



**FOOD
BANKS**
MISSISSAUGA

ANNUAL IMPACT REPORT 2024



LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We at Food Banks Mississauga acknowledge that we reside and work on the treaty lands and territory of the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation and the traditional territory of the Huron-Wendat and the Haudenosaunee. We are thankful to the First Peoples for their stewardship over the lands where we gather and work.

Mississauga is home to many First Nations, Metis, and Inuit people today, and we recognize the many injustices that have been brought upon them. **We will strive to learn from and understand these injustices and bring awareness to them in our work to create a Mississauga where everyone is food secure.**

We are steadfast in our commitment towards truth and reconciliation by teaching, learning, advocating, and by being an allied partner to all First Nations, Metis, and Inuit people. We will work together to create a more equitable community for all.

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A NOTE FROM OUR LEADERSHIP

It was another record-breaking year in food insecurity here at Food Banks Mississauga.

We provided food support to 56,267 neighbours – that’s almost 8% of Mississauga’s population or 1 in 13 Mississauga residents. Our agency members on the front lines tell us they are maxing out and will hit their ceiling soon, as costs continue to rise and we are all forced to increase our capacity every month.

Food banks were meant to be a temporary “band-aid” emergency support, not a replacement for government social assistance programs. But almost 40 years after Food Banks Mississauga was founded, we face a growing crisis because government programs are underfunded and haven’t kept up with the rising cost of living.

What we’re seeing in Mississauga is reflected across the country. A new report by Food Banks Canada introduced the Material Deprivation Index (MDI) – a poverty metric widely used in Europe to measure a poverty level standard of living. The MDI estimates that 25% of Canadians – almost 10 million people – are living in poverty because they cannot afford two or more household essentials to lead an adequate life.¹ This is nearly 6 million *more* people than is reflected in Statistics Canada’s most recent data.²

In the face of these staggering numbers and harsh realities, we are grateful for you, our supporters, for standing by us this past year as we provide food to our neighbours *today* while we also advocate for policy change to address the root causes of food insecurity for *tomorrow*.

In the following pages, you will read more about the impact your support has made this past year, easing the burdens of food bank visitors, as well as our advocacy strategy.

Thank you for continuing to step up for your community as food insecurity worsens faster than it ever has in our lifetime. Together, let’s raise our voices and call on our elected officials to support those who are living precariously and facing food insecurity.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Todd Fisher".

Todd Fisher
Board Chair



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Meghan Nicholls".

Meghan Nicholls
Chief Executive Officer



¹ Mendelson, Michael; Notten, Geranda; Matern, Richard; Seer, Sofia. *POVERTY IN CANADA Through a Deprivation Lens*. Food Banks Canada, 2024.

² Statistics Canada (2024). *Dimensions of Poverty Hub* [Data visualization tool]. <https://www.statcan.gc.ca/en/topics-start/poverty>

WHO IS FOOD BANKS MISSISSAUGA?

Food Banks Mississauga is the largest poverty relief organization focused on food insecurity in Mississauga.

We lead a network of 60+ agency members, including neighbourhood food banks, pantries, cupboards and meal and snack programs, working together to realize a food-secure Mississauga. This means your support goes beyond one organization to reach neighbours in need across the city!

We provide emergency food through our agency network so neighbours in need have food **today**, and use our front-line knowledge and experience to advocate for government policies and programs that will decrease food bank use for **tomorrow**.

MISSION

We lead our agency network to realize a food-secure Mississauga by providing and promoting access to healthy and appropriate food.

VISION

A Mississauga where everyone is food secure.

VALUES

Integrity First, Bold Mindset, Respect for All, Collaborative Leadership.

OUR AGENCY NETWORK



9 Neighbourhood Food Banks

7+ days of fresh & shelf-stable food plus household items each month



15 Food Pantries

3+ days of fresh & shelf-stable food each month



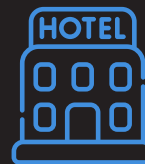
26 Food Cupboards

2+ days of shelf-stable food each month



15 Meal & Snack Programs

Meals and/or snacks each visit



4 Ukrainian Programs

(Ukrainian newcomers stayed in hotel accommodations for 2 weeks)

2+ days of fresh & shelf-stable food each week



2024-2027 STRATEGIC PLAN:

Our strategic plan guides both our work to meet the immediate needs in our community and our work toward future goals with your ongoing support.

Learn more about our Strategic Plan



BY THE NUMBERS

56,267

neighbours received food support from Food Banks Mississauga last year.



1 in 13 residents in Mississauga are using a food bank.



28%

were children, a 42% increase from last year.

37%

of food bank visitors have been in Canada for five years or less.

45%

have been visiting a food bank for under a year.

421,251

total visits to Food Banks Mississauga and our network.



Our neighbours experience different levels of food insecurity:

48%

experience 'low food security' sharing they can't afford to eat balanced meals and had to reduce portion sizes for some months.

27%

experience 'very low food security' sharing they have to skip meals every month.

