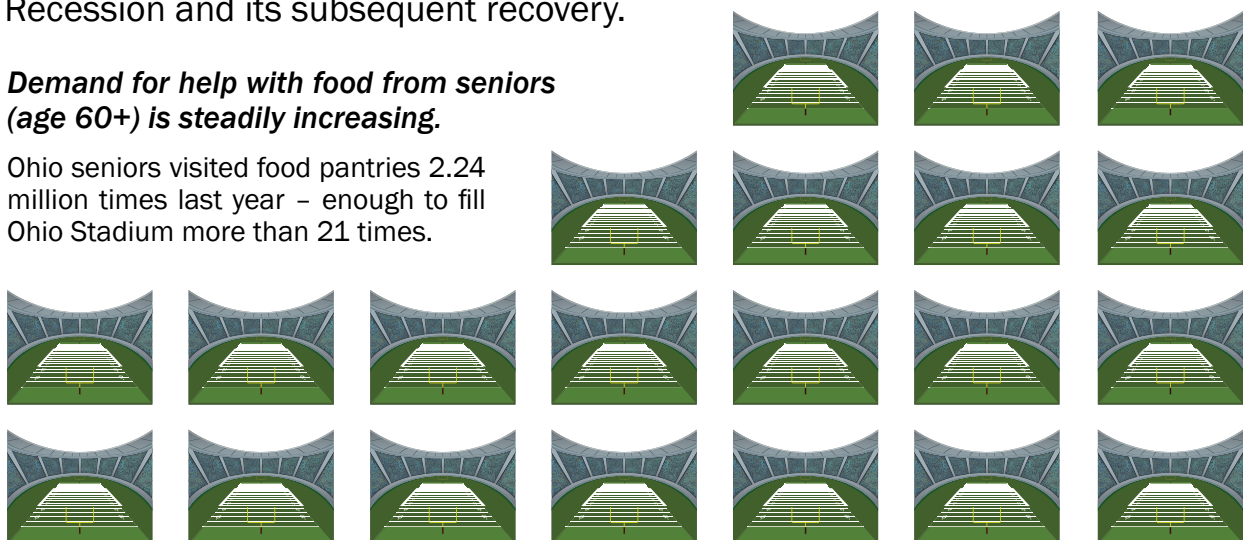


COVID-19 Has Exacerbated Food and Economic Insecurity²

Feeding America estimates that nearly 1 in 5 Ohioans – including more than 1 in 4 Ohio children – were food insecure in 2020. Overall food insecurity in Ohio was higher in 2020 than at any time during the Great Recession and its subsequent recovery.

Demand for help with food from seniors (age 60+) is steadily increasing.

Ohio seniors visited food pantries 2.24 million times last year – enough to fill Ohio Stadium more than 21 times.



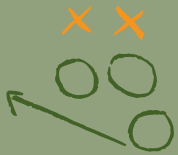


HOW WE BATTLE HUNGER EACH DAY

About the Ohio Association of Foodbanks

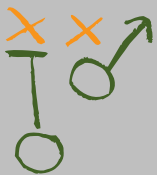
Our mission is to provide food and other resources to people in need and to pursue areas of common interest for the benefit of people in need. We proudly represent Ohio's 12 Feeding America foodbanks, their nearly 3,600 member food pantries, soup kitchens, and other hunger relief agencies, and the millions of Ohioans they serve each year.

Securing and distributing emergency food



Our statewide hunger relief network distributed 270 million pounds of food to Ohioans in need last year. More than 20 percent of that food came from the state-funded Ohio Food Program and Agricultural Clearance Program (OFPACP). For an average of just 38 cents a pound, we distributed 32.7 million pounds of surplus Ohio-grown fruits and vegetables and 18.1 million pounds of protein items and shelf-stable foods through OFPACP. Those products made up some of the most wholesome foods available to Ohioans struggling to afford food on their own.

Addressing child hunger



Children are particularly vulnerable to hunger, and several federal programs, including the National School Lunch and Breakfast Program and the Summer Food Service Program, exist to help prevent children from going hungry. However, children experience higher rates of food insecurity during out-of-school time. We partner with the Governor's Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives to implement programs that feed children left underserved by the federal SFSP and most recently worked with Ohio JFS and partners to promote access to Pandemic EBT.

