



Hunger hurts.

YOU CAN HELP.

Read our summary of the
2025 Hunger Report to learn more.



Hunger hurts people & families

In every corner of Ontario, food banks are working tirelessly to meet record-high demand, but the need is outpacing the resources available. As a result, many food banks are facing difficult choices to help keep their doors open. This includes reducing service hours, limiting the amount of food they provide, or even having to turn some people away.

While sudden events like the pandemic or a downsize in the economy can cause spikes in demand, today's record-high and sustained level of food bank use is due to Ontario's affordability crisis.

The cost of basic needs like rent, groceries, and transportation have climbed significantly since 2020, while wages and income supports have not kept pace. Families that were once "just getting by" are now "barely holding on," which has led to more Ontarians than ever before having no choice but to turn to food banks for help.

Last year alone, more than

1 million **Ontarians**

needed a food bank, making a record-breaking

8.7 million **visits**

Of these visitors:

1 in 3

were children
under the
age of 18

1 in 3

were people with
disabilities

1 in 4

were employed but
still could not earn
enough

2x

as many were seniors
compared to just five
years ago

3 in 5

were social
assistance
recipients

Hunger reaches every region of Ontario and behind each of these numbers is a person who is facing nearly impossible choices to just get by. Parents who skip meals so that their kids can eat, seniors choosing between groceries and medication, or workers doing everything they can to make ends meet but still falling short. The reasons for needing help may be different, but the impact is always the same. Hunger hurts people and families.

Hunger isn't just a crisis for people and families, it's a crisis for Ontario. When food bank use spikes, it is often an early warning sign that the province will face even bigger challenges soon, including: more people becoming homeless, even more crowded hospitals, and entire communities under stress.

Hunger hurts communities

When food bank visits go up, homelessness follows.

Over 1 million Ontarians need the help of food banks to make ends meet and, without this support, many have said that they would not have been able to afford their rent or housing.

Often, homelessness does not happen quickly. For many people and families, it follows a gradual decline in options that lead to a widening gap between income and expenses. For example, before turning to a food bank, someone may first downsize their home, take out a loan, or ask friends and family for help. But, if their cost of living continues to rise and help is not enough, families eventually face eviction and even homelessness.

More people than ever before are facing this possibility. As predicted by the Association of Municipalities of Ontario, without urgent intervention, homelessness in Ontario could rise from 81,000 people today to over 300,000 people in the next ten years. This is alarming and, with more people needing help than ever before, serves as a clear warning that homelessness in Ontario will only continue to rise if something doesn't change now.

When food bank visits go up, healthcare costs increase.

When people can't afford their basic necessities, they are more likely to become sick. Nutritious food and safe housing are essential to health and well-being but have become unaffordable for many Ontarians. Low-income people and families regularly have to do without some of their basic necessities, and often face other health-care challenges, like being able to afford medicine they may need or even transportation to essential appointments and care.

At the same time, Ontario's hospitals are overcrowded, patients are facing record-long wait times, and health-care resources are being stretched thin. This has made it harder for everyone to get the care they need.

Research shows that Ontario can ease this pressure on the healthcare system by making sure that everyone has access to their basic necessities. It also shows that investing in poverty reduction can save the Province up to \$6.2 billion in healthcare costs every year.

When people have enough income to afford their basic necessities, including rent, food, transportation, and medicine, they stay healthier and are more likely to stay out of the hospital.

When food bank visits go up, communities feel the pressure.

It can be easy to lose hope that your financial circumstances will improve when, no matter how hard you try, you can't afford your basic necessities.

Poverty weakens communities and erodes the trust that people have in the systems and institutions that are meant to keep them safe and support their well-being. This can lead to places where people feel disconnected from each other, a sense of shared responsibility begins to break down, and where it becomes harder to build and sustain the kind of safe and stable neighbourhoods where everyone can thrive.

Strong communities start when everyone's basic needs are being met. This means ensuring that people have access to good jobs, affordable housing, healthcare and support, and enough food to eat. When people and families have what they need to thrive, communities thrive too.

Hunger hurts ONTARIO

Food banks are playing an essential role in communities and in Ontario. Without their service, more children, adults, and seniors would go hungry, more families would lose their homes, and more people would not be able to access the healthcare they need. Food banks are actively preventing some of the Province's biggest challenges from getting worse, including homelessness, strain on the healthcare system, and instability in our communities.

But as hard and tirelessly as they work, food banks have been stretched to the breaking point. The need for help exceeds the resources that food banks have available to them and, if this need continues to rise, the consequences for the province will be significant.

Luckily, there is hope. The Government of Ontario is in the process of developing a new poverty reduction strategy that could lay the foundation for a more coordinated approach, across all levels of government, for addressing these issues. This could mean solutions that prevent and end homelessness, improve the health and well-being of people and families, and build stronger communities across Ontario.

Feed Ontario believes that ending hunger is possible. For a full list of Feed Ontario's recommendations, visit [our website](#).

We need immediate action against hunger and poverty before Ontario's biggest challenges become even harder to solve. Hunger is hurting Ontario and we need bold action now."

*-Carolyn Stewart,
CEO, Feed Ontario*



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Read the full Hunger Report to learn more

Feed Ontario and food banks across the province are working tirelessly to help people and families today while advocating for solutions that will end hunger tomorrow.

With food bank use hitting another record high, your help is needed now more than ever. Here are three easy ways you can make a difference and help create a stronger, healthier future for Ontario.

Ways to take action

1 **Sign our petition or contact your local MPP**

Let our political leaders know that Ontario needs a strong poverty reduction plan and that ending hunger must be a priority. Sign the petition [here](#).

2 **Support your local food bank**

Food banks need your help to keep their shelves full and doors open. If you can, donate food, funds, or your time to help families in your community. To locate the food bank in your area, visit our website and use our [Find a Food Bank Tool](#).

3 **Support Feed Ontario**

Help Feed Ontario strengthen the provincial food bank network and advocate for lasting change. For every \$1 donated, Feed Ontario can provide 2 meals to people and families in need. [Donate today](#) to help end hunger in the province about how you can help end hunger in the province.