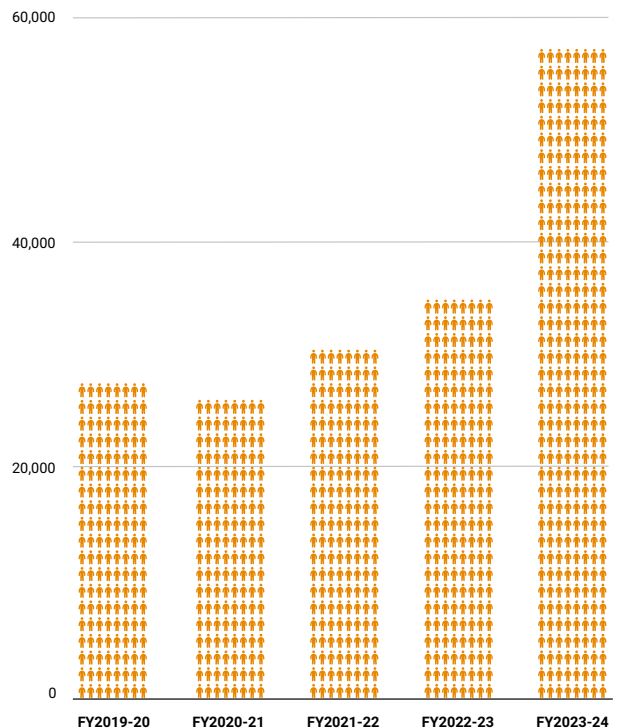
AN EXPANDING CRISIS

These numbers show how your generosity is vital in meeting the needs of our community **today** as we work towards a Mississauga where everyone is food secure. They also tell the story of **who** your support is helping as we continue to serve a record-breaking number of neighbours in need.

In 2023-2024, Food Banks Mississauga provided food support to 56,267 neighbours— a **58% increase** compared to last year, and a 120% increase since 2021.



UNIQUE FOOD BANK VISITORS, BY FISCAL YEAR



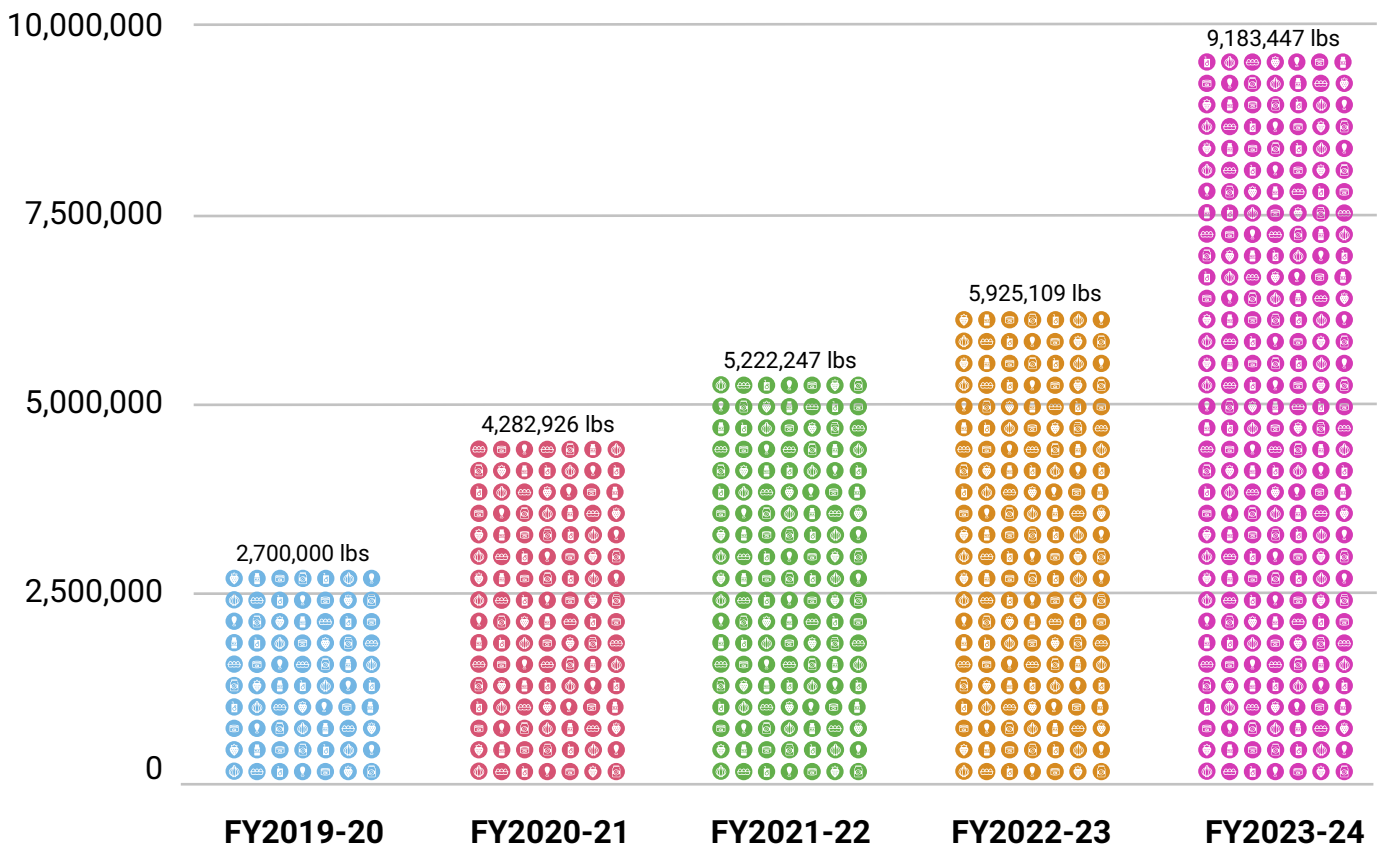


MORE FOOD TO MORE NEIGHBOURS

Thanks to your support and generosity, we can be there for our neighbours to provide more food through our network of **60+ agency members**.

