



Food Banks
Canada



Banques alimentaires
Canada

ADVOCACY TOOLKIT

ISSUED 2024

**HUNGER
IN CANADA
IS A REALITY
FOR FAR
TOO MANY
PEOPLE**

1  **6**

**HOUSEHOLDS
ARE EMPLOYED
AND STILL CAN'T
MAKE ENDS MEET**

I. INTRO

What is Advocacy?	3
Why is Advocacy Important?	4
Our Call to Action	5
What we Can Achieve	6
Info about Hunger in Canada	8
Policy Overview	12

2. YOUR ROLE IN ADVOCACY

What is your Organizational Capacity?	15
Not Sure Where to Begin?	16
Identifying When and Where to Strike – Your Windows of Opportunity	18
Identifying When and Where to Strike – Levels of Government	21

3. ADVOCACY STRATEGIES

Active and Passive Advocacy	24
Social Media	27
Informing and Educating Politicians	32
Site Visits	34
Events (Webinars and workshops)	36
Meeting with Elected Officials (Lobbying)	39
Petitions and Letters	43
Forming Coalitions	45
Op-Eds and Media	47
Data Collection and Link2Feed	49
Tax Clinics	51

4. CASE STUDIES

Coming Soon	55
-------------	----

5. THE RULES FOR CHARITIES AND NON-PROFITS

Provincial	57
Federal	62

6. TOOLS

TOOL A – Information Package Template	64
TOOL B – Federal and Provincial Policy Recommendations	65
TOOL C – Webinars and Workshops	66
TOOL D – Sample Media Alert	70
TOOL E – Running a Link2Feed Report	71
TOOL F – Writing a Letter to Inform Your Local Representative	76

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D
I
S
I
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Welcome to the Food Bank Network Advocacy Toolkit.

This is your one-stop document for all things advocacy.

If you're hoping to make lasting and impactful change in your community and for Individuals in Canada alike, this toolkit is the perfect place to start.

While you are already doing such great work in your food bank by ensuring that no Canadian goes hungry today, there is still so much that needs to be done to ensure that no Canadian goes hungry tomorrow – and this can only be done by addressing the root causes of food insecurity, which are poverty and low incomes. This document is a first step in that direction. Learn to identify your capacity as an individual and organization and develop plans to help Canada become a country where no one goes hungry.

WELCOME TO
CHANGE

I. INTRO

[What is Advocacy? / Why is Advocacy Important? /](#)

[Our Call to Action / What we Can Achieve /](#)

[Info about Hunger in Canada / Policy Overview](#)



[Return to Table of Contents](#)

WHAT IS ADVOCACY?

Advocacy is **the act of supporting or recommending a solution to a particular social, political, or economic issue**. For a charity that focuses on food insecurity in Canada, advocacy will likely consist of your support and request for policies that help lift people out of poverty.

It is important to be non-partisan in all your advocacy efforts. As a charity or non-profit, conducting advocacy that promotes or denounces an elected official or political party is strictly off limits. In other words, all actions should be non-partisan, and your role should instead be focused on drawing people's attention to key issues and how they can be resolved in your area.

For those of you who are already familiar with the Election Toolkit that Food Banks Canada releases during each federal election, many of the same cautions and tips are applicable to your everyday advocacy efforts.



A SUMMARY OF THE RULES FOR CHARITIES AND NON-PROFITS CAN BE FOUND ON **PAGE 58**

AS A CHARITY OR NON-PROFIT, CONDUCTING ADVOCACY THAT PROMOTES OR DENOUNCES AN ELECTED OFFICIAL OR POLITICAL PARTY IS STRICTLY OFF LIMITS.

I. INTRO

[What is Advocacy? / Why is Advocacy Important? / Our Call to Action / What we Can Achieve / Info about Hunger in Canada / Policy Overview](#)



[Return to Table of Contents](#)

WHY IS ADVOCACY IMPORTANT?

As you know, **food banks are not a long-term solution to food insecurity.**

Those visiting food banks are seeking help because they are dealing with the underlying issues of poverty and low incomes.

Food banks have a large role to play in helping their clients escape the cycle of poverty that makes bringing food to the table so difficult. Beyond offering nutritious and dependable foods along with other community services, food banks can advocate for their clients on many levels.

As frontline witnesses to the hardships that food bank clients experience, you no doubt have every desire to help your clients find a long-term solution to their problems.

With your unique perspective, you and your team can become a crucial player in long-term policies that reduce the need for food banks in the future.

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I. INTRO

What is Advocacy? / Why is Advocacy Important? /
Our Call to Action / What we Can Achieve /
Info about Hunger in Canada / Policy Overview

 [Return to Table of Contents](#)

OUR CALL TO ACTION

You are a part of a vast network that represents thousands of organizations and hundreds of thousands of people across Canada. **If we can unite under a unified voice, our messages will be heard loud and clear by elected officials everywhere.** Please use your position, as a first-hand witness to the damage of poverty and low incomes, to stand up and ask for better policies that help people put food on the table. You can truly make a big difference for the people of your community and beyond. Start here, don't be afraid to ask for help, share your success, and take on new challenges.

IF WE CAN
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I. INTRO

[What is Advocacy? / Why is Advocacy Important? / Our Call to Action / What we Can Achieve / Info about Hunger in Canada / Policy Overview](#)



[Return to Table of Contents](#)

WHAT WE CAN ACHIEVE

The food bank network includes thousands of people and organizations in communities across the country. If we work on advocacy as a united front, we can:

1. Inform politicians (MPs, MPPs, city councillors) and the public about food bank use in Canada, and in your community;
2. Develop new relationships with politicians linked to your community;
3. Bring increased attention to the root causes of food bank use – which are poverty and low incomes; and
4. Encourage all political parties and candidates to develop and enact real policy solutions to reduce the need for food banks in the future.

Food Banks Canada isn't the only place you can find pertinent data for your local advocacy efforts. Don't forget that the **Link2Feed software** allows you to pull data directly related to your clients. This is the best way to take accurate numbers about client demographics to the public and political officials.

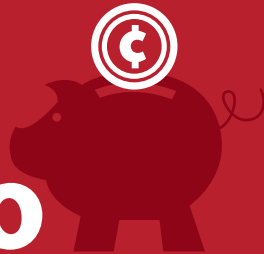
If you haven't set up **Link2Feed** at your food bank location yet, please contact: karanjyot@foodbankscanada.ca.

I. INTRO

[What is Advocacy?](#) / [Why is Advocacy Important?](#) / [Our Call to Action](#) / [What we Can Achieve](#) / [Info about Hunger in Canada](#) / [Policy Overview](#)

 [Return to Table of Contents](#)

**HUNGER
IN CANADA
IS A REALITY
FOR FAR
TOO MANY
PEOPLE**

42%  **OF THOSE ACCESSING
FOOD BANKS
ARE ON **SOCIAL
ASSISTANCE** OR
DISABILITY-RELATED
INCOMES**

The following statistics from HungerCount 2023 show that food bank use is a reality, or a close reality, for far too many people in Canada. This information can help you build your case when informing others about the need for action on these issues.

CANADIANS VISITED FOOD BANKS
OVER 1.9 MILLION TIMES IN MARCH OF 2023

33% OF PEOPLE HELPED BY FOOD BANKS
ARE CHILDREN, WHEREAS CHILDREN ONLY MAKE UP
20% OF THE GENERAL POPULATION

68% OF FOOD BANK CLIENTS
LIVE IN MARKET RENTAL HOUSING

14% OF FOOD BANK CLIENTS
ARE LIVING IN SOCIAL HOUSING

SINGLE ADULT HOUSEHOLDS REPRESENT
44% OF HOUSEHOLDS ACCESSING FOOD BANKS,
YET THEY ONLY MAKE UP 29% OF THE GENERAL POPULATION

INFO ABOUT HUNGER IN CANADA

I. INTRO

[What is Advocacy? / Why is Advocacy Important? /](#)
[Our Call to Action / What we Can Achieve /](#)
[Info about Hunger in Canada / Policy Overview](#)

 [Return to Table of Contents](#)

1 IN 6 HOUSEHOLDS

ARE EMPLOYED AND STILL CAN'T MAKE ENDS MEET

THOSE IN THE LABOUR FORCE (RECEIVE INCOME FROM
A JOB, EI, OR PANDEMIC-RELATED BENEFITS)
REPRESENT 20% OF FOOD BANK CLIENTS

42% OF THOSE ACCESSING FOOD BANKS
ARE ON SOCIAL ASSISTANCE
OR DISABILITY-RELATED INCOMES

★ **29% ON SOCIAL ASSISTANCE**

★ **14% ON DISABILITY-RELATED INCOME**

8% OF FOOD BANK CLIENTS
ARE IN **POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION**

INDIGENOUS PEOPLE NOW REPRESENT
13% OF FOOD BANK CLIENTS

INFO ABOUT HUNGER IN CANADA

I. INTRO

[What is Advocacy? / Why is Advocacy Important? /
Our Call to Action / What we Can Achieve /
Info about Hunger in Canada / Policy Overview](#)



[Return to Table of Contents](#)

NEARLY 7 MILLION (18%)