SNAP outreach



The federal Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP, formerly food stamps) is our nation's most critical line of defense against hunger. But applying for SNAP can often be intimidating and overwhelming for people in crisis, which is why we have partnered with the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services to conduct SNAP outreach throughout Ohio for more than 15 years. We believe the best way to feed hungry people is by putting them in grocery store lines, where what they spend circulates back into local economies.

Public policy advocacy



We know that elected officials at the state and federal levels can't be experts on every issue, and we're proud to serve as a resource for lawmakers as they create and implement policies that impact Ohioans struggling with hunger and poverty. Our role as advocates is to educate elected representatives and other public officials about issues related to hunger and work collaboratively toward effective policy solutions. With 30 years experience in implementing public-private partnerships, we strongly believe in the critical role that government plays in addressing hunger.



THE COSTS OF LETTING HUNGER PREVAIL

Food Insecurity Worsens Health Outcomes³

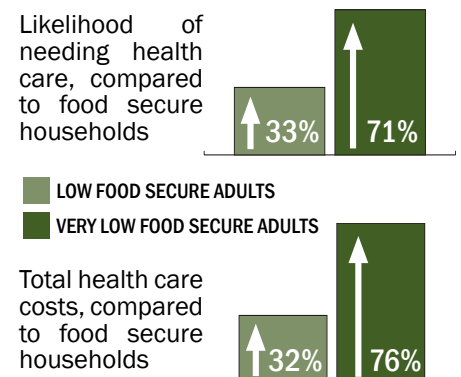
The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention found that health care usage and expenditures increased when SNAP (food stamp) benefits decreased, while a modest increase in SNAP benefits contributed to slower growth in health care usage.

In counties with high food insecurity⁴:



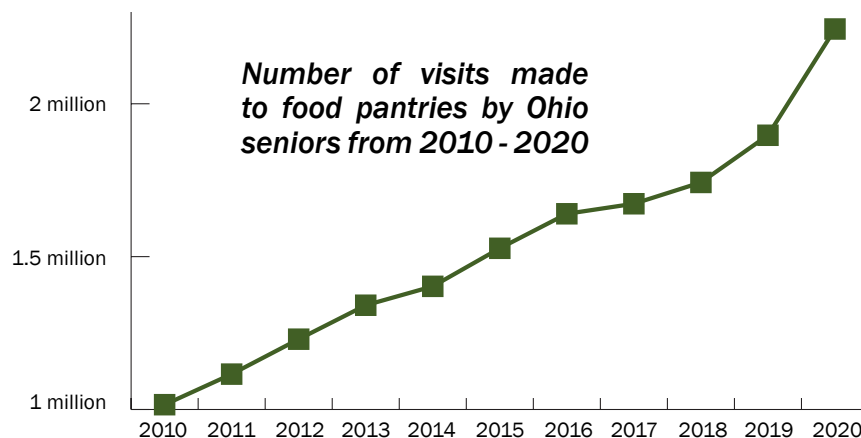
Food insecure households often consume less nutritious foods because they are less expensive. An inadequate diet can lead to toxic stress, poor nutrition, and chronic diet-related diseases.⁶

Food insecurity is linked to higher health care usage and costs⁵:



Older Adults Increasingly Rely on Help from Foodbanks⁷

While the COVID-19 public health and economic crises exacerbated food insecurity for Ohioans of all ages, including displaced workers and families with children, it also worsened an already growing senior hunger crisis in Ohio. The number of seniors seeking help with food continues to increase each year.



Food insecurity in seniors worsens and exacerbates aging issues⁸

Rates of high blood pressure, asthma, depression, chest pain, and limits to activity are higher for food insecure seniors.

Chronic conditions and diseases limit employability and increase health care costs.



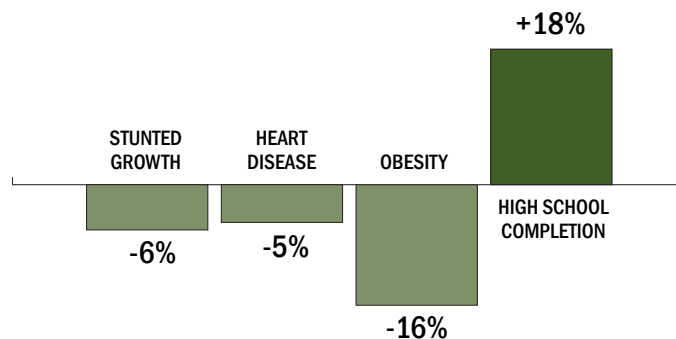
SNAP: OUR MOST IMPORTANT DEFENSE AGAINST HUNGER

SNAP Linked to Many Improvements in Health Outcomes, Lower Costs⁹

The federal Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) provides about 1.4 million Ohioans with an average of \$122 per person, per month to help purchase food.¹⁰ Access to SNAP improves food security in the short-term and contributes to improved health and household stability in the long-term.