We continue to build relationships with farmers, wholesalers, producers, and grocery stores to source fresh and shelf-stable food.

TOTAL FOOD DISTRIBUTED, BY FISCAL YEAR





MEETING NEEDS TODAY

LEADING OUR NETWORK

Our network is made up of 60+ agency members who are on the front lines, supporting neighbours across Mississauga. Through our hub and spoke model, we source and distribute food and personal care items in all corners of the city.

AGENCY SPOTLIGHT



GLOBAL FAMILY COMMUNITY CENTRE

“There’s a big difference when you see you are enabling the agency to become not just a food store to get food, but also to become a real place of community basis. When people come, they see a sense of belonging... [The] food bank is not just for the people who don’t have... [it’s for] people who are transitioning from [one] situation to another situation.”

Pastor Daniel Dihele is the Executive Director of Global Family Community Centre, one of the agency members in our network. He shares his appreciation of how our two organizations are serving the community together, and how the food Food Banks Mississauga provides is passed on to neighbours in need.

We also support members to ensure adherence to service standards, manage a central client database, and offer training and development opportunities to expand and enhance programming and services, such as our Capacity Building Fund.

CAPACITY BUILDING FUND

The Capacity Building Fund is an exclusive grant offered to our agency network. It’s awarded annually to select applicants to enhance visitor experience, support accurate data collection, or purchase appropriate equipment.

Since it launched in 2022, **\$107,057** has been awarded through **36 grants!**

“With the addition of these shelving units, we are able to stock more items and to offer more items on a regular basis.”

Vita Centre

“The grant allowed us to purchase items that improved our intake and shopping room processes.”

Deacon’s Cupboard

Learn more about our Agency Members

PROGRAMS YOU SUPPORTED

In addition to our primary work of providing food to our agency network, Food Banks Mississauga operates a wide range of unique programs to ensure we meet neighbours where they need support the most.



POP-UP FOOD BANK

FOOD BANKS MISSISSAUGA

Modelled after a farmer's market, our Pop-Up Food Bank brings free fresh fruit, vegetables, and more to neighbours in high-priority neighbourhoods, providing the opportunity to 'shop' for what they need.

Pop-Up Food Bank returned for its third year in the Malton neighbourhood and launched in the Acorn Place community, in partnership with our agency member, Services and Housing in the Province (SHIP).



13,793

Individuals Served



1,569

Households Served



114,210

Pounds of food provided

(80% more than last year)

"You go to the grocery store and everything is so high priced, you can't afford it... And I'm a senior on pension, you know, by the time you pay your rent - you don't have nothing, nothing! And you pay your phone bill and that and where are you? You have nothing left much for groceries."



Susan* is a senior who lives on her own and turns to the Pop-Up Food Bank for fresh food because she doesn't have enough money left over after paying her rent and other bills.

Did you know? The average weekly cost of groceries for a family of four in Peel is **\$272.62**.

Nutritious Food Basket (2024), Region of Peel - Public Health.

*name changed to protect privacy 10

PROGRAMS YOU SUPPORTED



FOOD BANKS MISSISSAUGA

The Food Bank 2 Home Delivery Program brings custom food orders to homebound neighbours. Each order consists of fresh, frozen, and shelf-stable food of the neighbour's choosing (plus personal care items!). **Your monetary gifts and volunteering make it all possible!**

 **753**
Individuals Served

 **508**
Households Served

 **225,680** (up 4% over last year)
Meals from food delivered

This year, the program focused on increasing the amount of fresh fruit and vegetables provided and continued to streamline the order-packing process.

Looking ahead, our goal is to continue working with community health organizations, senior service partners, and our neighbourhood food banks to enroll eligible neighbours in the program.

We will also be piloting a new way of transporting temperature-sensitive food and improving access to culturally appropriate food.



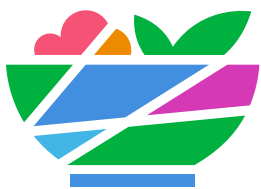
PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT

CLIENT CONNECT

Launched in April 2024, Client Connect allows our team to conduct scheduled wellness check-ins and connect with Food Bank 2 Home clients who may live alone to help manage feelings of isolation.



PROGRAMS YOU SUPPORTED



TAX CLINIC

FOOD BANKS MISSISSAUGA

The annual Income Tax Filing Clinic helps lower-income neighbours file their taxes to receive tax benefits that provide much-needed funds they wouldn't have received otherwise. This program helps put money back into the hands of those who need it most. **THANK YOU to our dedicated volunteers who make this program possible!**