PEOPLE IN CANADA LIVED IN

FOOD-INSECURE HOUSEHOLDS IN 2022

THIS INCLUDES ALL LEVELS OF FOOD INSECURITY (MARGINAL, MODERATE AND SEVERE)[†]

MORE THAN 1 IN 3 (35%)

CANADIANS LIVE IN A HOUSEHOLD THAT

STRUGGLES TO MEET IT'S FOOD AND HOUSING COSTS

(THIS IS UP FROM 1 IN 5 (19%) IN JUST TWO YEARS)

43% OF PEOPLE IN CANADA

FEEL FINANCIALLY WORSE OFF

THAN THEY DID ONE YEAR AGO

I. INTRO

[What is Advocacy? / Why is Advocacy Important? /](#)

[Our Call to Action / What we Can Achieve /](#)

[Info about Hunger in Canada / Policy Overview](#)



[Return to Table of Contents](#)

MORE THAN 1 IN 3 CANADIANS
ARE SPENDING MORE THAN
30% OF THEIR INCOME ON HOUSING

46% (NEARLY HALF)
OF PEOPLE RECEIVING **GOVERNMENT INCOME SUPPORTS**
SAY THAT RATES **AREN'T ENOUGH TO KEEP UP**
WITH THE **COST OF LIVING**

RACIALISED COMMUNITIES, NOW REPRESENT
39% OF FOOD BANK VISITORS
– UP FROM 33% LAST YEAR.

† Statistics Canada

‡ Grassroots Greenhouse public opinion poll around agriculture, agri-food and issues affecting the Canadian food space (April 2022)

While these figures paint a portrait of the national situation, it is also important for you **to use your own local information** to inform policy makers and the public about the realities in your region and community.



VISIT **TOOL** E TO GET STATS ON YOUR OWN FOOD BANK VISITORS

ADDITIONAL
STATISTICS

I. INTRO

What is Advocacy? / Why is Advocacy Important? /
Our Call to Action / What we Can Achieve /
Info about Hunger in Canada / Policy Overview



Return to Table of Contents

POLICY OVERVIEW

Our policy at Food Banks Canada is regularly evolving with the political landscape. You can find a full-detailed report of our policy.

Below is a snapshot of our four main policy objectives, which we ask that you use to guide your own advocacy efforts.

1. Governments must begin rebuilding our broken social safety net.

For decades, governments have been clawing back on social supports from housing to education. These days, millions of Canadians are falling through the cracks into poverty and are forced to visit food banks. To fix this broken system, we recommend progress towards a minimum income floor, starting with quick and meaningful action on the Canada Disability Benefit. We call for better access and quality of benefits and immediate relief for those struggling with the cost of living.

2. It's time to get serious about housing.

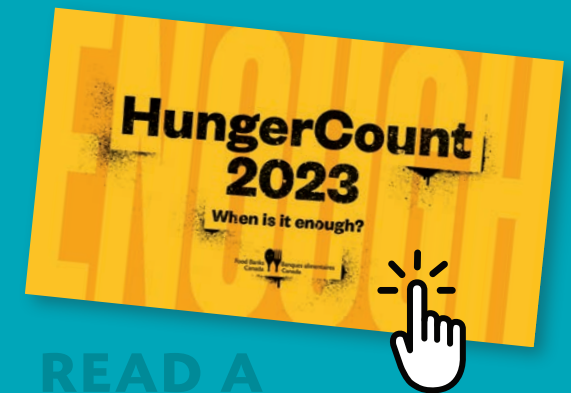
As more people continue to struggle at unprecedented rates, affordable housing supplies are still eroding and are being built too slowly. Using a dual-approach, long term solutions are needed to increase the development of new affordable housing while short term solutions like a national rent-assist program are needed.

3. As workers with low incomes continue flood food banks, Canada needs new policies that guarantees those who work will always have enough money to put food on the table.

After years of asking the federal government to follow through on its EI promises, we are still waiting. The long-awaited EI reforms need to be introduced swiftly. Additional reforms to the CWB will also be necessary to ensure that Canadian workers with low incomes can make ends meet.

4. Food insecurity and poverty must get special attention in northern and remote parts of Canada.

This region suffers from much higher rates of poverty and food insecurity than the rest of the country. Governments must introduce permanent solutions instead of unpredictable temporary funding solutions. New locally driven approaches to develop Northern economies must be prioritised to help support communities that have struggled for far too long.



READ A
COPY OF THE
CURRENT FOOD
BANKS CANADA
DETAILED POLICY
REPORT [HERE](#)

I. INTRO

[What is Advocacy?](#) / [Why is Advocacy Important?](#) /
[Our Call to Action](#) / [What we Can Achieve](#) /
[Info about Hunger in Canada](#) / [Policy Overview](#)

 [Return to Table of Contents](#)



HUNGER IN CANADA IS A REALITY FOR FAR TOO MANY PEOPLE



NEARLY **7 MILLION**
CANADIANS (18%)
LIVED IN
FOOD-INSECURE
HOUSEHOLDS IN 2022



If you're ready to start exploring your individual and organization's role in advocacy, you can begin in this section. First, you will need to start by identifying your organization's capacity for advocacy. Asking how much time you have and where you are best placed to focus your efforts is key to starting on the right foot. Once you've recognized your capacity, **this section includes details to help you in your first brainstorming session.**

As you begin to narrow your focus on a specific cause and campaign, you can also begin exploring timing and different levels of government. With that said, **not all advocacy efforts require much effort in the end, and every organization is capable of finding a way to contribute without stretching their valuable time.**

2. YOUR ROLE IN ADVOCACY

2. YOUR ROLE IN ADVOCACY

What is your Organizational Capacity? /
Not Sure Where to Begin? / Identifying When and
Where to Strike – Your Windows of Opportunity /
Levels of Government

 [Return to Table of Contents](#)

WHAT IS YOUR ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY?

Every food bank and network affiliate will have varying levels of capacity for advocacy. Understandably, **running a food bank is a monumental task** that takes up most (or all) of the resources that food bank organizers have to spare.

Depending on the size of your staff and volunteer network, along with the support that you have in the community, you will be equipped to conduct advocacy in one of two ways. The first is through passive advocacy, where most of your efforts can be done without elaborate planning. Second, you can conduct an active advocacy effort where your actions are carefully planned out to target a certain objective.

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2. YOUR ROLE IN ADVOCACY

What is your Organizational Capacity? /
Not Sure Where to Begin? / Identifying When and
Where to Strike – Your Windows of Opportunity /
Levels of Government

 [Return to Table of Contents](#)

NOT SURE WHERE TO BEGIN?

Thinking about advocacy can be overwhelming. While this toolkit has been designed to provide you with most of what you'll need to run a successful advocacy campaign, or to better imbed advocacy into the culture of your organization, finding out where to start can be a challenge.

Our team is here to help you plan. Reach out to dana.vreeswijk@foodbankscanada.ca.

In addition, here are some prompts to help you get started:

- What is an outcome you would like to see?
- Working backwards, what are the steps needed to reach the outcome you described in the previous prompt
- What unique perspective can you offer on an important social issue?
- Do you have a local politician who is passionate about poverty and food insecurity?
Or a local politician who is closely engaged with your food bank?
- Have you noticed any changes in food bank visitors in the last year?
Perhaps this is an indication of another change.
 - Is the issue something that the public is already familiar with?
- What connections in the community do you have that can help make your voice heard?
- Are other organizations in the area focusing on a particular issue that also fits your mandate?

2. YOUR ROLE IN ADVOCACY

What is your Organizational Capacity? /
Not Sure Where to Begin? / Identifying When and
Where to Strike – Your Windows of Opportunity /
Levels of Government

 [Return to Table of Contents](#)

Reflecting on these questions will help you gain an understanding of what you hope to achieve and how much effort will be needed to achieve it. If you ask yourself these questions and find that your goals are too ambitious to achieve alone, then **tapping into the wider food banking network, or a network of local volunteers or like-minded organizations, may be the best way to accomplish them.**



INFORMATION ABOUT FORMING COALITIONS CAN BE FOUND ON **PAGE 45**

**RACIALISED
COMMUNITIES
NOW REPRESENT**

 **39%**

OF FOOD BANK VISITORS

(UP FROM 33% LAST YEAR)

2. YOUR ROLE IN ADVOCACY

What is your Organizational Capacity? /

Not Sure Where to Begin? / Identifying When and

Where to Strike – Your Windows of Opportunity /

Levels of Government



Return to Table of Contents

IDENTIFYING WHEN AND WHERE TO STRIKE – YOUR WINDOWS OF OPPORTUNITY

Advocacy is often a matter of identifying a window of opportunity in your community. With many important issues being addressed by governments, there are a few key moments throughout the year that create opportunities for your objective to be heard.

While you don't always have to wait for these opportunities to arise, they can simplify your efforts and anchor your advocacy in a broader process.



EVENT CALENDARS

Look online to see if your local government or politician has a calendar of events. Within this calendar, there may be townhalls that you wish to attend or upcoming meetings that are related to your advocacy topic. Seeing this list of events and meetings can also give you an idea of when you may want to speak to a politician. If, for example, there is a big meeting of interest in two months, you will want to speak to the politician before then in order to sway their role in the meeting.

