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**Need is Up; Funding is Down: Alameda County Community Food Bank Facing Fundraising Shortfall as Holiday Season Arrives**

*Food Bank fundraising is down 10% year-over-year while Emergency Food Helpline referrals have increased 22% during the same period*

**OAKLAND, Calif. – October 1, 2024** – Facing a potential budget shortfall more urgent than it has experienced since before the COVID-19 pandemic, Alameda County Community Food Bank today announced the kick-off of its holiday fundraising efforts during which it must raise \$14.2 million by December 31 to meet its funding needs. As a community-based non-profit, meeting its holiday fundraising goals is critical to the Food Bank’s efforts to serve a community in which 1 in 4 residents experiences some level of food insecurity.

Alameda County Community Food Bank distributed 59.3 million pounds of food during fiscal year 2024 (July 1, 2023 to June 30, 2024) – the highest distribution total in the organization’s 39-year history. In the first three months of FY25 (July-September), the Food Bank has already provided about 14 million pounds to its network of 400 distribution partners, with the high-demand holiday months still to come. During the same three-month timeframe, the Food Bank’s Emergency Food Helpline made 22 percent more referrals for emergency food than it did in 2023 (3,734 vs. 3,060)—a symptom of multiple factors, including the Bay Area’s untenable cost of food, housing, and other basic needs.

Meanwhile, Alameda County Community Food Bank’s contributed revenue during the first three months of FY25 has been concerningly low. Through September (Q1FY25), the Food Bank’s year-over-year contributed revenue has declined 10 percent—\$514,000 behind the same point in 2023.

“Reconciling such sharp increases in need with a dramatic decline in funding is something that keeps me and many Food Bankers up at night,” says Regi Young, executive director of Alameda County Community Food Bank. “We’re facing an uphill battle at this point, but with our primary fundraising season upon us we’re optimistic that we can work to reverse this trend. Still, we cannot underscore enough how critical strong community support is to our work during the holidays and year-round.”

Alameda County Community Food Bank historically raises two-thirds of its annual contributed revenue budget by December 31, meaning it must raise 50 percent of its budget in the three months between October 1 and December 31 alone. To put this in context, the amount The Food Bank needs to raise during the three holiday months (\$14.2m) is nearly equal to the organization’s entire annual budget in FY19 (\$14.4m), the last full year before the pandemic.

Meeting its budget goals ensures Alameda County Community Food Bank continues to implement its innovative hunger-relief and anti-poverty work, including:

- **Emergency food programming** which provides up to 1 million meals worth of food every week to its community.
- California's largest **CalFresh Outreach** department which helped Alameda County households access 6 million meals worth of government benefits in the last year, while creating \$36 million in local economic impact.
- Leading sustainability and **Food Recovery** efforts which rescued more than 10 million pounds of food from grocery partners last year—ensuring that food went to local families instead of landfills.
- Burgeoning **Food as Medicine** initiatives which provide medically supportive food to people managing chronic illnesses.
- **Grassroots advocacy and policy change** efforts to pass and protect critical anti-hunger and anti-poverty legislation.

### **How to Help Alameda County Community Food Bank**

- **Donate funds.** Supporting nonprofit food banks is one of the most efficient and impactful investments you can make. The Food Bank can provide about 2 meals for every \$1 donated, while 94 percent of all donations go directly to anti-hunger programming.
- **Host a Virtual Food Drive.** Virtual Food Drives (VFD) help the Food Bank purchase its most needed items—particularly those that can't go in food drive barrels like healthy proteins (meat, milk, eggs, etc.) and fresh produce. VFDs are perfect for businesses, schools, clubs, and other groups interested in a collective activity to help end hunger.
- **Donate appreciated stock, cryptocurrency, or other securities.** Gifts of stock and other securities have an outsized impact—and neither the donor nor the charity will be taxed on the gains for appreciated assets that you donate. In addition to traditional securities, the Food Bank now accepts donations of cryptocurrency. Visit [www.accfb.org/cryptocurrency/](http://www.accfb.org/cryptocurrency/) to donate or learn more.
- **Matching Gifts.** Many employers sponsor matching gift programs and will match any charitable contributions or volunteer hours (1-to-1 or 2-to-1) made by their employees.

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### **About Alameda County Community Food Bank**

Alameda County Community Food Bank has been at the forefront of hunger relief efforts in the Bay Area since 1985. The Food Bank serves a community in which 1 in 4 residents experiences some level of food insecurity. The Food Bank's core work includes distributing food through a network of approximately 400 food pantries, meal programs, and other community organizations, as well as direct distribution programs including school-based and home delivery distributions. This year, the Food Bank will distribute the equivalent of 48.8 million meals worth of food. In addition to its extensive emergency food programming, ACCFB's hunger-relief efforts include California's largest CalFresh (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) outreach department, anti-hunger advocacy, food as medicine, and food recovery and sustainability efforts. Alameda County Community Food Bank was named Feeding America's Food Bank of the Year in 2016; is an accredited charity by the Better Business Bureau; and for 17 consecutive years has received Charity Navigator's top rating — Four Stars — ranking the organization among the top 1 percent of charities nationwide.