506 Returns completed
(118 more than last year)

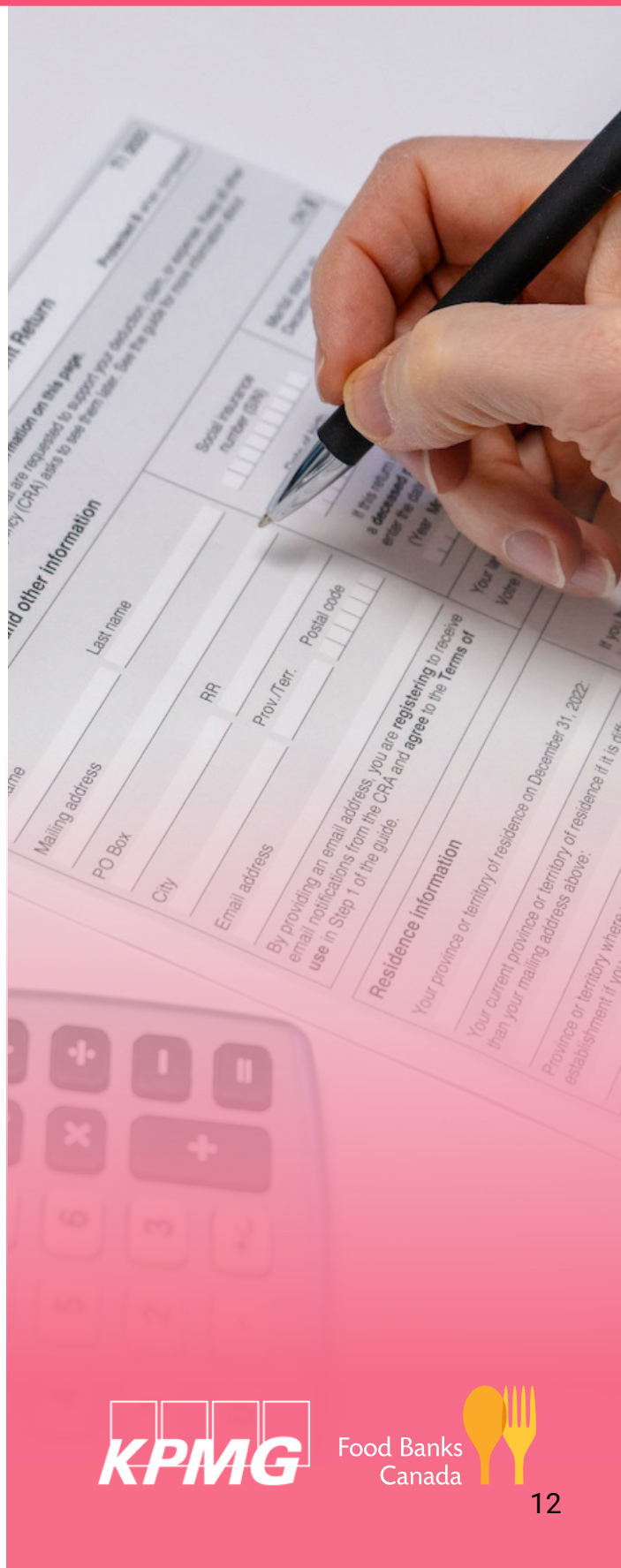
\$2,758,900



Funds returned to our neighbours
(Over \$1.2 million more than last year!)

**"Thank you Food Banks Mississauga!
I bought some groceries with the
money I saved and shared them to my
loved ones. More power to you and all
the volunteers."**

Monica*, Tax Clinic client
*name changed to protect privacy



Food Banks
Canada



PROGRAMS YOU SUPPORTED



FOOD BANKS MISSISSAUGA

The ReclaimFRESH Food Rescue Program is our solution to reducing food waste while supporting neighbours in need!

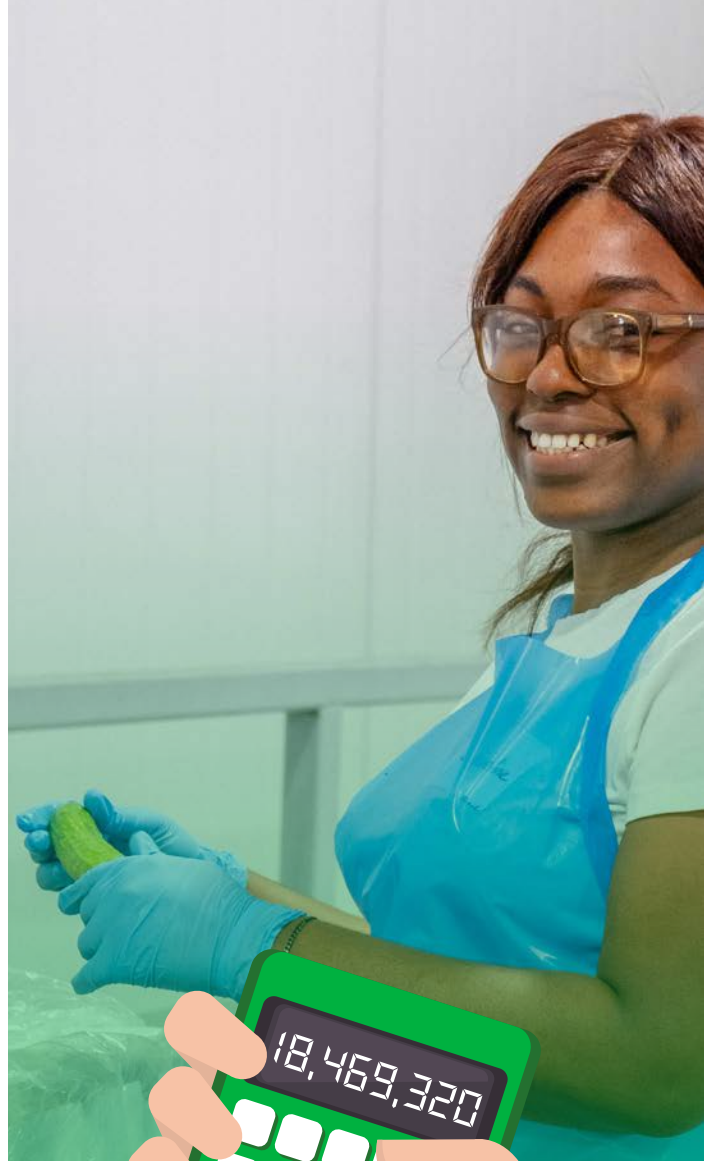
By working with local farmers, wholesalers, producers, and grocery stores, we rescue and rehome edible food. This may be fruit and vegetables that aren't "pretty" enough for retail, surplus harvest or other food that would otherwise be wasted.



