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**FOOD ASSISTANCE
PROGRAMS**

Helping Hoosiers Access Healthy Foods

A deep dive into all the Food Assistance Programs at IHN

One of the most exciting parts of building a true network of food assistance and food security in Greater Indianapolis is working closely with folks involved with all aspects of the fight to end hunger. We work with politicians and activists at every level of society, with community organizers and food pantry volunteers, and with our own neighbors who are looking for the healthy food they want, deserve, and need.

In particular, our Food Assistance Programs are designed to address and support both sides of food access. As IHN's Director of Food Assistance Programs, Adam Meyer, notes, "On one side of these programs, we are helping neighbors find and connect to food and resource support. On the other side, we are helping pantry partners strengthen the way they serve their communities." Adam, who is finishing up his first year with Indy Hunger Network, has helped restructure our many food assistance initiatives into an even more accessible and streamlined set of programs. Read on to learn how IHN is fueling food assistance in Greater Indianapolis!

IHN's Food Assistance Programs include:

- **Community Compass**
- **Food Resource Services Hub (FRSH)**
- **Food Pantry Network**
- **Food Pantry Grants Program**

Community Compass is the the statewide tool that helps neighbors find nearby food and community resources. It currently averages 37,500+ unique users each month and around 16,000 total uses each month. Our Community Compass Coordinator, Tom Lageveen, recently launched an updated design. With new features, like the ability to save favorite searches, sign in as a guest or through a personal account, and to search by location or services sought, Community Compass is now more user-friendly than ever.

If you're not currently seeking food assistance, we still encourage you to [**download the app or have the website handy.**](#) You never know when you'll meet a neighbor seeking food assistance, and your referral might make a big difference in them accessing the food they need. It's an easy way to make a big difference in someone's day.

Food Resource Services Hub (FRSH) is our most direct, hands-on program for helping Hoosiers experiencing food insecurity. Through one-on-one appointments, our FRSH Resource Navigator, Niq Askren, supports neighbors who need help connecting to benefits, pantry options, transportation, or other stabilizing resources. Neighbors often walk away from these in-person, virtual, or phone call sessions with bus passes, next steps for SNAP or WIC applications, and knowledge about resources that meet their specific needs, often in their own neighborhood!

This year, we also launched the option to have FRSH in Food Pantries, and we appreciate Mid-North Food Pantry and Westminster Neighborhood Services for welcoming us, in addition to the Indy Central Library. For summer hours at these sites and the IHN Office, check out the "Calendar & Connections" section, below, and to request a FRSH in Food Pantries partnership, please fill out an interest form [HERE](#). If you want to make a FRSH appointment for yourself, everything you need to get started is [HERE](#)!



Adam Meyer, IHN's Director of Food Assistance Programs, visits with Loretta Farr at the Bread of Life Food Pantry at Overcoming Church.

The **Food Pantry Network** offers technical support, resources, community, and connection for the fearless food pantry leaders and volunteers facing ever-growing lines, high food prices, and often-intimidating levels of need. We connect over 200 food pantries across Greater Indianapolis, and our **Food Pantry Network** is ever expanding!

This summer, we are glad to welcome Katie Howell as our new Food Pantry Support Coordinator. She will be supporting all things related to the Food Pantry Network. This includes pantry network communication, site visits, coalition meeting and Food Pantry Summit planning, and technical assistance. She'll also help pantry partners know where to go when they have questions or need support. Her email is pantrysupport@indyhunger.org.

If you're a long-time supporter or a pantry leader who has participated in past food pantry grant opportunities, you'll be familiar with Healthy Nudges. Even though Healthy Nudges is no longer a standalone project, access to healthy food is still central to the work of the Food Pantry Network, and the concepts we shared through Healthy Nudges -- tips for making healthy food more accessible and attractive; vehicles for stocking fresh produce in every type of pantry -- are now incorporated into several of our programs. The building blocks for turning every food pantry into a source of health and wellness can be found in our **Manual of Best Practices**, our grants programs, coalition meetings, Food Pantry Summit, and our general technical assistance with pantry partners.

Speaking of ways to connect with other pantry leaders, the next round of Food Pantry Coalition meetings will take place in August 2026, with locations and times TBD. The 2027 Food Pantry Summit is currently scheduled for Tuesday, March 9, 2027. We hope to see you there!