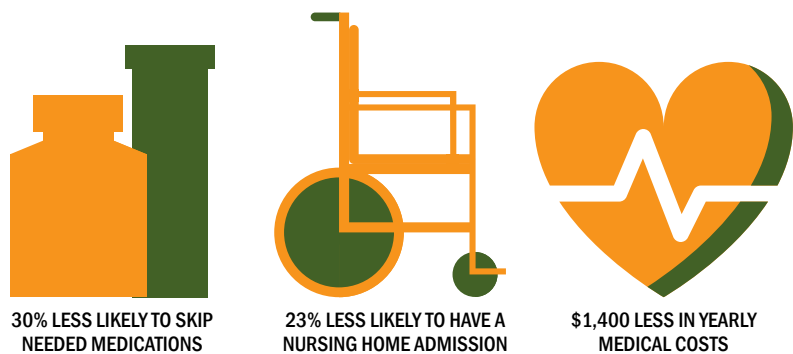
SNAP improves birth outcomes, lowers risk of chronic conditions, and supports academic achievement.¹¹

Researchers found that SNAP had a profound long-term impact on health and wellbeing. Adults who had access to SNAP as children fared better in many categories when compared with similar children who did not have access to SNAP.



SNAP provides critical support to low-income elderly individuals.

When compared to low-income elderly individuals who do not participate in SNAP, elderly SNAP participants have lower health care costs, are more likely to adhere to medication regimens, and spend less time in hospitals and nursing homes.¹²



SNAP Boosts Local Economies, Supports Workers¹³

SNAP recipients redeem benefits at nearly 10,000 retailers in Ohio - primarily supermarkets and superstores. In 2019, SNAP recipients redeemed about \$2 billion in completely federally-funded food assistance dollars at grocers and other food retailers in their local communities.

In Ohio, 1 in 11 workers (about 496,100 statewide) participate in SNAP.¹⁴ These workers earn low wages, working unpredictable and demanding schedules, and they rely on SNAP to keep food on the table for their families.



OHIO FOOD PROGRAM & AGRICULTURAL CLEARANCE PROGRAM

**Providing wholesome food to families in need
for pennies on the pound**

The Ohio Food Program and Agricultural Clearance Program (OFPACP) has received bipartisan support from 5 governors and 12 Ohio General Assemblies since its creation in the 1998/99 state budget. OFPACP provides more than 20 percent of all of the food distributed statewide by Ohio’s 12 Feeding America foodbanks and their 3,600 member food pantries, soup kitchens, and other hunger relief agencies.

<i>Ohio Food Program</i>	<i>Ohio Agricultural Clearance Program</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provided 22 million pounds of food in state fiscal year 2020 • Distributed items include proteins and shelf-stable foods, like eggs, soup, milk, pasta, canned fruits and vegetables, macaroni and cheese, and peanut butter • Average pound of food cost 71 cents • Keeps wholesome, staple foods on the shelves of 3,600 hunger relief agencies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provided 32.1 million pounds of food in state fiscal year 2020 • Distributed items are all grown by 65+ Ohio farmers; products include apples, onions, potatoes, squash, cabbage, tomatoes, corn, carrots, peppers, and more • Average pound of food cost 22 cents • Salvages surplus agriculture products that would otherwise go to waste

Making an economic impact while fighting hunger

Not only does OFPACP and other state-funded food provide nutritious food to Ohio families in need, but it also generates additional direct and indirect economic output, including job creation, right here in Ohio.¹⁵

SFY 2020	Direct Economic Impact	Indirect Economic Impact	Total Economic Impact
Value of Output	\$18.9 million	\$20.9 million	\$39.2 million
Income Generated			\$11.5 million
Jobs Created in Ohio			401



ESSENTIAL NON-FOOD HOUSEHOLD ITEMS

Providing access to basic necessities for low-income Ohioans

The COVID-19 crisis laid bare many entrenched disparities. The early recommendations to purchase and store a 14-day supply of food in the event of a household quarantine; the rush to purchase toilet paper and hand sanitizer; the rising food prices and lack of access to in-demand products; all of these scenarios shed light on longstanding challenges for low-income households. With little to no remaining income after paying bills, low-wage workers and seniors living on fixed incomes struggle to afford personal care and personal hygiene items like shampoo, toothpaste, baby wipes, and child and adults diapers, household paper products like toilet paper and paper towels, and other essential household items. SNAP does not allow recipients to purchase these items, and no other federal or state funds directly cover or fund these items.