You helped us rescue over

2,530,271

pounds of food!



Using Food Banks Canada's Greenhouse Gas Calculator, we calculated that we saved a total of 18,469,320 kg of greenhouse gas emissions across all of our programs. This equals the amount of carbon removed by **305,482** tree seedlings over ten years!

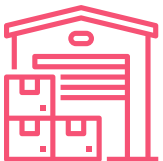
PROGRAMS YOU SUPPORTED

FEED COLLABORATION

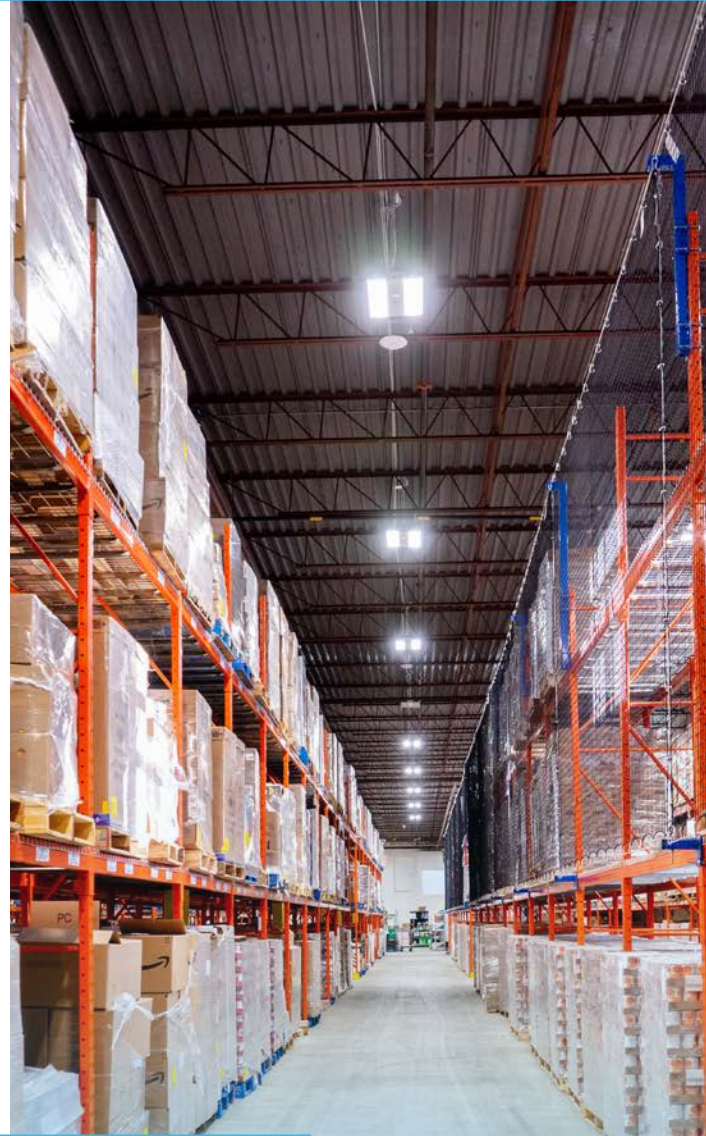
In partnership with Feed Ontario, and using a local-first model, we along with other food bank organizations at the local, regional, and provincial levels, work together to increase and distribute food resources across the Southern and Central Ontario regions.



3,546,191
pounds of food delivered



38 food bank recipients
across the province



"This program has served our small towns tremendously with many high-demand food items such as cereal, pasta, and rice delivered right to us. The donations have allowed us to serve our growing demand with much more ease than we were before getting involved with the program. Thank you!"

Salvation Army - Bracebridge

"We are very grateful for the partnership with Food Banks Mississauga. With this partnership, we are able to share more fresh produce with our community partners as well as smaller food banks in and around our area. Getting more food into even more communities."

Orangeville Food Bank



FEED
ONTARIO



CLIENT SPOTLIGHT

MEET JAI

Thanks to your support, we can help food bank visitors like Jai*, who hasn't been able to find steady employment since the pandemic. Jai's story is like many we've heard from other food bank visitors. He used to volunteer at a food bank and had a job before the pandemic, but he has struggled to find full-time work ever since.

"I'm a software developer by profession. So I got a job, very good job, very nice salary. But right now, every IT company is laying off and it is very hard to find a job. So I have to depend on [the] food bank."