2. YOUR ROLE IN ADVOCACY

What is your Organizational Capacity? /
Not Sure Where to Begin? / Identifying When and
Where to Strike – Your Windows of Opportunity /
Levels of Government

 [Return to Table of Contents](#)



BUDGET SEASON

Budget season is one of the most significant times of the year at all levels of government. Generally, from the fall and into the early spring, governments will be reviewing the past year's budget and making decisions on what ought to be included in the new budget. This is an opportunity to ask for funding to be directed to important initiatives like affordable housing.



MUNICIPAL MASTER PLANS

Every municipality in Canada has a master plan (generally renewed every five years) which provides a general outline of the city's goals and direction. If your municipality is in the process of reviewing this document, it would be worthwhile to speak with councillors and planners about the importance of issues related to poverty and food insecurity. Making sure that certain goals and policies are included in this document is a fantastic way to build government accountability.

Even when the master plan is already decided, you can use the language within it to strengthen your arguments and deliver a strong message.

2. YOUR ROLE IN ADVOCACY

What is your Organizational Capacity? /

Not Sure Where to Begin? / Identifying When and

Where to Strike – Your Windows of Opportunity /

Levels of Government



[Return to Table of Contents](#)



ELECTIONS

Elections are clearly one of the most significant focal points for advocacy. They also come with another set of rules and strategies.



PLEASE SEE FOOD BANKS CANADA'S FEDERAL ELECTION GUIDE [HERE](#) FOR SOME STRATEGIES THAT YOU CAN APPLY AT ALL LEVELS OF GOVERNMENT DURING AN ELECTION.



MAJOR EVENTS

Major events are opportunities that arise beyond anyone's control. COVID-19 is an example of a major event which impacted the way people advocated. Another example would be a high-profile local event that has brought attention to an issue. No matter the circumstances, when a major event occurs around a topic of interest, you can use that event as an opportunity to voice your opinion. In the case of COVID-19, many advocates spoke-out about 'building back better'. The 'build back better' movement is a perfect example of how advocacy organizations can take a bad situation and come forward with well-framed solutions.

2. YOUR ROLE IN ADVOCACY

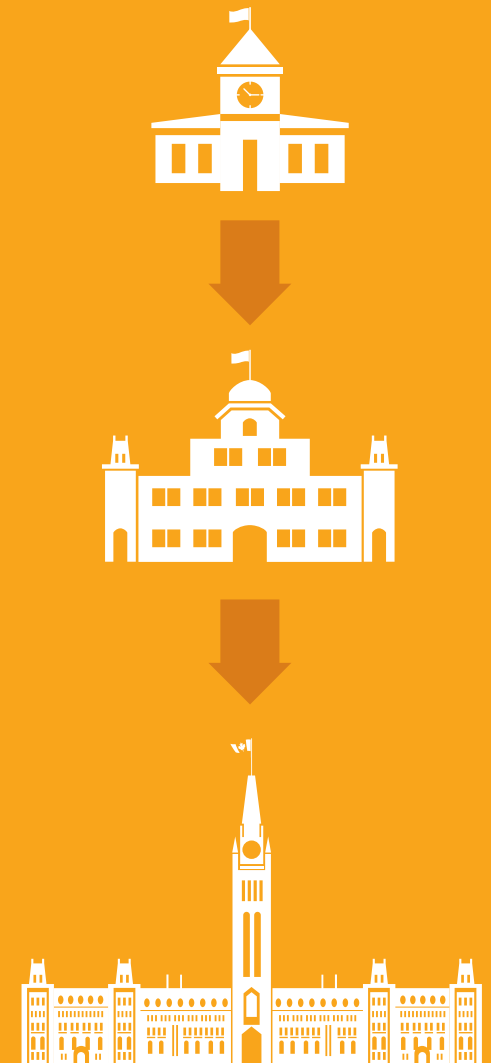
What is your Organizational Capacity? /
Not Sure Where to Begin? / Identifying When and
Where to Strike – Your Windows of Opportunity /
Levels of Government



[Return to Table of Contents](#)

IDENTIFYING WHEN AND WHERE TO STRIKE – LEVELS OF GOVERNMENT

Each level of government has its own jurisdiction over different issues. As such, you will want to contact different elected officials depending on the issue that you want to address. While it's not always clear which political official you will need to talk to (sometimes issues impact several levels of government), you can start here with a simple breakdown of jurisdiction.



2. YOUR ROLE IN ADVOCACY

What is your Organizational Capacity? /
Not Sure Where to Begin? / Identifying When and
Where to Strike – Your Windows of Opportunity /
Levels of Government

 [Return to Table of Contents](#)

MUNICIPAL – CITY COUNCILLOR

- **Public transportation cost**
- **City development/planning** (i.e., zoning that is conducive to affordable housing)
- **Ticketing and fines**
- **Taxing** (taxes for licensed childcare, etc.)
- **Culture** (tourism, festivals, events, libraries, economic development)
- **Emergency services**
- **Some housing** (social housing, shelters, etc.)
- **Hydro**
- **Parks and recreation**
- **Public facilities and washrooms**
- **Public health** (immunizations, inspections)
- **School boards**
- **Mobility poverty** (changes to curbs, sidewalks, distance between transit hubs)

PROVINCIAL – MEMBER OF PROVINCIAL PARLIAMENT (MPP)

- **Healthcare**
- **Education**
- **Social assistance**
- **Disability assistance**
- **Affordable housing funding**
- **Wages**
- **Childcare**
- **Transportation**
- **Children and youth services**
- **Community and social services**
- **Correctional services**
- **Health and long-term care**
- **Northern development and mining**
- **Some agriculture and agri-food**

FEDERAL – MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT (MP)

- **Some tax benefits** (i.e., Canada Child Benefit)
- **Employment insurance** (EI)
- **Affordable housing funding**
- **Some agriculture and agri-food**
- **Crown-Indigenous relations**
- **Indigenous services**
- **Innovation, science, and economic development**
- **Public safety and emergency preparedness**

CLICK HERE TO FIND YOUR
FEDERAL MP




TO FIND YOUR **MPP** OR **MUNICIPAL OFFICIAL**, A SIMPLE ONLINE SEARCH WILL BRING YOU TO A DIRECTORY WHERE YOU CAN ACCESS THEIR CONTACT INFORMATION

2. YOUR ROLE IN ADVOCACY

What is your Organizational Capacity? /
Not Sure Where to Begin? / Identifying When and
Where to Strike – Your Windows of Opportunity /
Levels of Government

 [Return to Table of Contents](#)

**HUNGER
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33% 
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HELPED BY FOOD BANKS
ARE CHILDREN,
WHEREAS CHILDREN
ONLY MAKE UP 20%
OF THE GENERAL POPULATION**



ACTIVE ADVOCACY

Understanding the policy objectives of the network and the needs within your community, you conduct advocacy with a targeted and measurable end-goal. These strategies are planned, deliberate, and the most effective in making a change.

- **Planned social media campaigns**
- **Hosting coordinated events**
(webinars, rallies, workshops, etc.)
- **Directly advocating for an issue with city councillors, MPPs, and MPs**
- **Forming coalitions focused on shared objectives**
- **Hosting elected officials to visit your food bank and sharing valuable information to help shape policy**

3. ADVOCACY STRATEGIES

3. ADVOCACY STRATEGIES

Active and Passive Advocacy / Social Media / Informing and Educating Politicians / Site Visits / Events (Webinars and workshops) / Meeting with Elected Officials (Lobbying) / Petitions and Letters / Forming Coalitions / Op-Eds and Media / Data Collection and Link2Feed / Tax Clinics

 [Return to Table of Contents](#)



PASSIVE ADVOCACY

Understanding the policy objectives of the network and the needs within your community, you conduct advocacy through general and ongoing efforts which are not targeted but are intended to keep the public informed and engaged.

- **Ongoing social media participation**
- **Knowledge sharing for food bank clients and the community**
- **Sending annual information packages to local politicians**
- **Collecting advocacy data through Link2Feed**
- **Hosting a tax clinic**

3. ADVOCACY STRATEGIES

Active and Passive Advocacy / Social Media / Informing and Educating Politicians / Site Visits / Events (Webinars and workshops) / Meeting with Elected Officials (Lobbying) / Petitions and Letters / Forming Coalitions / Op-Eds and Media / Data Collection and Link2Feed / Tax Clinics

 [Return to Table of Contents](#)

There are multiple ways to reach out to elected officials and share your impact, and support community input and engagement.

Click on any of the topics below to quickly access more about these strategies.



