



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Second Annual State of Hunger – Hunger in the time of Coronavirus

San Diego Hunger Coalition presents the reality of food insecurity during COVID-19 and next steps.

San Diego, November 17, 2020 – Hunger Free San Diego, facilitated by San Diego Hunger Coalition, will host its **2nd Annual State of Hunger** on November 17, 2020 at 10 am. This year's event will take place online through Zoom and is free of charge. The Guest of Honor, Representative Susan Davis, will be recognized for her 20 years of service and dedication to ending hunger. Representative Davis will present special remarks. More info & registration available at <http://sdhunger.org/state-of-hunger>.

During the 90-minute webinar, the San Diego Hunger Coalition and Hunger Free San Diego Advisory Board will release critical up-to-date data on hunger during COVID-19 and what the local hunger relief sector has done and is doing to address the precipitous rise in food insecurity in San Diego County.

Food Insecurity on the Rise During COVID-19

COVID-19 has resulted in record unemployment and economic depression rivalling the Great Recession of 2008. The result has been a dramatic increase in food insecurity and demand for hunger relief while thousands of San Diegans are out of work due to layoffs, reduced hours, and business closures.

- 1 in 3 households are currently at risk of food insecurity – up from 1 in 7 prior to the pandemic.
 - For many, this may be their first time facing hunger.
- The highest levels of food insecurity are in the El Cajon, North Inland, and South Bay regions.
- Latino and Black & African American households in San Diego County are disproportionately affected by the increase in food insecurity.

The State of Hunger

During the Second Annual State of Hunger, along with taking a detailed look at how COVID-19 has affected our communities, we will celebrate the successes and incredible efforts of San Diego nonprofits, government, and resident leaders:

- The State of California & County of San Diego streamlined the application process for both WIC and CalFresh/SNAP, the latter of which saw a 300% increase in applications during the first month of shutdowns.
- School districts throughout the County made an immediate switch to curbside delivery of school meals to ensure that students would have enough to eat while they were away from school or distance learning.
- The *USDA's Farmers to Families Food Box Program* brought and continues to bring thousands of boxes of fresh and local produce to San Diego County families.
- The Pandemic-EBT (P-EBT) program provided eligible families with \$365/child for groceries. This program, originally ended in mid-July, has been extended by the federal government.
- Food distributions have doubled their output and increased services to meet demand that increased 50% - 100%.

We will also examine what is next and what hunger relief looks like in 2021 with an analysis of the communities most impacted by food insecurity and how we will use data, technology, and the strength of community connections to fight hunger.

Hunger Free Navigator Program

A new initiative will be unveiled that will equip everyone to navigate the complex hunger relief system and support nonprofits to work side-by-side with resident leaders to end hunger. The *Hunger Free Navigator Program* is scheduled to roll out in December and has already begun piloting in select San Diego communities. Two types of training will be available:

- Nonprofit Navigator: supports nonprofit organizations and staff with comprehensive training to connect people to *all* food resources.
- Community Navigator – supports community resident leaders to understand, increase access, and influence food assistance resources to benefit their communities.

2nd Annual State of Hunger

November 17, 2020

10:00 am – 11:30 am

Register & info:

sdhunger.org/state-of-hunger

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For more information on the State of Hunger, please visit www.sdhunger.org/state-of-hunger or contact Joe Shumate, Director of Communications, at joseph@sdhunger.org or 619.501.7917 ext. 106.

*A recording will be available shortly following the webinar. A link to a DropBox download will be emailed to media contacts. **Please confirm your attendance with Joe Shumate to ensure receipt of the video link.***

Interviews with hunger relief experts are available. Please contact Joe Shumate to coordinate.