He's looking for short-term, gig work to get by but even those jobs are few and far between. "I applied for every kind of job. Anything I can do and I am willing to do. But the situation over here is very bad."

Jai already lives very lean and tries his best to stretch every dollar. He rents a room in a house where he shares a bedroom with another renter and has to share common spaces like the bathroom and kitchen with 11 other people. It still isn't enough for him to get by, but thanks

to your generosity, he can turn to his neighbourhood food bank in this time of need.

"I am happy with whatever they are giving me because especially they are giving vegetables, the produce, and eggs, milk... I know the value of food right now very well. I never waste a single bit of food. So I can survive almost two to three weeks without any issue."

The reality is, that even with the support of the food bank, Jai still doesn't eat three meals a day in order to make his food last as long as possible. That's why your continued support is so important as we work to support neighbours like Jai as they try to get back on their feet.

We continue to advocate on behalf of neighbours to elected officials at all levels of government to invest in social safety nets and policies for those who are most vulnerable.

**name changed and representative photo used to protect privacy*

TOGETHER FOR FOOD SECURITY

Volunteers are at the heart of our work! Thank you to each volunteer who dedicated their time to collect donations, sort food, input data, pack and deliver orders, answer phone calls, conduct surveys, and more!



1,125

Total Volunteers



33,711

Total Volunteer Hours



1,631,076

Pounds of food sorted

We welcomed **23% more volunteers** who contributed **13% more hours** this year!

Breakdown of Volunteer Hours



4,278

Administrative Hours



19,411

Operations & Food Sorting Hours



10,022

Community Programs Hours



"Volunteering makes me feel as if I'm giving back to the community. It's a double-edged sword. Good to help people but sad so many people cannot afford food... I always felt like it's my duty to help others if I am able."

Susan, volunteer



INCREASING FOOD SECURITY FOR TOMORROW

A FOOD-SECURE MISSISSAUGA

To create a food-secure Mississauga, we not only provide food and resources to support neighbours who are facing food insecurity now, we also advocate for long-term, systemic policy change to address the root causes of food insecurity, including poverty.

We do so by meeting with and educating elected officials at all levels of government on the crises we, our network and food bank visitors, are facing.

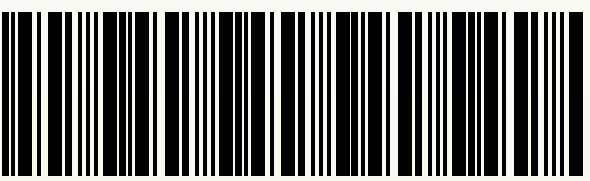
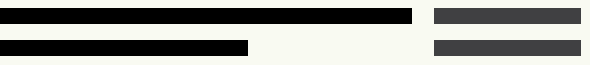
POVERTY

**COSTS ONTARIO AROUND
\$33 BILLION PER YEAR**

feedontario.ca/research/cost-of-poverty-2019

Justice system **\$1.1 billion**
Health care **\$3.9 billion**
Lost income **\$19.4 - 25 billion**
Lost tax revenue **\$2.7 - 3 billion**

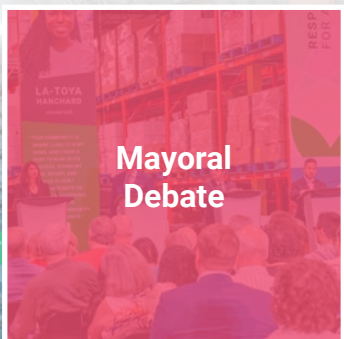
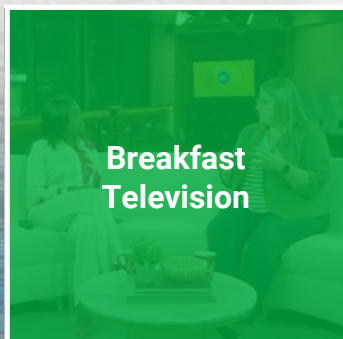
=====
Total: \$33 BILLION



The support you show your neighbours to ensure they have access to healthy food is important and helps them get from one day to the next.

To support them for the future and help build systems that will enable them to break out of the cycle of poverty will take all our collective efforts.

Check out our advocacy in action!




OUR CHANGE AGENDA

Our advocacy priorities align with Feed Ontario's policy recommendations, which outline immediate actions our Municipal Government and the Government of Ontario can take. Please use your voice and join us in calling on our elected officials to prioritize the following four recommendations!

PRIORITY #1:

IMPROVE ONTARIO'S SOCIAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

 **25%** of food bank visitors identify as having a disability.

1 in 3 food bank visitors receive income support through the Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP) and / or Ontario Works (OW).

\$1,308 is the most that a single person on ODSP can receive per month.

That's less than \$16,000 per year.

ODSP is currently lower than it was in 2018 (\$1,376, adjusted for inflation) and amounts to **less than half** of the disability-adjusted poverty line (\$3,091).³

We must reduce barriers to access OW and ODSP, increase social assistance rates to align with the true cost of living, and ensure these benefits are exempt from clawbacks.