With investment from the State of Ohio, the Ohio Association of Foodbanks will use its statewide purchasing power and emergency distribution network to provide access to these critical items to Ohioans with limited resources. Products will be secured and distributed based on local population needs identified by regional foodbanks.

EQUIPMENT & INFRASTRUCTURE ENHANCEMENTS

Modernizing to increase fresh, healthy food access

Ohio's 12 Feeding America foodbanks are emphasizing healthy, fresh fruits, vegetables, protein items, and dairy items more than ever. But our network of 3,600 hunger relief agencies, serving all of Ohio's 88 counties, need reliable infrastructure to quickly and safely store and distribute large quantities of fresh food.

In 2020, the State of Ohio's \$500,000 initial investment in capacity building provided 116 refrigerators, 94 freezers, and dozens of hand trucks, pallet jacks, and other food handling equipment to 149 local hunger relief agencies in 56 counties. Additional investments will help maximize our network's ability to store, transport, and distribute fresh, healthy foods to hungry Ohioans, especially in areas with limited food access.



SUPPORTING AN EQUITABLE RECOVERY FOR ALL OHIOANS

Investing federal dollars in basic needs for low-income households

The Ohio Association of Foodbanks has partnered with the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services to conduct SNAP outreach for more than 15 years. Foodbanks invest matching, privately-raised dollars to maximize efforts to connect low-income households to the nation's most critical line of defense against hunger, helping them navigate the benefit application process and maintain access to food assistance dollars.

But access to SNAP is just the first step in leveraging federal dollars to support Ohioans and Ohio's economy. In the short-term, pass-through federal funds like CARES Act dollars should be invested in food assistance, rental and mortgage assistance, local public services, and other efforts to keep more families from economic devastation in the midst of the public health crisis.

Hundreds of millions of dollars remain in the State of Ohio's Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) 'Sustainability Fund Balance.' At the same time, more than one in four children in Ohio (27.1 percent) were food insecure in 2020.¹⁶ As of early December 2020, nearly half of children live in households that have trouble covering usual expenses.¹⁷ The annual TANF block grant is already woefully inadequate, providing basic cash assistance to just 25 of every 100 Ohio families in poverty.¹⁸ TANF dollars are federal funds paid for by Ohio taxpayers and should be invested in meeting the basic needs of low-income families.

Additionally, the State of Ohio should use its flexibility and administrative authority to maximize access to federally-funded programs like SNAP for working families. For example, the State of Ohio could raise the gross income limit for SNAP eligibility up to 200 percent of the federal poverty level, so that more low-wage workers with children could access this nutrition lifeline.



POTENTIAL PITFALLS: WHAT MAKES EFFECTIVE LEGISLATION?