SOCIAL MEDIA ON PAGE 27



INFORMING AND EDUCATE POLITICIANS ON PAGE 32



SITE VISITS ON PAGE 34



EVENTS ON PAGE 36



MEETING WITH ELECTED OFFICIALS (LOBBYING) ON PAGE 39



PETITIONS AND LETTERS ON PAGE 43



FORMING COALITIONS ON PAGE 45



OP-EDS AND MEDIA ON PAGE 47



DATA COLLECTION AND Link2Feed ON PAGE 49



TAX CLINICS ON PAGE 51

3. ADVOCACY STRATEGIES

Active and Passive Advocacy / Social Media /
Informing and Educating Politicians / Site Visits /
Events (Webinars and workshops) / Meeting with
Elected Officials (Lobbying) / Petitions and Letters /
Forming Coalitions / Op-Eds and Media /
Data Collection and Link2Feed / Tax Clinics

 [Return to Table of Contents](#)

SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media is an incredibly powerful advocacy tool that allows people to quickly and easily share information with their networks about various issues and causes. When harnessed properly, organizations can engage their existing audiences and leverage that support to attract new people to the cause.

This is done by:

- Posting regular, consistent, and quality content;
- Engaging with followers;
- Using relevant hashtags; and
- Partnering with other accounts and/or influencers.

3. ADVOCACY STRATEGIES

Active and Passive Advocacy / Social Media /
Informing and Educating Politicians / Site Visits /
Events (Webinars and workshops) / Meeting with
Elected Officials (Lobbying) / Petitions and Letters /
Forming Coalitions / Op-Eds and Media /
Data Collection and Link2Feed / Tax Clinics

 [Return to Table of Contents](#)

Our recommended best practices are as follows:

Regular, consistent, quality content

Data shows that accounts that post more frequently tend to have more followers and better rates of engagement. However, the content posted must also be relevant and engaging. Do you have an exciting new food drive coming up? Is there a local news story that relates to the work you do? These are ideal topics for social media posts.

When creating and sharing content, be sure to **keep your audience in mind.**

Why will they find this compelling? What's in it for them?

For platforms like Instagram, are the images that are being used in focus, level, and visually appealing? You don't need a degree in graphic design to use some of the editing tools baked into these apps and make a regular iPhone snap into some quality social media content! Remember to include a link and information about how to identify their MP, MPP, etc., as well as language that they can use in an email or phone call. Perhaps you could have templates on your website for reference.

3. ADVOCACY STRATEGIES

Active and Passive Advocacy / Social Media /
Informing and Educating Politicians / Site Visits /
Events (Webinars and workshops) / Meeting with
Elected Officials (Lobbying) / Petitions and Letters /
Forming Coalitions / Op-Eds and Media /
Data Collection and Link2Feed / Tax Clinics

 [Return to Table of Contents](#)

Engaging with followers

The great thing about social media is that it's a two-way conversation. Build your following by engaging with other similar accounts to yours, and always reply to positive, productive follower comments. Our policy is to delete comments that are blatantly harmful, offensive, or spam.

A great way to get followers invested is by including information about an issue or topic, followed by a call to action. What do you want your followers to do after reading your post? Visit your website, sign a petition, or make a donation? Write to their elected officials to lobby for policy change? Remember to include a link and information about how to identify their MP, MPP, etc., as well as language that they can use in an email or phone call. Perhaps you could have templates on your website for reference.



**THE GREAT
THING ABOUT
SOCIAL MEDIA
IS THAT IT'S
A TWO-WAY
CONVERSATION.**

3. ADVOCACY STRATEGIES

Active and Passive Advocacy / Social Media /
Informing and Educating Politicians / Site Visits /
Events (Webinars and workshops) / Meeting with
Elected Officials (Lobbying) / Petitions and Letters /
Forming Coalitions / Op-Eds and Media /
Data Collection and Link2Feed / Tax Clinics

 [Return to Table of Contents](#)

Using relevant hashtags/participating in trends

Hashtags are ways for people to discover new content and accounts on social media. To identify which ones make the most sense for your organization, explore what others are doing and what kind of content pops up when you click on a hashtag. Other times, new hashtags are created to celebrate an event. Hosting a donation drive? Create a fun and unique hashtag and use it on all relevant posts.

This relates to the next point, which is participating in trends. No, we don't mean learning the latest TikTok dance (but please film it if you do). What we mean is that paying attention to trends and participating where appropriate is a great way to engage followers. Similarly, keeping a calendar of national/international observances (like World Hunger Day on October 16th, for instance) is a great way to participate in the larger conversations being had, even around the world.

Partnering

This is something that we are still new to exploring here at Food Banks Canada. You can partner with other similar organizations to maximize the reach and impact of your message by sharing similar content or sharing each other's content, etc. You can also partner with influencers to reach non-traditional audiences, although as a charity, we prefer that these relationships develop organically and that they not be paid.

3. ADVOCACY STRATEGIES

Active and Passive Advocacy / Social Media /
Informing and Educating Politicians / Site Visits /
Events (Webinars and workshops) / Meeting with
Elected Officials (Lobbying) / Petitions and Letters /
Forming Coalitions / Op-Eds and Media /
Data Collection and Link2Feed / Tax Clinics

 [Return to Table of Contents](#)



Some general tips:

- Develop a brand style guide. What kinds of colours and fonts will you use? Be consistent to develop an instantly recognizable look and feel for all of your posts.
- On platforms like Facebook and Instagram, images of people tend to get more likes, whereas carousels of text and/or images tend to get more shares. Be sure to use a combo of both.
- Have fun, use emojis!
- Avoid grammar and spelling mistakes. Have a second set of eyes review any content before it's published.
- Use alt text for followers with disabilities.
- If you're referencing an article or external link, be sure to include it. Later and Linktree are both free content aggregators that are compatible with Instagram.
- Experiment with posting at different times of the day. Do your followers seem to like more content when it's posted in the evening?
- Like and engage with content besides your own!

Common mistakes

- Advocacy done via social media can seem performative if not accompanied by concrete action. That's why we suggest including a call to action in your posts.
- Like any communications piece, spelling and grammar are very important!
- Posting the same content across all platforms. Use more visual content for Instagram and shorter, more informational content for Twitter.



**ON SOME
SOCIAL MEDIA
PLATFORMS,
IMAGES OF
PEOPLE TEND
TO GET
MORE LIKES**

3. ADVOCACY STRATEGIES

Active and Passive Advocacy / Social Media /
Informing and Educating Politicians / Site Visits /
Events (Webinars and workshops) / Meeting with
Elected Officials (Lobbying) / Petitions and Letters /
Forming Coalitions / Op-Eds and Media /
Data Collection and Link2Feed / Tax Clinics



Return to Table of Contents

INFORMING AND EDUCATING POLITICIANS

Benefits:

- This can be organized quickly
- You can contact several political officials at once
- A good place to start if you have little advocacy experience

Challenges:

- As a passive activity, this may not result in a response

Politicians at all levels of government are very busy people. There are many social issues that need to be addressed and it is often the case that your local politician may need some information about what you do before they can see just how important our work is.

Much like our process during the federal election, one of the simplest strategies in advocacy is to prepare a package to send to your local politician. This package can include a short cover letter discussing your local perspective, our HungerCount report or brochure, and a list of our policy priorities.



SEE **TOOL A** FOR A TEMPLATE ON WHAT TO INCLUDE IN YOUR INFORMATION PACKAGE

3. ADVOCACY STRATEGIES

Active and Passive Advocacy / Social Media /
Informing and Educating Politicians / Site Visits /
Events (Webinars and workshops) / Meeting with
Elected Officials (Lobbying) / Petitions and Letters /
Forming Coalitions / Op-Eds and Media /
Data Collection and Link2Feed / Tax Clinics



[Return to Table of Contents](#)

 **General tips:**

- Politicians are bombarded with information from many groups, so your information package should be as concise and to the point as possible.
- Send the document with a short cover letter and ask for a response. Don't be afraid to follow up if they are slow to respond.
- You can also download a copy of the HungerCount 2023 ([En](#) / [Fr](#)) report.
- Include a copy of our latest Federal or Provincial Policy Recommendations



- Be prepared if the politician reaches out to visit your location.

NOTE: if you are sending information to municipal politicians, you may have several councillors that are interested in the work you're doing. Feel free to reach out to all relevant councillors, or choose councillors strategically based on the committees that they sit on or the projects they are passionate about.

3. ADVOCACY STRATEGIES

Active and Passive Advocacy / Social Media /
Informing and Educating Politicians / Site Visits /
Events (Webinars and workshops) / Meeting with
Elected Officials (Lobbying) / Petitions and Letters /
Forming Coalitions / Op-Eds and Media /
Data Collection and Link2Feed / Tax Clinics

 [Return to Table of Contents](#)

SITE VISITS

Benefits:

- Creates a personal experience
- Brings the politician into your domain
- A good place to start if you have little advocacy experience

Challenges:

- Can be difficult balancing the visit and a meaningful conversation focused on a policy ask

Site visits are a fantastic way to make an ally out of your local politicians. Visits offer **an opportunity to connect directly with a politician, and to inform them about the issues that matter to you and the people accessing your programs.** Further, establishing this personal relationship with your local politicians may prove useful in the future.