IHN now offers two funding opportunities through our **Food Pantry Grants Program**. The Small Grants Program -- *applications will open this August!* -- provides awards of up to \$10,000 and is meant for smaller capacity-building projects. The new Infrastructure and Capacity Grant opportunity -- recipients have already been chosen for 2026 -- provides awards of up to \$50,000 and is focused on larger, more strategic projects that can help pantries strengthen their long-term operations. We were thrilled to receive 26 applications for the inaugural round of Infrastructure and Capacity Grants. With a total ask of more than \$750,000, these applications show both the level of need and the number of pantries thinking seriously about long-term capacity.

Want to learn more about IHN's Food Assistance Programs? Contact Adam Meyer at adam@indyhunger.org.

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ihn
STAFF
& BOARD

Welcoming New Board & Staff Members

This Summer, we are pleased to welcome a number of new team members to our Board of Directors and Staff. Next time you're in the office or connecting with IHN at an outreach event or coalition meeting, we hope you'll welcome them to the Network! And don't forget -- you're all a part of the work we do!

"Food insecurity is a core challenge to overcome. It touches people across many demographics. Working with IHN gives me an opportunity to make an impact across the community, addressing a fundamental aspect of life."

*Adrian Warren, IHN Board of Directors
General Sales Manager, Radio One Indianapolis*



"To live in a land and time of food abundance and still have people going hungry due to food insecurity is just wrong. I believe in the mission of IHN to address system issues and eliminate disparities in the hunger relief systems and want to work alongside them to attain that goal. I often turn to quotes from people far more eloquent than I and one of my favorites is from Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s Nobel Prize acceptance speech, 'I have the audacity to believe that peoples everywhere can have three meals a day for their bodies, education and culture for their minds and dignity, equality and freedom for their spirits.'"

*Denny Stephens, IHN Board of Directors
Retired, Eli Lilly & Co.*

"I first began partnering with Indy Hunger Network via the Healthy Nudges program. I visited lots of pantries in central Indiana that were all doing amazing things for their communities. I was so impressed with their different projects, solutions to various problems, and future plans. I am very excited that I get to continue to do so as part of the staff at Indy Hunger Network."

Katie Howell, Food Pantry Support Coordinator





"Growing up in central Indiana, I saw first hand how food insecurity affected my community and touched people from all walks of life. I also saw how economic factors and systemic problems perpetuated the conditions for food insecurity. Indy Hunger Network offers me a platform to be of service to my neighbors through my work and I am honored and privileged to join IHN."

Ryne Mills, Communications & Development Manager



Already, 2026 has been full of community and connection for IHN! We've met with State Legislators, Senators, and students. We've had Food Pantry Coalition Meetings and one of our most engaging Food Pantry Summits ever. We've welcomed new team members and bid a fond farewell to folks headed off to their next chapter!



This Spring, IHN's Cooking Matters Program brought their hands-on, nutrition-based curriculum to schools, community centers, recovery programs, and families of all shapes and sizes. Participants left with full bellies, more know-how, and enough groceries to recreate the recipe they learned at home!

Calendar & Connections

Summer FRSH Sites and Hours

- IHN Office, 32 E. 32nd St.
- Every Monday, Wednesday & Friday, 11:00am-2:00pm
- Mid-North Food Pantry, 3333 N. Meridian St.
- Second and Fourth Fridays, 9:00am - 12:00pm
- Please note, we will be at Mid-North on July 17, instead of July 24. On July 24, come find us at the Resource Fair at the 38th Street Branch Public Library, 11am - 3pm!
- Indy Central Library, 40 E St Clair St.
- First Mondays & Last Thursdays, 12:30 - 2:30pm
- Westminster Neighborhood Services, 2325 E. New York St.
- Every Thursday, 9:00am -12:00pm

To make an appointment after hours, call 317-546-3990 or visit [HERE](#).

** The IHN Office will be closed on Friday, July 3, in observance of the Independence Day holiday.

Food Pantry Coalition Meetings

The next round of Food Pantry Coalition meetings will take place in August 2026, with locations and times TBD. Reach out to Katie Howell at pantrysupport@indyhunger.org with questions!

IHN's 2027 Food Pantry Summit – Save the Date!

We look forward to welcoming you to the next Food Pantry Summit on Tuesday, March 9, 2027, at St. Luke's United Methodist Church (100 W 86th St, Indianapolis). See you at the Summit!



Dr. Kate Howe, IHN's Executive Director, and Mark Lynch, IHN's Director of Advocacy, joined a host of Hoosiers working to end hunger at the 2026 Bread for the World Advocacy Summit in Washington, D.C.

Want to learn more about IHN's local, state, and national advocacy initiatives? Reach out to Mark Lynch at mark@indyhunger.org.

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](#).