The two simple litmus tests for any legislation impacting hungry Ohioans

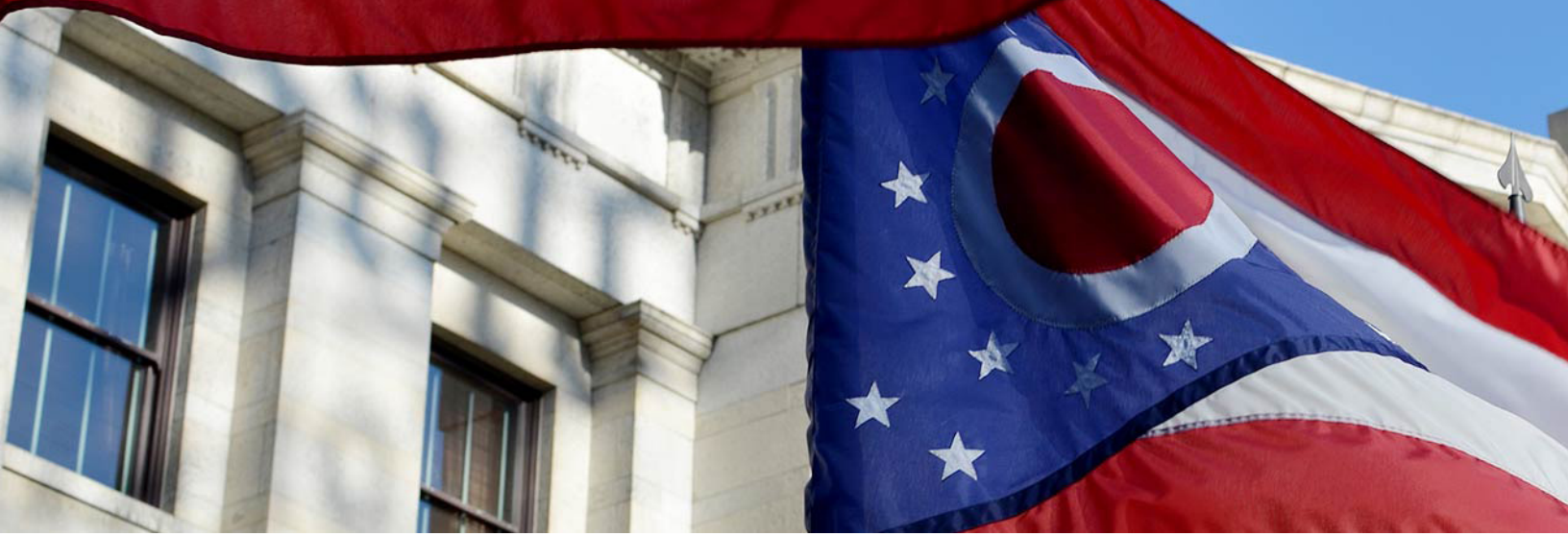
When considering any proposals that would affect programs and policies that serve food insecure Ohio families, we encourage you to ask:

Will this proposal improve the food security of Ohioans?

Will this proposal use taxpayer dollars responsibly?

	Will this proposal improve the food security of Ohioans?	Will this proposal use taxpayer dollars responsibly?
Proposals to “increase fraud prevention and oversight” of SNAP by means such as increased frequency of eligibility verifications	No, it would put additional barriers in place for vulnerable people	No, it would increase administrative costs exponentially, and likely lead to additional quality control errors by caseworkers
Proposals to require photo identification when shopping with SNAP benefits	No, it would erroneously remove program participants from SNAP using tactics that have been proven unsuccessful in other states	No, it would increase administrative costs exponentially, in addition to placing an added burden on private grocers and retailers
Proposals to make existing work requirements harsher, more punitive in order to receive SNAP benefits	No, it would force many low-wage, contingent workers off of SNAP without improving their employment prospects	No, it would increase administrative costs while forfeiting federal dollars owed to the State of Ohio
Proposals to restrict access to SNAP, such as by eliminating categorical eligibility or mandating child support cooperation	No, it would undermine access to basic federal food assistance through punitive and harmful restrictions	No, it would forfeit federal funds owed to Ohio taxpayers and the State of Ohio and increase administrative costs

Ohio Revised Code requires that members of the Ohio Association of Foodbanks network serve all Ohioans with incomes up to 200 percent of the federal poverty level. In 2019, more than 3.4 million Ohioans lived in households with incomes at or below that threshold. Any proposal that takes SNAP benefits or other income-supporting benefits out of the pockets of low-income Ohioans places more strain on our statewide hunger relief network.



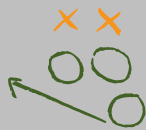
STRATEGY FOR SUCCESS: OUR BUDGET REQUEST

The Ohio Association of Foodbanks is requesting \$45 million per year over the 2022-2023 biennium (\$90 million total) to fund emergency hunger relief efforts and help Ohioans meet their basic needs throughout the COVID-19 recovery.



Ohio Food Program & Agricultural Clearance Program

\$40 million per year to secure, transport, store, and distribute at least 88 million pounds of nutritious, wholesome foods at an average of just 38 cents per pound.



Emergency Access to Essential Household Items

\$4 million per year to secure, transport, store, and distribute basic non-food items that cannot be purchased with SNAP benefits, such as personal care and personal hygiene products.



Capacity Building Resources for Charitable Organizations

\$1 million per year to provide hunger relief agencies with updated refrigeration and freezer equipment and other tools for safely and efficiently handling and distributing fresh foods.

The Ohio Association of Foodbanks encourages the State of Ohio to invest additional federal pass-through dollars, including Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) block grant funds and CARES Act funds, in meeting the basic needs of low-income Ohioans.



Support an Equitable Recovery for All Ohioans

Invest more of Ohio's federal TANF block grant in basic needs, including food, homelessness prevention, and basic cash assistance for families with children.

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