SEE **TOOL F** FOR A LETTER TEMPLATE TO INVITE YOUR POLITICAL OFFICIAL

3. ADVOCACY STRATEGIES

Active and Passive Advocacy / Social Media /
Informing and Educating Politicians / Site Visits /
Events (Webinars and workshops) / Meeting with
Elected Officials (Lobbying) / Petitions and Letters /
Forming Coalitions / Op-Eds and Media /
Data Collection and Link2Feed / Tax Clinics



[Return to Table of Contents](#)



General tips:

- If your organization has the capacity to do so, we recommend that you invite them for a meal while they visit – this gives you a solid period of time to inform the politician about your work and the issues you face in your community.
- You could also invite politicians to meet volunteers, help sort food, harvest food, attend a cooking class, or help pack hampers to get a hands-on understanding of your work.
- Make sure that you have **prepared an information package and have the policy recommendations printed** so that the politician leaves the meeting with the information you want them to remember.



SEE **TOOL A** FOR A TEMPLATE

- Don't be afraid to ask questions – this is also a good opportunity to see what they think, and to stimulate some thoughts on some of the difficult decisions they may be dealing with or asked to deal with in the near future.
- Thank them for their time and efforts and let them know you look forward to working with them in the future.

3. ADVOCACY STRATEGIES

Active and Passive Advocacy / Social Media /
Informing and Educating Politicians / Site Visits /
Events (Webinars and workshops) / Meeting with
Elected Officials (Lobbying) / Petitions and Letters /
Forming Coalitions / Op-Eds and Media /
Data Collection and Link2Feed / Tax Clinics



[Return to Table of Contents](#)

EVENTS

Events provide a valuable opportunity to leverage your unique perspective, demonstrate support for your cause, and bring relevant stakeholders together while providing you with a forum to communicate your advocacy goals. Events can be either in-person or virtual. Opportunities and outcomes may vary depending on which format you choose.

IN-PERSON

Benefits:

- Develops local community support
- An opportunity to share ideas between your organization, community, and local politicians
- Demonstrates there is support for your cause
- Builds relationships (new and existing)

Challenges:

- Requires advanced planning and organization
- Troubleshooting when attendance is low

Holding in-person community events is an effective way of bringing the community, politicians, and media together. Your advocacy goals may be to raise awareness while also working toward a specific policy change. In-person events provide the opportunity to address these goals together.

3. ADVOCACY STRATEGIES

Active and Passive Advocacy / Social Media /
Informing and Educating Politicians / Site Visits /
Events (Webinars and workshops) / Meeting with
Elected Officials (Lobbying) / Petitions and Letters /
Forming Coalitions / Op-Eds and Media /
Data Collection and Link2Feed / Tax Clinics

 [Return to Table of Contents](#)

VIRTUAL EVENTS (WEBINARS AND WORKSHOPS)

Benefits:

- Increased flexibility
- Wide range of engagement tools to leverage (i.e., polls, surveys)

Challenges:

- Careful planning is required to drive active engagement
- Difficulty gauging engagement
- Evaluating the impact of the event

Holding webinar and workshop-style events is a good way to inform community members about your cause in a flexible format. Inviting local politicians gives them an opportunity to interact with their community while also hearing from you. Virtual events offer more flexibility and may increase the likelihood that local politicians attend.



SEE **TOOL C** FOR SUGGESTED FORMATS FOR WEBINARS/WORKSHOPS

3. ADVOCACY STRATEGIES

Active and Passive Advocacy / Social Media /
Informing and Educating Politicians / Site Visits /
Events (Webinars and workshops) / Meeting with
Elected Officials (Lobbying) / Petitions and Letters /
Forming Coalitions / Op-Eds and Media /
Data Collection and Link2Feed / Tax Clinics



[Return to Table of Contents](#)



General tips:

- Identify your advocacy goals for the event. This will guide the development process and help to inform the program for the event.
- Engage your community in the development of the event.
 - Ask for their feedback on issues to address during the event.
 - Invite community members to participate in the planning.
- Think carefully about the time for your event. Typically, Wednesdays and Thursdays are good days to host events. If you wish to host during the day, aim for a lunchtime event. 10 a.m. EST is also a common time that people have openings in their schedule and work across time zones.
- Survey attendees after the event to receive feedback for future events.
 - Use your event goals to help frame survey questions.
- Meet with event presenters/participants beforehand to develop the program plan and go over logistics.
- Send reminders to people who have RSVP'd.
- Consider partnering with other local organizations to find alignment in causes, increase participation, and leverage opportunities for exposure and marketing.
- Invite your local media representatives.

3. ADVOCACY STRATEGIES

Active and Passive Advocacy / Social Media /
Informing and Educating Politicians / Site Visits /
Events (Webinars and workshops) / Meeting with
Elected Officials (Lobbying) / Petitions and Letters /
Forming Coalitions / Op-Eds and Media /
Data Collection and Link2Feed / Tax Clinics



[Return to Table of Contents](#)

MEETING WITH ELECTED OFFICIALS (LOBBYING)

Benefits:

- Best way to get the undivided attention of an elected official
- Legitimizes your cause (appears professional)

Challenges:

- Time-consuming
- Skill/planning needed

Meeting with elected officials is among the more complex forms of advocacy, but has the advantage of being one of the most effective.

The objective of these meetings is to share a specific policy objective and ideally obtain the support of an elected official. From their support, you can then give them a specific ask for how they can actionably support your cause. This ask can be many things, such as voting a specific way, signing a letter of support, introducing a motion, or speaking with other political officials.



SEE **TOOL F** FOR A LETTER TEMPLATE TO INVITE YOUR POLITICAL OFFICIAL

3. ADVOCACY STRATEGIES

Active and Passive Advocacy / Social Media /
Informing and Educating Politicians / Site Visits /
Events (Webinars and workshops) / Meeting with
Elected Officials (Lobbying) / Petitions and Letters /
Forming Coalitions / Op-Eds and Media /
Data Collection and Link2Feed / Tax Clinics



[Return to Table of Contents](#)

Wondering who to meet?

Choosing who to meet is not always as simple as choosing the city councillor from the area that your food bank is in. Depending on your objective, you may need to look beyond your riding/ward. For example, if you are aiming to change local policy surrounding transportation, then you may wish to meet with city councillors who sit on the transportation committee.

Another common strategy may be to target politicians who you know are sympathetic to the cause. Gaining their support early on may provide momentum to your campaign and get you in meetings with other important people.

The most important thing about choosing your targets is to research each person at an individual level and look beyond their roles in government. Politicians often have passion projects or past careers that can give you hints into their stance on your issue.



RETURN TO THE SECTIONS ON WINDOWS OF OPPORTUNITY AND LEVELS OF GOVERNMENT ON **PAGE 21**

3. ADVOCACY STRATEGIES

Active and Passive Advocacy / Social Media /
Informing and Educating Politicians / Site Visits /
Events (Webinars and workshops) / Meeting with
Elected Officials (Lobbying) / Petitions and Letters /
Forming Coalitions / Op-Eds and Media /
Data Collection and Link2Feed / Tax Clinics

 [Return to Table of Contents](#)

Wondering how to get in the door?

As a crucial organization within your community, you may not find it very difficult to organize a meeting with an elected official. It is likely that a politician would be happy to meet with you and to hear the unique perspective that you have on the issues within the community. That said, organizing a meeting with elected officials can be challenging due to their heavy workload and packed email inbox.

Here are some general tips to help you set up a meeting:

- Practice good email etiquette and use professional subject lines to avoid being confused with spam.
- Get straight to the point and avoid burying your meeting request far down in them email. Start by saying that you're contacting them to set up a meeting and then continue with more information.
- Don't be afraid to follow up regularly. Leave them a week to respond and follow up as needed after that.
- Calling into the office can sometimes help cut through the email waiting line.
- Send an information package or background report to let them know who you are and what you want to discuss.



SEE **PAGE 64** AND **TOOL A** FOR MORE DETAILS ON INFORMATION PACKAGES

3. ADVOCACY STRATEGIES

Active and Passive Advocacy / Social Media /
Informing and Educating Politicians / Site Visits /
Events (Webinars and workshops) / Meeting with
Elected Officials (Lobbying) / Petitions and Letters /
Forming Coalitions / Op-Eds and Media /
Data Collection and Link2Feed / Tax Clinics



[Return to Table of Contents](#)

What to prepare before your meeting

- Know who you're meeting – make sure you've done your research and have investigated their background. You should already have an idea of where this person stands on the issue and what kinds of arguments you can make that are appealing to them.
- Dress well.
- Make sure your ask is clear, concise, realistic, and measurable. Essentially, your ask should fit in a single sentence and be something that the political official can realistically do to help you.

EXAMPLES OF BAD ASKS

Notice that all of these asks either leave room for interpretation or require the person being asked to figure out how to actually do the ask.

- Express your support for our cause.
- Change x law that is preventing our cause.
- Tell your colleagues to support our cause.
- Eliminate poverty in our city by x date.

NOTE: If you have limited experience with lobbying, we recommend that you reach out to isaac.smith@foodbankscanada.ca to develop a strategy that works best for you.

EXAMPLES OF GOOD ASKS

Each of these asks are clear and concise. They leave no room for individual interpretation and are prescriptive. They tell the politician exactly what they need to do.

- Write an open letter supporting our cause, and post it for the public and for your colleagues to see.
- Introduce a motion/bill to change section x of the Transportation Act.
- Bring this issue up at your next committee meeting and request that a debate be held on the matter.
- Request that the planning committee introduce a developer tax credit with the goal to reduce the number of people who need critical housing in our city by x% by x date.

