

December 2024



Why I Support Indy Hunger Network

A message from Adrienne Shields, Vice Chair, IHN Board of Directors

As we turn towards the end of the year, I have been reflecting on why I support Indy Hunger Network (IHN,) especially why I financially support their work by donating regularly. I hope you will consider adding IHN to your end-of-year giving for 2024 and to your charitable contributions throughout the year ahead.

Donating to IHN is a powerful way to make a tangible difference in the lives of those who are struggling with food insecurity. By contributing, this is my way of supporting an organization that assists individuals and families access to nutritious meals, which is fundamental for anyone's health and well-being. We all know that food insecurity can lead to numerous health issues, including malnutrition and chronic diseases, and I believe that my donation can help mitigate these risks by providing consistent and reliable access to healthy food.

Moreover, IHN fosters a sense of community and solidarity for the Network of providers in Marion and surrounding counties. When I donate, I'm not just supporting an agency; I am also showing compassion and support for my neighbors in need. This act of kindness I hope inspires others to contribute as well, creating a ripple effect that strengthens the entire community. It also helps build a more inclusive society where everyone has the opportunity to thrive, regardless of their economic situation.

Finally, donating to IHN is personally rewarding. I am part of a larger mission to combat hunger and improve lives. IHN offers opportunities for donors to get involved through volunteering or attending events, which further enhances my connection to the cause and the community I am helping to support.

Adrienne Shields,

Vice Chair, IHN Board

*Director of Public Policy & Engagement,
Diversified Services Network*



[DONATE TO SUPPORT IHN HERE](#)

2024

Indy Hunger Network by the numbers



50,000: Community Compass users (up from 32,300 users in 2023)



\$110,000: Equipment for 20 pantries, funded by Healthy Nudges



3,787: Individuals assisted by FRSN Staff

705: Clients assisted by 1:1 visits with FRSN Navigators

2,083: Emergency food bags distributed



73: Cooking Matters classes taught in Marion Co.

703: Class participants (17% increase from 2023)

14: Satellite partners in 8 counties



\$93,000: Grant funds distributed to 23 pantries

\$135,000: Funds awarded to 29 pantries (for 2025)

350: Attendees at the 2024 Food Pantry Summit

Learn about IHN "by the numbers" with these end-of-year metrics

Food Drop Program Transferred to Society of St. Andrew

Part of IHN's mission is to start initiatives, develop and refine their mission, and then hand them to partners or member organizations that can help these programs continue to grow long-term. As of this month, the Food Drop program, a food rescue program focused on the trucking industry, has been passed from IHN to the Society of St. Andrew (SoSA).

Since its beginning as a pilot program in 2017, Food Drop has grown far beyond Greater Indianapolis, and now operates throughout the state of Indiana. Every day, truckloads of (still edible) food are rejected due to logistical issues, temperature fluctuations (e.g. some outer cases of produce get frozen), damage to pallets or packaging, imperfections, ordering mistakes, delays, etc. Unless truck drivers or dispatchers can find a fast, alternative solution, this food often gets thrown away. Drivers have to drive to a dump, pay landfill fees, and offload the product in order to get on their way quickly. Food Drop connects drivers and dispatchers to hunger relief organizations throughout the state that can accept their rejected loads, offload the product, and issue a tax-deductible receipt. And, of course, all the food gets into the hands of people experiencing food insecurity.

Food Drop has rescued/redirected more than 650,000 pounds of food. Most of that food is fresh produce, meat, and dairy. Such items that have short shelf lives and can be hard to find an alternate buyer for, but items that food banks desperately need.

Over the last few years, IHN has worked to make improvements to the program's operations. Most recently, in partnership with the Purdue University Computer Science Department and funded by Google.org, we have developed a text-message-based software that uses AI to match donors and recipients, streamlining the matching process and allowing additional partners to be added.

Society of St. Andrew is a natural fit for this, since the organization is already involved in food rescue and in moving large loads. Their staff has the capacity, relationships, and experience to not only manage this program long-term, but take it to the next level of success. We've been transitioning the program to SoSA over the last year, and are proud to say that SoSA now owns Food Drop (but will continue to get support from us as needed).



