2021 ANNUAL IMPACT REPORT

HUNGER ★ FREE
OKLAHOMA

INVESTING IN A HUNGER-FREE OKLAHOMA

Hunger Free Oklahoma, a fund of Tulsa Community Foundation, is grateful for the support of our donors. Thanks to their generosity, we are able to apply our innovative approach to work toward an Oklahoma where everyone has access to enough nutritious food every day. For a complete list of 2021 donors, please email your request to Info@HungerFreeOK.org.

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EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR MESSAGE

Dear friends, supporters, and allies,

In 2021, Hunger Free Oklahoma (HFO) turned five years old. As has been true throughout our short organizational life, we did not have much time to celebrate as we were busy focusing on the next thing. It was a demanding and exciting year for HFO and our partners. The pandemic continued to evolve and therefore challenged us to remain adaptive in everything we do. It also allowed us to see direct proof that the solutions we advocate for can have tremendous impacts when barriers are removed and programs are designed with the people who need them in mind.

Hundreds of millions of new federal dollars came back to our state in 2021 to help Oklahomans purchase the food they need. Barriers to access were removed in a way never seen before. Necessary resources were poured into programs including Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and Pandemic Electronic Benefits Transfers (P-EBT) to replace school meals during out-of-school time. Nine communities across the state saw new access to fresh produce through the Double Up Oklahoma program operating in their local grocer. The numbers are big, the impacts impressive, and the results for Oklahoma families transformational.

I hope we can ALL celebrate and reflect upon the work that has gone into the results you see in this report. Everyone who works in the anti-hunger space has been busy fighting a fire for the last two years, but we have still found time to come together, to be intentional in our collaborative work, to overcome challenges, and to plan together for the future.

All of us on the ever-growing team at HFO are grateful for the opportunity to do this work and recognize none of these outcomes would be possible without partnership. We are excited for 2022 and are mindful that new challenges and opportunities are soon to come. Together, we can continue to work toward our goal of a hunger-free Oklahoma.

In partnership,

Chris Bernard, Executive Director

June 2021 - Chris Bernard, HFO's Executive Director, was awarded The Journal Record's Most Admired CEO in the nonprofit category.

STEERING COMMITTEE

Chris Bernard, Hunger Free Oklahoma, Ex Officio
Miki Farris, Infant Crisis Services, Inc
Courtney Knoblock, The Anne and Henry Zarrow Foundation (Jan-Aug)
Bill Major, The Zarrow Family Foundations, Chair (Sept-Dec)
Doug McDurham, Art Center Waco
Bryan Riddle, Tenstreet
Brooke Townsend, Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Oklahoma

Today in Oklahoma nearly 15% of our population is food-insecure, well above the national average of 10.5%, and the pandemic has created further instability. Where there is challenge, there is opportunity, and the team at Hunger Free Oklahoma rose to the occasion in 2021, expanding our impact, our collaborations, our funding, and our team. Most importantly, we worked to transform the support of our partners into new programs and service delivery flexibilities to ensure more Oklahomans had the nutrition they need. In 2021, Hunger Free Oklahoma contributed to the following accomplishments:

DOUBLE UP OKLAHOMA

Double Up Oklahoma (DUO), a program that empowers Oklahomans to purchase more fruits and vegetables with SNAP benefits, continued to expand with particular focus on rural and/or low-income areas. This work was made possible in part by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) through the Gus Schumacher Nutrition Incentive Program (GusNIP) and Covid Relief and Response Grants (GusCRR).

10 GROCERY PARTNERS

234% FARMERS MARKET SNAP USE

$995K VALUE REDEEMED

Our market year has surpassed anything that we could ever imagine!! We've had more SNAP users come because they heard about DUO.

Cindy Nocton, Lawton Farmers Market

- HFO secured a $6.3M Tobacco Settlement Endowment Trust (TSET) grant to ensure the sustainability of DUO.
- Grocery partners grew from one participating store in 2020 to 10 in 2021.
- SNAP use at farmers markets has increased by 234% since HFO began administering DUO.
- An estimated 20,000 households redeemed benefits, with the total value growing from $130,000 in 2020 to $995,000 in 2021.

SNAP PARTNERS

Hunger Free Oklahoma's SNAP outreach and partners' initiatives helped connect thousands of Oklahomans to SNAP benefits in 2021. These projects included SNAP in Schools, SNAP on College Campus outreach, Tulsa Community Partners Program (TCPP), and partnerships with Oklahoma's food banks. With new barriers to in-person application assistance due to COVID-19, HFO looked for opportunities to innovate and overcome the resulting constraints, resulting in a partnership with OKDHS to design a Statewide SNAP Outreach Plan to support and improve program enrollment.

$7.1M HFO's SNAP projects helped 8,245 households submit applications during 2021, generating **at least $7.1M in additional food benefits.**

86% SNAP applications submitted through the TCPP collaborative **increased by 86% from 2020 to 2021.**

3,289 **3,289 SNAP applications** were submitted through food bank partnerships.

59,903 **59,903 people connected to SNAP resources** on the HungerFreeOK.org/Groceries website.