3. ADVOCACY STRATEGIES

Active and Passive Advocacy / Social Media / Informing and Educating Politicians / Site Visits / Events (Webinars and workshops) / Meeting with Elected Officials (Lobbying) / Petitions and Letters / Forming Coalitions / Op-Eds and Media / Data Collection and Link2Feed / Tax Clinics

 [Return to Table of Contents](#)

PETITIONS AND LETTERS

Benefits:

- Low maintenance approach
- Demonstrates widespread support

Challenges:

- Can backfire if you have few signatures
- Not often effective in inspiring change

Circulating a petition or doing a letter writing campaign is a commonly used campaign strategy. This strategy works best when you believe that the issue you are advocating for has wide support. A petition with very few signatures can hurt your cause, just as a petition with many signatures can help your cause.

Generally, a petition begins with a statement where you describe your advocacy cause, then highlights the issues and solutions, and then ends with an ask. When circulating this document, individuals sign it in support of the statement and ask.

3. ADVOCACY STRATEGIES

Active and Passive Advocacy / Social Media /
Informing and Educating Politicians / Site Visits /
Events (Webinars and workshops) / Meeting with
Elected Officials (Lobbying) / Petitions and Letters /
Forming Coalitions / Op-Eds and Media /
Data Collection and Link2Feed / Tax Clinics

 [Return to Table of Contents](#)

Letter writing campaigns work in a similar way to petitions, but they add a secondary feature of sending emails directly to the member(s) of government that you are targeting. There are several online tools that enable you to set up a letter writing campaign. As individuals sign your petition/letter, an email is sent directly to the politician. Signers will also have the option of personalizing this email to increase its effectiveness.

Here are a couple websites that allow you to run letter writing campaigns to elected officials:

- [Action Network](#) (Free)
- [New/Mode](#)

While petitions and letter writing are often thought of as a way to convince powerful individuals to act, **they actually provide a very important secondary purpose.** These initiatives help organizations to build a local base of support. They develop networks of individuals that can come together in future campaigns to work on shared interests.

Even if the process is unsuccessful in convincing officials to act, you will effectively educate and develop a base of individuals who can now continue advocating for the issue in their own ways.

3. ADVOCACY STRATEGIES

Active and Passive Advocacy / Social Media /
Informing and Educating Politicians / Site Visits /
Events (Webinars and workshops) / Meeting with
Elected Officials (Lobbying) / Petitions and Letters /
Forming Coalitions / Op-Eds and Media /
Data Collection and Link2Feed / Tax Clinics

 [Return to Table of Contents](#)

FORMING COALITIONS

Benefits:

- You can reach a larger audience
- Efforts are divided among members

Challenges:

- Can be difficult to organize several independent groups
- Partner organisations may pull you away from your initial objective

Coalitions

Forming a coalition is one of the most useful advantages that you can provide yourself with as an advocate for poverty-related issues. As anti-poverty strategy is a topic that impacts everyone and has many supporters, there will be other organizations in your area that will be happy to form coalitions.

Charities and non-profits are often overwhelmed and have very little capacity for advocacy. Forming a coalition is a quick and easy way to boost your collective capacity and make a bigger difference.

Start by identifying other local organizations that have a similar focus. You can either keep an eye out for campaigns that they start and join them, or you can approach them with a shared campaign.

3. ADVOCACY STRATEGIES

Active and Passive Advocacy / Social Media /
Informing and Educating Politicians / Site Visits /
Events (Webinars and workshops) / Meeting with
Elected Officials (Lobbying) / Petitions and Letters /
Forming Coalitions / Op-Eds and Media /
Data Collection and Link2Feed / Tax Clinics

 [Return to Table of Contents](#)

Standing Coalitions

Developing a standing coalition is another helpful strategy. A standing coalition is one where you, along with a group of other local activists, have regular meetings to strategize about your advocacy efforts. In this role, you typically work as a group to identify a window of opportunity ([see page 18](#)) that you can collectively act on.

Joint Letters

Finally, using joint letters that state a concern and a proposed solution for an issue, and are signed by a large cohort of key organizations, is another good tactic.

For this approach, you simply write a letter for elected officials and circulate it to local organizations that agree to back your cause. Once ready, you can send the letter off to the elected officials and the joint stance will be far more compelling – especially if several of the organizations are well-respected.

3. ADVOCACY STRATEGIES

Active and Passive Advocacy / Social Media /
Informing and Educating Politicians / Site Visits /
Events (Webinars and workshops) / Meeting with
Elected Officials (Lobbying) / Petitions and Letters /
Forming Coalitions / Op-Eds and Media /
Data Collection and Link2Feed / Tax Clinics

 [Return to Table of Contents](#)

OP-EDS AND MEDIA

Interacting with the media is something that you are encouraged to do alongside each of the previous strategies.

Over time, as you engage more frequently with media:

1. Your relationship with reporters will improve;
2. You will become more comfortable with media engagement and messaging; and
3. Your position in the community will be better established.

3. ADVOCACY STRATEGIES

Active and Passive Advocacy / Social Media /
Informing and Educating Politicians / Site Visits /
Events (Webinars and workshops) / Meeting with
Elected Officials (Lobbying) / Petitions and Letters /
Forming Coalitions / Op-Eds and Media /
Data Collection and Link2Feed / Tax Clinics

 [Return to Table of Contents](#)

Op-eds

Op-eds are a great method to spread your message across the community in a controlled and legitimate way. If you feel as though the message you're trying to spread is not being communicated effectively in the media, you can write an op-ed to spread your message just as intended. Each media outlet has a different set of rules for submitting an op-ed. If you are interested in pursuing this option, visit the website of your local publications for details on how to submit.

For tips on writing strong op-eds, you can visit the op-ed section of the paper you are submitting to. You can also visit these resources:

- massnonprofitnet.org
- McGill University
- The New York Times

Media releases

A media release is a document that you can send to your local media providers to inform them of an upcoming event, announcement, or recent happening.



SEE **TOOL D** FOR A SAMPLE MEDIA ALERT

3. ADVOCACY STRATEGIES

Active and Passive Advocacy / Social Media /
Informing and Educating Politicians / Site Visits /
Events (Webinars and workshops) / Meeting with
Elected Officials (Lobbying) / Petitions and Letters /
Forming Coalitions / Op-Eds and Media /
Data Collection and Link2Feed / Tax Clinics



Return to Table of Contents

DATA COLLECTION AND Link2Feed

By now, many food banks have already heard about the Link2Feed system that is available to them. What you may not have heard about yet is how useful Link2Feed can be as a tool for the advocacy process.

Link2Feed is a program you can use to collect demographic information about your clients so that you may **help them in a way that goes beyond giving them food**. With accurate data, you will be able to talk about your community with the media, donors, and local politicians. Most importantly, Link2Feed can provide you with an opportunity to **make connections with local politicians about what is happening in their riding**. Using data to demonstrate your point improves the legitimacy of your objective and positions you as a local leader in the fight against food insecurity.



SEE **TOOL E** FOR DETAILS ON HOW TO RUN A REPORT FOR YOUR CLIENTS

3. ADVOCACY STRATEGIES

Active and Passive Advocacy / Social Media /
Informing and Educating Politicians / Site Visits /
Events (Webinars and workshops) / Meeting with
Elected Officials (Lobbying) / Petitions and Letters /
Forming Coalitions / Op-Eds and Media /
Data Collection and Link2Feed / Tax Clinics



[Return to Table of Contents](#)

There is no doubt that food bank employees know their clients very well; however, having real-time demographic information that is easily accessible can provide a reliable source of data about who is using food bank services and how often. Politicians, the media, and donors all like to see real numbers that reflect the needs of your clients.

In the past, food banks have been able to use Link2Feed reports to see changes in their client base, which they then brought forward to the government. In these cases, data was essential to communicate the community's need accurately.



General tips:

- First and foremost, explain to the clients WHY you are asking these questions. For example:
 - To improve client services by targeting specific programs and benefits.
 - To allow food banks, provincial associations and Food Banks Canada to advocate on behalf of clients for improved social policy and access to income supports.
- Make sure to communicate that their participation is voluntary, and they do not have to answer any questions if they don't want to.
- Ask all of the demographic client intake questions and collect as much data as possible about your clients.
- If you collect data but aren't sure where to look, start with one of the issues that Food Banks Canada brings up at the national level. For example:
 - Our policy calls for action on affordable housing. To support this effort, you can look at how many of your clients are renters and see if that number has changed significantly in the past months.

3. ADVOCACY STRATEGIES

Active and Passive Advocacy / Social Media /
Informing and Educating Politicians / Site Visits /
Events (Webinars and workshops) / Meeting with
Elected Officials (Lobbying) / Petitions and Letters /
Forming Coalitions / Op-Eds and Media /
Data Collection and Link2Feed / Tax Clinics



[Return to Table of Contents](#)

TAX CLINICS

Each year, many people miss out on important tax benefits that could put money back into their pockets, simply because they don't file an income tax return. Free tax clinics fill an important need by helping people living on low incomes to file their taxes.