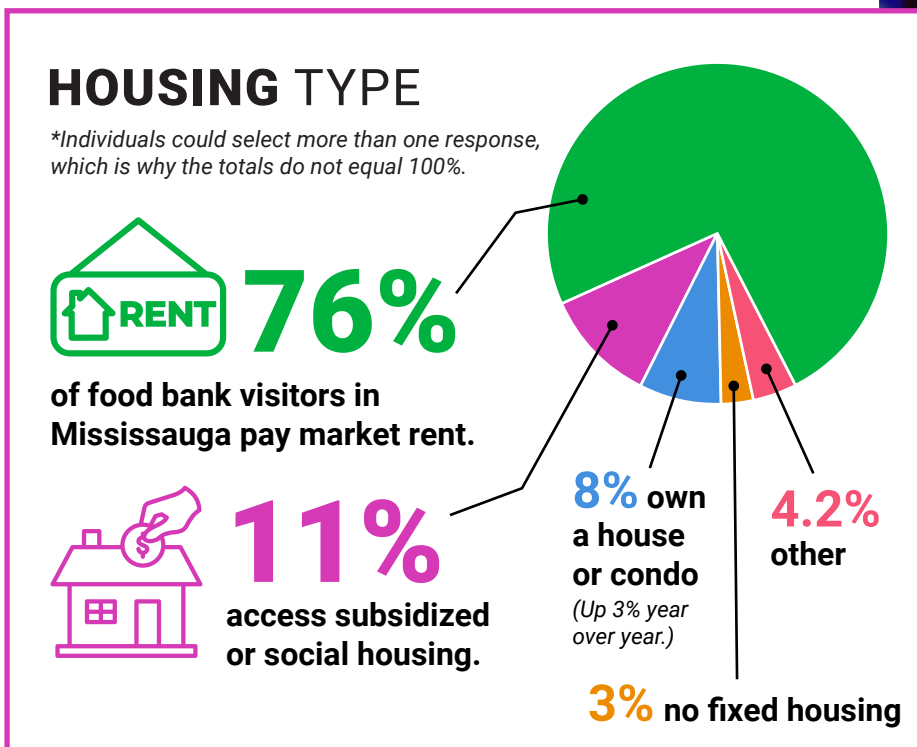
³ Statement on 2023 Increase to ODSP. Feed Ontario, July 24, 2023. <https://feedontario.ca/news/statement-on-2023-increase-to-odsp>

OUR CHANGE AGENDA

PRIORITY #2:

INVEST IN AFFORDABLE HOUSING

For many people, food banks are a last resort. A recent study by McMaster University showed that nearly 50% of food bank clients would be homeless without food bank support⁴, and unaffordable housing is one of the top reasons that people visit a food bank.



Building and repairing affordable and supportive housing, including non-profit and cooperatives, needs to be a priority so our neighbours have enough money left over for food or other necessities after paying rent. Laws also need to be strengthened to promote tenant stability.



⁴ Mitchell, Don. "Food Share study reveals half of users could suffer homelessness without food bank." Global News, October 20, 2022. <https://globalnews.ca/news/9213608/mcmaster-hamilton-food-share-study-homeless-without-food-banks/>

OUR CHANGE AGENDA

PRIORITY #3:

BUILD A STRONGER WORKFORCE

Wages are not keeping up with the cost of living or inflation, and with people increasingly relying on low-wage, precarious work, employed individuals are one of the fastest-growing food bank demographics.

With the provincial minimum wage so far below a living wage, those with steady employment from one or even multiple jobs will continue to be dependent on a food bank to make ends meet.

What will contribute to a stronger workforce?

- Increasing the provincial minimum wage to be a living wage
- Developing and protecting labour laws that benefit workers (including 'gig workers')
- Reducing barriers to unionization
- Allowing low-income workers to keep more of their income by increasing earning exemptions and reducing clawbacks
- Enhancing worker support programs like WSIB & EI

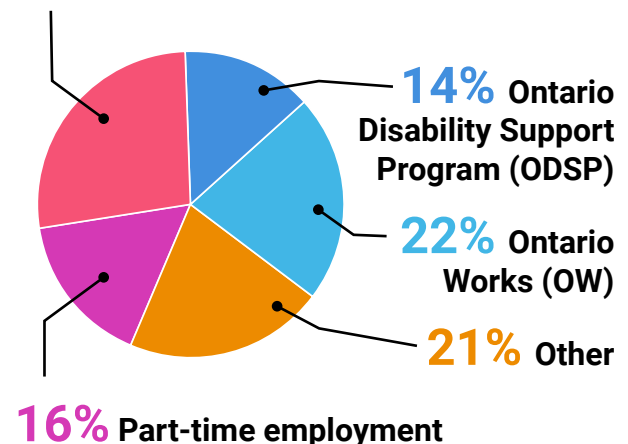


SOURCES OF INCOME

 **27%**

**Excluding those who reported no income or didn't disclose*

of food bank visitors shared that full-time employment is their main source of income.



OUR CHANGE AGENDA

PRIORITY #4:

PUT PEOPLE AT THE CENTRE

Our neighbours who have experience living in poverty are the experts on the realities of the challenges they face. Their perspectives and insights are necessary for developing effective poverty reduction initiatives.



"I feel like I have a family here... I feel at home when I come here... and I see the ladies and, you know, share my experience with them and the way I was welcomed. I was like, 'whoa', I have nothing to be afraid of."

Jordana*, food bank visitor
**name changed to protect privacy*

Consulting with people who have lived experiences of poverty, defining poverty and the outcomes we are working towards, and supporting the work of community organizations are key next steps.





