Strategic Plan

The Maryland Food Bank’s Strategic Plan — which we call MFB 3.0 — is our framework for working smarter, more efficiently, and with renewed energy to end hunger for more Marylanders by addressing not just food insecurity, but its systemic, root-level causes that keep up to two million of our neighbors from accessing the food they need.

MFB 3.0 Strategic Plan

Organizational Sustainability & Growth

Expanding Food Access

Creating Pathways Out of Hunger

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MFB 3.0 Strategic Plan is Built Upon Three Foundational Pillars

Pillar One:

Expanding Food Access
We sourced, managed, and distributed food that provided nearly 62 million meals last year, but the growing numbers — and the stories from our network partners on the front line about rising food prices and costs of living — tell us this isn’t enough. So we’re expanding our partnerships with local farms and vendors to shorten the distance between food producers and consumers, and we’re building a more ecologically sustainable system that provides healthier, fresher, and more nutritious foods to all corners of our state.

Our Farm to Food Bank program is a remarkably successful example of expanding not just access to food, but access to healthier, locally grown produce through our growing number of Pantry on the Go locations.

We’re also using more localized data and scientific research to identify hunger hotspots and determine which food distribution programs work best within different communities. Tools like our Maryland Hunger Map and Link2Food software allow us to use demographics and technology to more accurately serve our neighbors in need, while new solutions like home delivery and the OrderAhead app will help ease the stigma many feel when reaching out for assistance.

The Strategy Group is a catalyst for change within the food bank and across the state. We’re launching innovative pilot programs and partnerships that go beyond expanding food access to address the deeply rooted causes of hunger with bold new approaches.

Meg Kimmel
Pillar Two:

Creating Pathways Out of Hunger

While distributing food more efficiently and equitably is vital to our mission, food insecurity is a complex, multi-layered socioeconomic problem, with no quick and easy fix. The second pillar of our strategic plan focuses on creating more opportunities for our neighbors in need by addressing the deeply rooted causes of hunger while opening pathways out of food insecurity and toward greater local resiliency.

It’s a big job, but we’ve already paved the way for hundreds of Marylanders to lift themselves out of economic insecurity — as the graduates of our FoodWorks program can attest. FoodWorks provides intensive culinary training that prepares graduates for well-paying careers in the food industry. After years of success at the food bank’s main facility in Halethorp, the program is now expanding to new sites in Baltimore City (UA House) and on the Eastern Shore (Wicomico Community College) so that even more Marylanders are able to receive job training that can lead to sustained employment.

And we’re expanding beyond FoodWorks to bring even more life-changing opportunities to those we serve. MFB is partnering with workforce development organizations across Baltimore to support residents on a path out of hunger through job training (in IT, solar, and healthcare), social and financial support, and food resources.

We’re also working with our Network Partners to help them provide more “wraparound” services — financial literacy programs, educational opportunities, and access to healthcare, as well as help finding clothing, furniture, and transportation assistance. We’re partnering with public officials and state and local agencies to support policy efforts that address these root causes of hunger as well.

As a food bank, we can always be relied upon to distribute food, of course, but unless we help tackle the deeper issues that cause food insecurity, we will never reach our goal of ending hunger in our state. MFB’s broadened scope aims to treat those systemic causes holistically — uplifting individuals and opening up new paths to financial stability and economic security.

Beyond feeding people, the Maryland Food Bank works with our statewide network of community partners to address the systemic, root-level causes of hunger.
Organizational Sustainability & Growth

None of this is achievable without our third pillar, which prioritizes organizational sustainability and growth. The road to Maryland’s recovery has been long and fraught, and the pandemic has taken its toll on every organization serving those in need, including the Maryland Food Bank.

Without sufficient attention to the individuals who do this hard work every day, we cannot expand our efforts to help others. That’s why we’ve invested in training programs, professional development, and staff assistance to keep our team recharged and revitalized, and we’ve expanded our workforce to meet the increased demands on our programs.

We strive to make our workplace representative of our state’s diverse population, with racial equity and inclusivity as guiding principles. All MFB staff receive Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) training, and we make sure our partners embrace — and put into practice — those ideals. At MFB, diversity is not an afterthought — it’s who we are.

The rapid growth and expansion that are part of our strategic plan require new ways of thinking, and new tools. We continue to improve our internal processes, leverage innovative technologies wherever possible, and build automation into our workflows. We regularly audit our programs to make sure we’re functioning at optimum efficiency — and to see where we can do better.

Your Support Makes it Possible

Throughout the chaos of the pandemic, it became alarmingly clear to our entire nation just how many of our neighbors struggled to feed their families or were just a paycheck away from financial disaster. You supported us so we could help them in their time of deepest need, and we built our staff and operations to meet the challenge.

But even as the health risks from the pandemic wane, the economic impacts of COVID-19 will not. Your continued support will be needed as we bring MFB 3.0 to fruition and create a future in which new pathways to sufficiency are readily available to help more Marylanders achieve lasting food security.

We’ve taken our pre-pandemic efforts, applied the lessons we learned during COVID, and emerged stronger with a revitalized strategic plan that expands food access and creates pathways out of hunger. However, we realize those efforts will only be possible if we first invest in our own sustainability and growth.

+ Carmen Del Guercio
President & CEO