Food Banks Canada Tax Clinic Program

The goal of the Food Banks Canada Tax Clinic program is to support food banks that wish to offer a tax clinic for the people in their communities.

Like most free tax clinics, this program operates under the Canada Revenue Agency's Community Volunteer Income Tax Clinic Program (CVITP). Food Banks Canada offers assistance through grants, support, resources, and connections with skilled volunteers.

3. ADVOCACY STRATEGIES

Active and Passive Advocacy / Social Media /
Informing and Educating Politicians / Site Visits /
Events (Webinars and workshops) / Meeting with
Elected Officials (Lobbying) / Petitions and Letters /
Forming Coalitions / Op-Eds and Media /
Data Collection and Link2Feed / Tax Clinics

 [Return to Table of Contents](#)

Any food bank can offer a tax clinic. Some of the steps that are required are:

1. Register the tax clinic with the CVITP
2. Plan the timeline for all tasks
3. Assign or hire a tax clinic coordinator
4. Recruit and train volunteers
5. Ensure volunteers are registered and approved by the CVITP before they participate and have a valid police record check if handling taxpayer information
6. Provide technology to operate the clinic
7. Attend online orientation and training session(s)

Based on our experience working with food bank tax clinics, it is a good idea to start planning for your clinic early! Make sure you have enough tax preparer volunteers recruited in advance – the CVITP screening process takes time.

The federal government, through the CVITP, also provides support like training, a grant, laptops, promotional material, and more.

IN 2023

FOOD BANKS CANADA
SUPPORTED 13 FOOD BANKS
TO OFFER TAX CLINICS



THROUGH THESE LOCATIONS,
10,426 TAX RETURNS
WERE COMPLETED
RETURNING AN ESTIMATED
\$37 MILLION
TO PEOPLE IN THOSE COMMUNITIES!

3. ADVOCACY STRATEGIES

Active and Passive Advocacy / Social Media /
Informing and Educating Politicians / Site Visits /
Events (Webinars and workshops) / Meeting with
Elected Officials (Lobbying) / Petitions and Letters /
Forming Coalitions / Op-Eds and Media /
Data Collection and Link2Feed / Tax Clinics

 [Return to Table of Contents](#)

FOOD BANKS CANADA TAX CLINIC RESULTS

Saskatoon Food Bank Learning Centre Client Story

A client had been finding it difficult to navigate government systems and was turned away by other services due to their unique communication needs an individual with hearing differences.

With a bit of creativity, our Tax Coordinator was able to find a way to communicate with them. During the intake process she identified that the client had not been accessing all the government benefits they were entitled to. Multiple barriers made it difficult for them to complete the application process, ranging from finding a doctor to sign the disability tax credit forms to accessing a stamped envelope for returns.

It was a long process, but we were able to complete our client's return and claim the additional benefits. Our client was thrilled to have the added income they were entitled to, and was able to access additional services, such as a personal support assistant to help them navigate systems going forward.



CONTACT **KAREN ALEBON**, MANAGER OF NATIONAL STANDARDS AND PROGRAMS,
FOR MORE INFORMATION – karen@foodbankscanad.ca OR 905-267-1540

3. ADVOCACY STRATEGIES

Active and Passive Advocacy / Social Media /
Informing and Educating Politicians / Site Visits /
Events (Webinars and workshops) / Meeting with
Elected Officials (Lobbying) / Petitions and Letters /
Forming Coalitions / Op-Eds and Media /
Data Collection and Link2Feed / Tax Clinics



[Return to Table of Contents](#)



HUNGER IN CANADA IS A REALITY FOR FAR TOO MANY PEOPLE

68% OF FOOD
BANK
CLIENTS
LIVE IN MARKET RENTAL HOUSING



14% OF FOOD
BANK
CLIENTS
ARE LIVING IN SOCIAL HOUSING



COMING SOON

4. CASE STUDIES

HUNGER IN CANADA IS A REALITY FOR FAR TOO MANY PEOPLE



MORE
THAN
1 IN 3

CANADIANS (35%)

LIVE IN A HOUSEHOLD THAT
**STRUGGLES TO MEET
IT'S FOOD AND
HOUSING COSTS**

THIS IS UP FROM **1 IN 5 (19%)**
IN JUST TWO YEARS

In recent years, charities have been given plenty of freedom to conduct advocacy on issues that are relevant to their cause. While there are few rules that govern the advocacy activities you will be conducting, you will want to review the rules in place so you can avoid any complications in the future.

PROVINCIAL

Most food banks will not need to officially register as a lobbyist since most provinces allow an organization to conduct a certain number of lobbying hours before there is a need to act. If you or someone you work with is considered a lobbyist as per the provincial rule listed below, you will need to visit your provincial government's lobbying authority website to register your activities. This does not mean that lobbying acts are prohibited, it simply means that you need to disclose your meetings with elected officials under certain circumstances. See the chart below for details specific to your province.

5. THE RULES FOR CHARITIES AND NON-PROFITS

5. THE RULES FOR CHARITIES AND NON-PROFITS

Provincial / Federal

 [Return to Table of Contents](#)

Generally speaking, lobbying counts as both time spent preparing for communication and time spent communicating with a public office holder.

BRITISH COLUMBIA

An individual is not an in-house lobbyist if the following apply:

- a) the individual is an employee, director or officer of an organization that has **fewer than 6 employees**;
- b) the lobbying by the individual, either alone or together with other individuals in the organization, on behalf of the organization or an affiliate of the organization totals **fewer than 50 hours** in the preceding 12-month period



LOBBYISTS TRANSPARENCY ACT (GOV.BC.CA)

ALBERTA

You must register your lobbying activities if the total lobbying time of all **paid officers and directors** of an organization is equal to **50 or more hours** lobbying in a 12-month period



MICROSOFT WORD - L20P5.DOCX (ALBERTA.CA)

5. THE RULES FOR CHARITIES AND NON-PROFITS

Provincial / Federal

 [Return to Table of Contents](#)

SASKATCHEWAN

You do not need to register if:

officers, directors or employees of a non-profit organization, association, society, coalition or interest group, any of which has both a charitable purpose and **fewer than 5 employees**, if the lobbying activity performed by the officers, directors and employees combined is **less than 30 hours annually**



MANITOBA

The act **does not apply** to officers, directors or employees of a charitable or not-for-profit organization



ONTARIO

“In-house lobbyist” means an individual who is employed by an organization if,

- a) as part of his or her duties as an employee, the **individual** spends at least **50 hours a year**, or such other number of hours as may be prescribed, lobbying on behalf of the organization, or
- b) the individual’s duties as an employee involve lobbying on behalf of the organization and his or her duties to lobby, taken together with the duties of other employees to lobby, constitute at least 50 hours a year, or such other number of hours as may be prescribed



5. THE RULES FOR CHARITIES AND NON-PROFITS

Provincial / Federal

 [Return to Table of Contents](#)

NEW BRUNSWICK

A lobbyist is an individual who is employed by an organization and:

- a) a **significant part of whose duties** as an employee, as determined in accordance with the regulations, is to lobby on behalf of the organization, or
- b) a part of whose duties as an employee is to lobby on behalf of the organization if the employee's duties to lobby together with the duties of other employees to lobby would constitute a significant part of the duties of one employee, as determined in accordance with the regulations, if those duties to lobby were performed by only one employee



LOBBYISTS' REGISTRATION ACT

NOVA SCOTIA

An employee of a person, partnership or company whose lobbying activity is a significant part of their duties or whose lobbying activity along with that of other employees' would amount to a significant part of one staff member's duties

"Significant part of duties" as when lobbying takes up 20 per cent (or more) of an employee's time over a three-month period

If the time spent lobbying by 2 or more employees takes the equivalent of 20% or more of the time of one employee, each of the 2 or more employees must be registered as lobbyists.



LOBBYISTS' REGISTRATION ACT

5. THE RULES FOR CHARITIES AND NON-PROFITS

Provincial / Federal

 [Return to Table of Contents](#)

PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND

An individual who is employed by an organization

- i) whose duties as an employee are to lobby for at least **50 hours in a three-month period** on behalf of the organization, or
- ii) a part of whose duties as an employee is to lobby on behalf of the organization if the employee's duties to **lobby together with the duties of other employees** to lobby would constitute at least **50 hours** of lobbying in a three-month period by one employee, were those duties to lobby to be performed by only one employee



LOBBYISTS REGISTRATION ACT

NEWFOUNDLAND

A person who is employed by an organization and:

- i) **20%** of whose duties as an employee, as assessed in a 3-month period, **are to lobby** on behalf of that organization, or
- ii) a part of whose duties as an employee is to lobby on behalf of that organization if the employee's duties to lobby together with the duties of other employees to lobby would constitute **20% of time at work of one full time employee**, assessed in a 3-month period, were those duties to lobby to be performed by only one employee



LOBBYIST REGISTRATION ACT

5. THE RULES FOR CHARITIES AND NON-PROFITS

Provincial / Federal

 [Return to Table of Contents](#)

FEDERAL

Charities

A charity may engage in advocacy action as much as it chooses to, so long as it:

- a) furthers the charity's purpose; and
- b) is nonpartisan.

