



RHODE ISLAND COMMUNITY
FOOD BANK

Strategic Plan

July 2021 – June 2024

Rhode Island Community Food Bank Strategic Plan: July 2021 – June 2024

Introduction:

We are pleased to present our new, three-year strategic plan. It is the product of a comprehensive planning process that was profoundly influenced by events of the past year.

COVID-19 affected every aspect of the Food Bank's work. We saw the need for food assistance skyrocket as the Coronavirus spread and the economy collapsed. The Food Bank and its network of member agencies responded by boosting food distribution to record levels. At the same time, our donors – individuals, corporations, and foundations – responded generously to our call for support. We demonstrated that even in the worst of times, a caring community can come together to ensure that no one goes hungry.

The COVID-19 crisis confirmed our belief that hunger is a problem we can solve. It will require addressing the underlying conditions that leave families unable to afford adequate food: barriers to employment, housing, healthcare, and education. It will also take an anti-racist approach that confronts the reasons for systemic and historic inequities in food security. The Food Bank is committed to finding solutions to hunger in partnership with our member agencies and the communities we serve.

In planning for the future, the needs of the person facing hunger are the Food Bank's central concern. As those needs change, we will adjust, respond flexibly, and innovate. We will not be satisfied until everyone in Rhode Island has access to a nourishing supply of food, every day of the year. We hope to inspire continued, generous support for our work, so we can achieve freedom from hunger across Rhode Island.

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Strategic Planning Committee

Board Members:

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Vision, Mission & Values

Vision

We envision a state where no one goes hungry.

Mission

To improve the quality of life for all Rhode Islanders by advancing solutions to the problem of hunger.

Values

We believe in.....

Compassion: We approach our work with empathy, understanding and respect for the diverse communities we serve.

Fostering Health: We want all Rhode Islanders to have access to healthy food because good nutrition is essential for good health.

Innovation: We are flexible and responsive to the changing needs of the community. We lead by finding creative ways to prevent and reduce food insecurity.

Collaboration: We know we cannot end hunger alone. We succeed in partnership with others and strive to include a rich tapestry of voices in our work.

Accountability: We deliver outstanding service and high-quality programs, effectively and efficiently. We steward our resources with integrity and transparency.

Our commitment to Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

The Rhode Island Community Food Bank embodies diversity, serving every part of our state and engaging people from all communities and backgrounds in our work. We are an open and inclusive organization that welcomes, respects, and values all people. Diversity strengthens our organization, so we take responsibility for attracting employees, volunteers, and supporters with diverse identities and life experience. When we seek out, recognize, and cultivate diversity within our staff, we create an enriched and more inclusive work environment. Ultimately, it is our collective wisdom that enables us to achieve our mission with creativity and compassion.

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Priority I: Protect the most vulnerable from hunger.

Goal	A. Achieve equitable food distribution to reach more Rhode Islanders in need.
Strategies	1. Ensure member agencies have the food and other resources necessary to meet the demand for food assistance in their communities.
	2. Form new partnerships in underserved and underrepresented communities.
	3. Reduce food insecurity among at-risk groups by ensuring that food and other resources are accessible and available to them.

Goal	B. Center program development and evaluation on the expressed needs of the people experiencing hunger.
Strategies	1. Plan new approaches and innovative programs based on an assessment of community needs and assets.
	2. Take an active role in state-wide initiatives aimed at reducing food insecurity.
	3. Help community partners and member agencies recover from the COVID-19 crisis and prepare for future emergencies.

Goal	C. Address the root causes of hunger and poor nutrition.
Strategies	1. Establish criteria to prioritize issues for the Food Bank’s public advocacy agenda.
	2. Determine resources needed to achieve proposed policy changes.
	3. Engage member agencies in advocating for improved public policies.
	4. Build the audience for advocacy in Rhode Island by telling the full story of hunger as a symptom of poverty and racism.

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Priority II: Enable food insecure families to achieve their nutrition and health goals.

Goal	A. Increase enrollment in SNAP among eligible households.
Strategies	1. Establish a SNAP outreach team at the Food Bank to work with member agencies.
	2. Provide workshops, trainings, and informational materials to our agency network and directly to guests.
	3. Cooperate with RI Legal Services to develop a referral program for qualifying cases.

Goal	B. Boost the distribution of fresh and locally grown/farmed food.
Strategies	1. Partner with Hope’s Harvest, Farm Fresh Rhode Island, and other organizations to increase donations from local farms and fisheries.
	2. Source more culturally responsive foods and broaden the selection offered through food pantries.
	3. Identify innovative solutions to overcome capacity challenges (in terms of space and refrigeration) for fresh food distribution.

Goal	C. Reach a larger audience for nutrition education.
Strategies	1. Enhance Healthy Habits to make the program relevant to a wider and more diverse audience.
	2. Incorporate learnings from the community needs assessment into Healthy Habits, including the most pressing health and nutrition concerns of community members.

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Priority III: Secure a sustainable future for the Food Bank.

Goal	A. Maintain momentum in raising new funds, retaining donors gained during the pandemic, and attracting new donors.
Strategies	1. Generate major investments by individual and corporate donors in our strategic priorities.
	2. Educate donors and supporters about the systemic causes of hunger and the barriers to achieving food security for all Rhode Islanders.
	3. Revamp the volunteer program to meet volunteer needs at the Food Bank and its member agencies.

Goal	B. Advance diversity, equity and inclusion at the Food Bank.
Strategies	1. Ensure that Food Bank policies and procedures are aligned with our goal to increase diversity, equity and inclusion.
	2. Prioritize employee wellness and work/life balance needs based on lessons learned from working during the pandemic.
	3. Expand leadership opportunities and professional growth for staff through training and career development.
	4. Develop and implement a multi-year plan to increase diversity and community representation on the Board of Directors.