



## Frequently Asked Questions

### **ABOUT OUR WORK**

#### ***Q. How does the Capital Area Food Bank help those who are hungry in the Washington D.C. Metropolitan Area***

Providing food to those at risk of hunger through 700 partner agencies is the foundation of what we do. Additionally, the CAFB provides many nutrition education programs that equip those at risk of hunger with skills to more efficiently meet their current and long-term food and nutrition needs. The CAFB also conducts Food Stamp Outreach to help people understand the process for applying for Food Stamps; complete applications and submit them to the appropriate office.

#### ***Q. How does the food bank acquire food?***

Food is sourced from more than 400 manufacturers, wholesalers, retailers, distributors, grocers, growers, processors, the food industry and Feeding America, as well as from food drives.

#### ***Q. Does the food bank charge for food?***

The Capital Area Food Bank does not charge for food nor do our partner agencies charge for food. However, there is a nominal shared maintenance charge that helps off-set the cost of handling and delivery. There is no shared maintenance charge at all for fresh produce.

#### ***Q. How much food is distributed?***

When the Capital Area Food Bank was started, we delivered 1,539 pounds of food per month. Today, we distribute over 1.9 million pounds of food each month through over 700 partner agencies. We serve over 383,000 residents and distribute approximately 23 million pounds of food each year.

#### ***Q. Can the hungry get food directly from the food bank?***

No. Food is collected, stored and repackaged at the warehouse and then distributed to partner agencies that are also 501 (c) (3) organizations. These nonprofit community programs then either prepare the food and serve it or distribute bags of food to those in need. If you or someone you know needs emergency food assistance, [click here](#) or call our Hunger Lifeline at (202) 639-9770.

#### ***Q. Are nutrition and safe food handling issues for the food bank?***

The Capital Area Food Bank has several nutrition programs and a safe food handling course. There are dietitians on staff who work closely with our partner agencies. Additionally, partner agencies are inspected periodically by food bank staff. Our warehouses are inspected by the USDA, Feeding America and the Department of Health.

## **ABOUT HUNGER**

### ***Q. Does hunger really exist in the Washington, D.C. Metropolitan Area?***

In the Washington Metro Area, more than 633,000 residents are at risk of or experiencing hunger; 200,000 are children. Last year, the CAFB distributed approximately 23 million pounds of food, including 6.6 million pounds of fresh produce through our network of partner agencies to people needing food assistance. With the current state of our economy, demand for our services is rapidly increasing.

### ***Q. Who is hungry in our community?***

You might be surprised to learn that there are many working adults who are at risk of hunger – they often have to choose between paying rent or buying food. Senior citizens, on fixed incomes, often have to choose between buying medication and food. Children are going to school with empty bellies, making it more challenging to focus and learn.

### ***Q. Why are so many people hungry?***

There are many reasons that people find themselves at risk of hunger. The economy has taken its toll on the working poor – and more recently, those who once considered themselves middle class are needing food assistance. In the Washington, D.C. area housing costs are soaring and low income housing is difficult to find. Utility and transportation costs also continue to increase, leaving little room in household budgets for food.

### ***Q. How does the Capital Area Food Bank define poverty?***

The Capital Area Food Bank defines poverty based upon 185% of the federal poverty guidelines. This means that a household may earn up to 185% of the U.S. government's standard of poverty and still be considered "in poverty." This measure (and other multiples such as 125%, 150% and even 200% of poverty) is utilized to determine eligibility for many government programs. *Poverty and hunger are directly correlated and the CAFB has found that those who live in poverty are typically at risk of or suffering from hunger.*

## **FOOD BANK DESCRIPTION**

### ***Q. What is the difference between a food bank and a food pantry?***

A food bank solicits, collects, stores, repackages and distributes large quantities of food to direct food service programs. The Capital Area Food Bank is a food bank and a member of Feeding America, the national network of food banks.

A food pantry provides food directly to those who may not have enough food to eat. Food pantries are an important source of emergency food for the working poor and they often provide other critical resources.

**Q. What is the difference between a food bank and a soup kitchen?**

A food bank solicits, collects, stores, repackages and distributes large quantities of food to direct food service programs. The Capital Area Food Bank is a food bank and a member of America's Second Harvest, the national network of food banks.

A soup kitchen prepares food provided by the food bank into hot, nutritious meals for those in need. For many people, the soup kitchen provides their only hot meal of the day.

**ABOUT HELPING**

**Q. How much of my donation goes directly to feeding the hungry?**

Ninety-two cents of every dollar donated goes directly toward feeding those who suffer from hunger.

**Q. How many people will I feed with my donation?**

For every \$1 donated the Capital Area Food Bank, we are able to provide 3 meals to hungry people.

**Q. Is the Capital Area Food Bank a 501 (c) (3) organization?**

The Capital Area Food Bank is public, 501 (c) (3) organization that meets the Better Business Bureau's charity standards.

**Q. Why should I support the Capital Area Food Bank?**

In a nation as rich as ours, it is inconceivable that anyone should go hungry. In what is sometimes referred to as "the *world's* capital city," one in two children under age 18 is at risk of hunger. The childhood poverty rate in Washington, D.C. is the highest in the nation.

The working poor are the backbone of many businesses and significantly contribute to the productivity and prosperity of the National Capital region. They live in households where typically at least one adult works, but struggles to pay for rent, utilities, health care and food. However, many of these Americans go home after a long, hard day of work and often find themselves unable to meet the most basic needs of their families. In the Washington Metro area nearly *60 percent* of households receiving emergency food supplies have at least one adult family member who works.

By giving to the Capital Area Food Bank you are helping the area's most needy children, families and seniors with a basic human need – food. Your donation will support our efforts to alleviate hunger in the Washington Metro area.

**Q. Where does the Capital Area Food Bank get funding?**

We receive support from many different sources including donations from individuals, corporations and foundations.