



# 2021-22 State Policy Priorities

## Fighting Unprecedented Levels of Hunger

California remains in the worst hunger crisis in modern history. Almost 1 in 4 people in our state are food insecure — roughly 10 million people — with Black and Latinx communities experiencing disproportionate rates and impacts of hunger. Given the ongoing high levels of unemployment, especially for low-income Californians, continued state supports are critical and would prevent much more significant costs. Data from the UC San Francisco shows that even a 1% drop in food insecurity saves the state \$600 million in healthcare expenses.

### **Additional \$110 million one-time for food banks** *Keeping food banks stocked to meet the continued demand*

We applaud Governor Newsom for proposing \$30 million one-time for food banks and reiterate the need for early action to prevent a gap this Spring 2021. We are requesting an additional \$110 million in the 2021-22 budget.

Sadly; based on data collected during COVID-19, and the demonstrated record of the Great Recession, food banks expect that demand remains at double pre-pandemic levels — and a 145% increase in Los Angeles — for years, not months. The State must ensure funding is sufficient to support food banks at least through the 2021-22 fiscal year, as they remain on the frontlines of this crisis.

The need for \$30 million in early action, with \$110 in the final budget agreement, steps down from the \$150 million the State provided last year between the emergency actions (\$25 million), the 2020-21 Budget (\$50 million), and the \$75 million in CARES CRF funding that food banks utilized in less than two months.

We anticipate the need to double the monthly volume of State Emergency Food Boxes, which thankfully is possible due to new system capacity and efficiencies created by Department of Social Services' Fresh Look and new intermediary CalFoods Logistics who successfully executed the CRF in partnership with CAFB and food banks across the state.

An additional \$110 million is necessary to sustain food banks through the 2021-22 fiscal year due to the federal food cliff. Despite the recent federal stimulus, the total national support for emergency food was \$400 million in TEFAP and \$1.5 billion in CFAP (USDA boxes) — only \$1.9 billion against \$5.5 billion in funding from 2020. Moreover, while California receives its fair share of TEFAP, the lack of oversight has meant that CFAP has been hugely inequitable: in the recent Round 4 most of Central and Northern California were denied access entirely.

Food banks continue to face extraordinary demand as well as higher than normal costs given the loss of many local agencies and shift to direct, drive through distributions. East Bay food banks report record demand and costs persist and exceed private donations. San Diego food banks and local partners are piloting new programs, recognizing local gaps persist.

The State's support delivers boxes of staple items that families need and are in short supply because of the drop in donations from retailers, and facilitate safe, contact-free distributions. Thanks to partnership with Sysco, this program also supports good California jobs in the hard-hit food service sector, including thousands of Teamster members who are creating the boxes for food banks to distribute. An additional \$110 million is our best current estimate, which we will adjust in consultation with DSS and other stakeholders according to conditions on the ground.

For more information: [cafoodbanks.org/advocacy](https://cafoodbanks.org/advocacy)

