

**Food Security Work Group**  
**Background Document**  
**April 7, 2020**

Background

As the COVID-19 situation continues to develop, food insecurity challenges – which are significant even in the absence of a pandemic – will only increase. The state is working to assess needs and to play a role in coordinating a response that ensures relief efforts are well synchronized and that they avoid overlap with local efforts that are already ongoing wherever possible. The team, which is outlined below, is partnering with county and city governments, nonprofit hunger relief organizations, corporate food partners, and industry members to address the food insecurity challenges that are present now and that will be present down the road.

Participants

The state Food Security Work Group is comprised of members from the following state agencies:

- Department of Human Services;
- Department of Health;
- Department of Education;
- Department of Transportation;
- Metropolitan Council;
- Department of Agriculture;
- Minnesota Management and Budget; and
- Children’s Cabinet.

Strategies

The state has assembled a response team that is focused on a number of key strategies, which include:

- Supporting food banks and food shelves so they can meet statewide household demand;
- Expanding availability, access, and support for all Public Benefit Food Support programs;
- Providing access to school meals for all district-enrolled children;
- Engaging with Tribal Nations and ensuring they experience food security;
- Serving as a source of needs coordination and resource distribution via the State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC);
- Partnering with nonprofit and corporate leaders to provide meals across Minnesota; and
- Ensuring stability and continuity in the overall food supply chain.