Billboards and signs at gas stations help truck drivers connect with Food Drop

[LEARN MORE ABOUT FOOD DROP](#)

Upcoming Events & Holiday Hours

FRSH Hub Holiday Hours

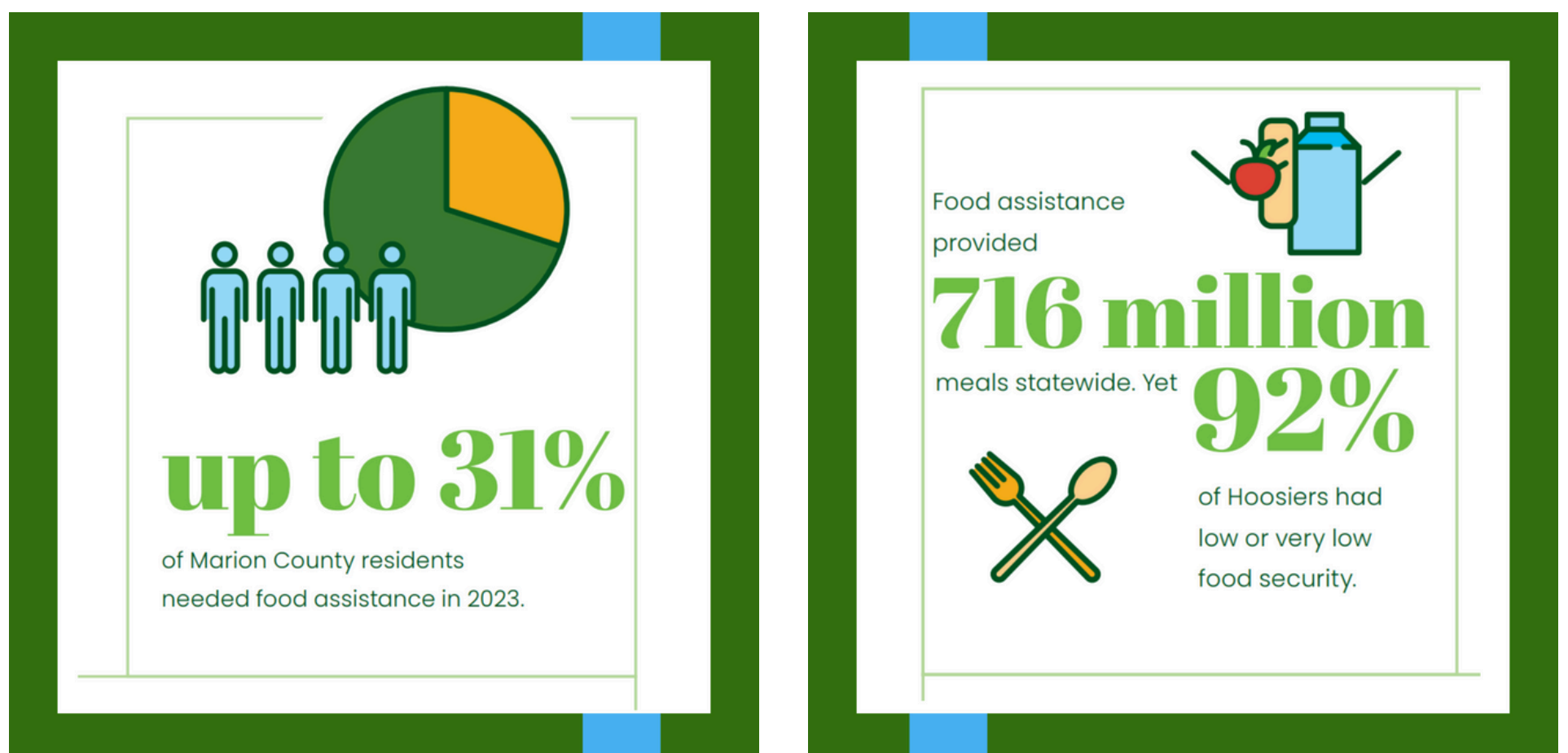
The week of December 23–27, the Food Resource Services Hub (FRSH) will only be taking virtual or phone appointments. In-person appointments will return the week of December 30. However, no appointments will be available on Christmas Day (December 25) or New Year's Day (January 1).

Clients and potential clients may reach out through phone or email (317) 546-3990, frsh@indyhunger.org, or fill out an intake form or schedule a virtual/phone appointment through our website.

2025 Food Pantry Summit

Save the date for IHN's next Food Pantry Summit -- March 12th at St. Luke's United Methodist Church. Registration to open soon!

This is a one-day event designed to bring together food pantry leaders across Central Indiana for networking, training, and learning from one another.



Did you know that IHN publishes a Hunger Study every two years? These findings come from our 2023 study, Look for new facts and figures in 2025!

WORKING TOGETHER TO END HUNGER

Our mission is to address systemic hunger issues and eliminate disparities in the Greater Indianapolis hunger relief system through collaboration on programs, advocacy, and research.

Help further Indy Hunger Network's mission to ensure that anyone who is hungry can access the food they need by donating [HERE](#).