CLIENT SPOTLIGHT

MEET MICHELLE

Michelle* is a single parent with a household of three to take care of. She used to be employed as a security guard but hasn't been able to work due to health issues. Like many of your neighbours, she now has to rely on the Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP). But social assistance programs like ODSP have not kept up with the cost of living and people like Michelle get stuck in a cycle that prevents them from moving ahead.

"I get \$1,968 every month from ODSP. My rent is \$1,650. So, you put that together, and then I have to wait until the 20th to get child tax. And the child tax is only \$850. By the time I get to \$850, I already borrowed like \$200, \$300 from someone else... and then we do it again next month."

Without proper government investment in programs such as ODSP, neighbours like Michelle end each month without enough to pay for necessities to ensure that they and their children can lead an adequate life.

"The biggest struggle right now is just taking care of children. It's the rent, it's the groceries, and everything just goes up every time you look... But I'm not going to be ashamed, because at the end of the day, this is helping me feed my children. It's helping me feed myself. And the most struggle is just trying to make sure these kids are comfortable and healthy. That's the hardest thing as a single mother."

If it wasn't for the generous support you show your neighbours in need, folks like Michelle and her family would go without.

"We really appreciate everything you're doing for the families that really need the help. At the end of the day, it helps and it relieves a lot of pressure off, especially single parents... Working and feeding children is really, really hard. So, we really appreciate everything you guys are doing. Thanks for thinking of us every month."

**name changed to protect privacy*

MEET OUR BOARD!

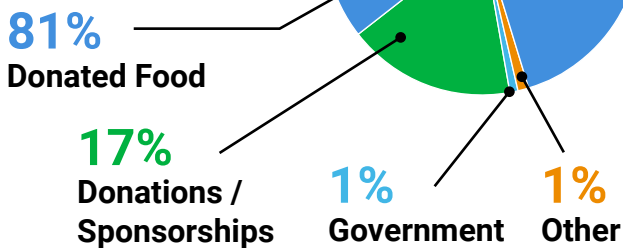


Get to know our Board!

Our Board of Directors provides oversight and leadership to Food Banks Mississauga's strategy and mission.

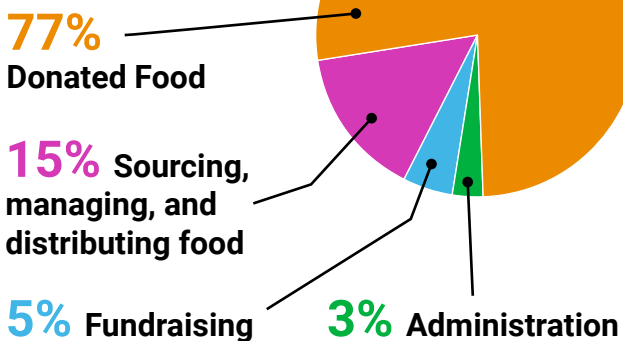
DONATIONS & INCOME

\$35,181,189



EXPENSES

\$36,767,748



OUR FINANCES

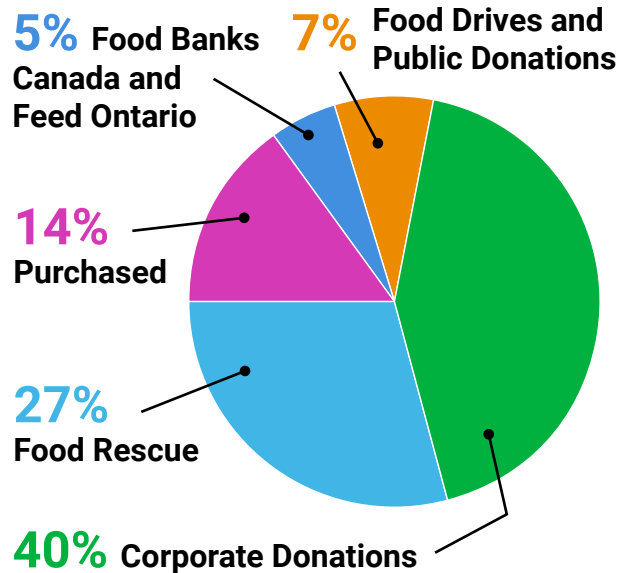
Every donation you make goes towards providing healthy food to neighbours across Mississauga.

Thank you to everyone who makes this possible, with a special thank you to our sponsors and partners who made significant contributions to support neighbours in need.

Income and expenses include 7,940,105 pounds of donated food and household products valued at \$3.58/pound. This value has been determined by Nielsen MarketTrack, for 52 weeks ending March 23, 2024.

FOOD SOURCES

Percentages are rounded, which is why the totals do not equal 100%.



SPONSORS AND PARTNERS



The Catherine and Maxwell
MEIGHEN FOUNDATION



The Government of
Canada's Community
Services Recovery Fund



J.P. Bickell Foundation

The John and Kim
Morrison Family Foundation



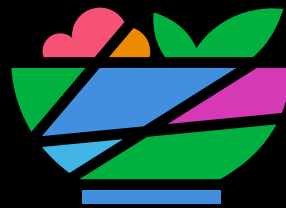
*Kimberly-Clark

Loblaw
Companies
Limited



Tim Hortons





**FOOD
BANKS**
MISSISSAUGA

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