SNAP HOTLINE

9,887 CALLS ANSWERED

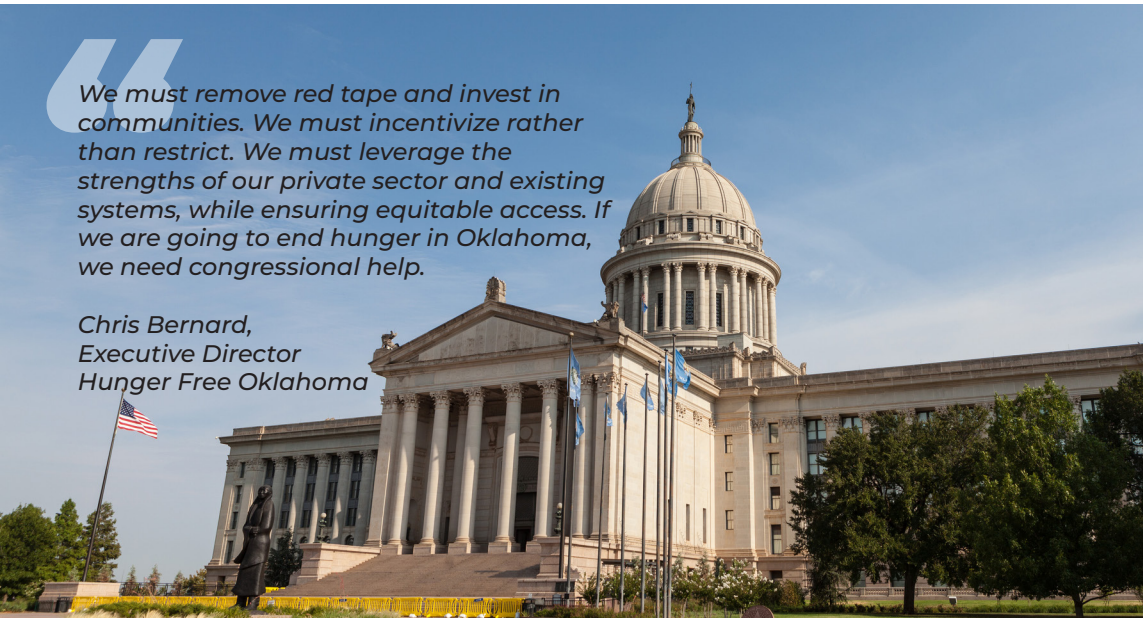
4,411 SNAP APPLICATIONS SUBMITTED

3,865 REFERRALS TO OTHER RESOURCES

$3.9M IN BENEFITS TO OKLAHOMANS

POLICY AND ADVOCACY

Hunger Free Oklahoma is recognized as the leader in Oklahoma anti-hunger advocacy. We regularly provide guidance regarding state and federal policy to legislators, agency directors, and coalition groups. These stakeholders proactively reach out to HFO for assistance in solving problems, building support, and finding innovative solutions.



- Hunger Free Oklahoma received funding from American Heart Association's Voices for Healthy Kids through a partnership with Oklahoma Institute for Child Advocacy to pursue a permanent state appropriation for DUO.

- HFO was invited to participate in two legislative interim studies in 2021, which were focused on 1) the grocery sales tax in Oklahoma, and 2) cliff effects in human services programs.

- HFO Executive Director Chris Bernard testified before the U.S. Congressional House Rules Committee at a roundtable to examine hunger in rural America at the request of Chairman James P. McGovern (D-MA). This opportunity expanded Hunger Free Oklahoma's profile and overall advocacy work.

PANDEMIC RESPONSE

Advocacy by HFO staff has been crucial to ensure that resources get to people in need throughout the pandemic. In 2021, HFO explored and advocated to continue the issuance of the maximum SNAP benefit to Oklahoma households. This policy was originally set to expire in July 2021 when Oklahoma's emergency declaration ended, but due to our research and subsequent advocacy work, we were able to identify a solution and see it through, resulting in over $368 million in additional SNAP benefits as of January 2022.

$500M in P-EBT benefits were distributed in 2020-21.

81,166 people connected to P-EBT resources on HungerFreeOK.org.

- HFO became a **leading source for P-EBT** updates for the state.
- **Extension of program waivers** ensured increased flexibility and reduced administrative burden for schools and other providers offering meals to children through one or more of the Federal Child Nutrition Programs.

CHILD NUTRITION

Hunger Free Oklahoma serves as the backbone organization for the Oklahoma Childhood Food Coalition, bringing together state agencies and organizations to increase awareness of and access to nourishing meals for Oklahoma children. In 2021, the coalition advanced its first policy agenda, advocating for state and federal policies that streamline access to nutrition programs and remove barriers to participation.

20.3M summer meals were served in 2021, an increase from 1.69M summer meals served in 2019.

60% Oklahoma increased the number of children participating in supper programs by almost 60% over the previous year.

35,326 people connected to Child Nutrition resources on Meals4KidsOK.org, a project of Hunger Free Oklahoma.

WORKING TOGETHER FOR A HUNGER FREE OKLAHOMA

FIND OUT MORE & TAKE ACTION AT

HungerFreeOK.org

@HungerFreeOK

HUNGER ★ FREE OKLAHOMA

Hunger Free Oklahoma works to bring a unified, statewide voice to the issues and solutions surrounding hunger, with a goal to ensure all Oklahomans have access to enough nutritious food. We are leveraging the power of collaboration to solve hunger in Oklahoma by improving systems, policies, and practices.