When filing taxes, charities that conducted advocacy efforts throughout the year will be asked to fill out a T3010 form. This is a simple form that asks you to provide a couple of sentences on the type of advocacy your organization has been doing.



MORE INFORMATION ON FILLING OUT THE T3010 CAN BE FOUND [HERE](#)

Additional information on registered charities and the federal government can be found [HERE](#), with a complete list of regulations [HERE](#).

If you are not a registered charity, please contact isaac.smith@foodbankscanada.ca for assistance.

WHAT IS PARTISAN?

Being partisan means you are conducting actions in favour of one or several political parties/candidates. When conducting advocacy activities, including events, you must give all political parties an equal chance to participate. You must also avoid denouncing any political parties/candidates or equally speaking in favour of one.

At all times, you should remain impartial and unbiased, and keep the focus on the policies and not the candidates/parties involved.

5. THE RULES FOR CHARITIES AND NON-PROFITS

Provincial / Federal

 [Return to Table of Contents](#)

**HUNGER
IN CANADA
IS A REALITY
FOR FAR
TOO MANY
PEOPLE**



**CANADIANS
VISITED FOOD BANKS
OVER 1.9 MILLION TIMES
IN MARCH OF 2023**

TOOL A – INFORMATION PACKAGE TEMPLATE

If you don't already have printed information about your organization, you can use this template to quickly inform political officials about the work you do.

Information to consider including:

YOUR LOGO

YOUR MISSION STATEMENT

- The services you offer
- Relevant statistics:
 - ~ Number of people helped by your food bank and/or other programs each month
 - ~ Number of children helped/percentage of people helped who are under age 18
 - ~ Number of seniors helped/percentage of people helped who are over age 65
 - ~ Number/percentage of people helped by your food bank who are working
- A recent Link2Feed report (see Tool E)
- The types of food offered by your food bank
- Printed copies of Food Banks Canada policy recommendations (see Tool B)
- Printed copies of the most recent HungerCount report
- Your contact information
- Your most recent annual report

For any questions on how to best prepare this content, please contact **Isaac Smith**, Manager of Policy and Government Relations, at isaac.smith@foodbankscanada.ca.

6. TOOLS

6. TOOLS

TOOL A – Information Package Template /

TOOL B – Federal and Provincial

Policy Recommendations / **TOOL C** – Webinars and Workshops / **TOOL D** – Sample Media Alert /

TOOL E – Running a Link2Feed Report /

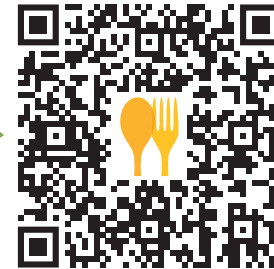
TOOL F – Writing a Letter to your Local Politician



[Return to Table of Contents](#)

TOOL B – FEDERAL AND PROVINCIAL POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

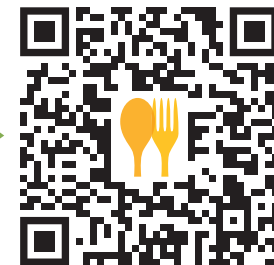
Our fully detailed policy document is available online in both French and English.
You may also scan the QR code below.



OR



For policy recommendations specific to your province, scan the QR code below or view them online by clicking the supplied links.



OR



6. TOOLS

TOOL A – Information Package Template /

TOOL B – Federal and Provincial

Policy Recommendations / **TOOL C** – Webinars

and Workshops / **TOOL D** – Sample Media Alert /

TOOL E – Running a Link2Feed Report /

TOOL F – Writing a Letter to your Local Politician

 [Return to Table of Contents](#)

TOOL C – WEBINARS AND WORKSHOPS

Webinars – Choosing a format

Webinars can be delivered in many formats, including Q&A, lecture/keynote, or panel discussions. It's important to consider which method best suits your desired outcome.

Q&A

During Q&A events, the audience has more control over the direction of the event; however, it is important that you have a plan to keep the audience engaged throughout the experience. You can do this by starting with an icebreaker activity to engage the audience, preparing questions to ask presenters during periods of silence, and requesting that colleagues or other champions of your cause participate along with the audience to drive engagement.

Providing an open forum for questions can introduce the risk of having negative questions or unwanted audience behaviour. Plan ahead to offset these risks by outlining the rules of engagement during the introduction and housekeeping portions of the event.

Online platforms provide various opportunities for attendees to engage with presenters. Depending on the platform, audience members may ask questions via the chat box, by entering questions in the Q&A feature, by speaking directly, or by pre-submitting questions. It is helpful to have an additional staff/volunteer help monitor the chat and Q&A functions to ensure all questions are addressed.

EXAMPLE – A group of newly elected city councillors has agreed to sit down for a Q&A on the topic of food insecurity and poverty. You ask audience members to submit questions beforehand so they can be vetted and approved.

6. TOOLS

TOOL A – Information Package Template /

TOOL B – Federal and Provincial

Policy Recommendations / **TOOL C** – Webinars

and Workshops / **TOOL D** – Sample Media Alert /

TOOL E – Running a Link2Feed Report /

TOOL F – Writing a Letter to your Local Politician



[Return to Table of Contents](#)

TOOL C – WEBINARS AND WORKSHOPS

Panel Discussions

A panel discussion is an effective way to bring different perspectives together in an engaging format for the audience. During these types of webinars, a skilled moderator will typically ask open-ended questions that the panelists can then discuss or debate. One of the best things about this format is also one of the most difficult things to manage – the discussion can go in interesting and unexpected directions. While the panelists should mostly be allowed to discuss amongst themselves, the moderator is also responsible for making sure that everyone has a chance to speak and the event is moving according to the timeline.

EXAMPLE – COVID-19 has impacted different communities in various ways. You invite key stakeholders from the community who represent diverse groups that are experiencing the impacts of poverty post-COVID. This is about educating the public and invited politicians on the complexity of poverty in your area.

Single Speaker/Lecture/Keynote

This format is well suited for educating the audience on a specific topic. While this type of delivery can be less engaging, it is an effective way to share knowledge that is relevant and timely. To increase engagement and capture takeaways, remember to include live polls, quizzes and small group activities in the program.

EXAMPLE – Your food bank recently took on a new initiative that helped a segment of the community that was in need. You host a webinar where you present the impact of this initiative and why these types of programs are needed to help those experiencing poverty. You also take the opportunity to address long-term solutions to the issue.

6. TOOLS

TOOL A – Information Package Template /

TOOL B – Federal and Provincial

Policy Recommendations / **TOOL C** – Webinars

and Workshops / **TOOL D** – Sample Media Alert /

TOOL E – Running a Link2Feed Report /

TOOL F – Writing a Letter to your Local Politician



Return to Table of Contents

TOOL C – WEBINARS AND WORKSHOPS

Interviews

This is an opportunity to interview one or more experts in front of an audience. Like hosting a panel, this format is an engaging way to discuss a topic without having to do a presentation or lecture. What's different from the panel discussion is the expert(s) chosen will likely share one perspective and the question format is more rigid. In this format, you should know exactly what will be asked and where the conversation will lead.

If your guest is well known, this may encourage an existing audience of followers to engage with your cause.

EXAMPLE – An important report was recently published about your municipality's housing strategy. You decide to host a live interview event with your city councillor and one of the public servants who worked on the document. Being a sensitive topic, you will be able to control the questions while also informing locals about the important issue.

6. TOOLS

TOOL A – Information Package Template /

TOOL B – Federal and Provincial

Policy Recommendations / **TOOL C** – Webinars and Workshops / **TOOL D** – Sample Media Alert /

TOOL E – Running a Link2Feed Report /

TOOL F – Writing a Letter to your Local Politician

 [Return to Table of Contents](#)

TOOL C – WEBINARS AND WORKSHOPS

Workshops/Group work

Group work provides a valuable opportunity to tap into the collective knowledge of the group and form new ideas or solutions to challenges and opportunities that your community is facing. There are a variety of methods that can be applied to your workshop or group work initiatives, including brainstorming, fishbowls, case studies, and many more.

EXAMPLE – Recently, your community has been struggling with access to public transit so they may better connect to the food bank and other important amenities. Knowing this, you invite community members to go over existing bus stops and routes to identify areas being left out of the transit system. You also conduct a group brainstorm on the challenges of the current transit system. Your plan is to collect this information and share it with the municipal councillors in your town.

Online Event or Conference

Conferences provide a group of people who share a common interest an opportunity to meet, learn and collaborate on solutions and ideas for their collective goal. In-person conferences typically take place over several days, may incorporate other related events such as an AGM, fundraiser or gala, and are developed using a variety of the event formats mentioned above. Adapting in-person conferences to a virtual delivery requires careful planning and consideration of the ultimate objectives of the conference. When exploring the option to host a virtual conference, consider your goals and use the virtual format as an opportunity to seek innovative ways to meet those objectives.



IN-PERSON EVENTS FORMATS

In-person events can follow many of the same formats as the webinars outlined in the above section. Q&As, interviews, panels, and lectures are all viable options. Being in person allows for expanded interaction throughout the process.

6. TOOLS

TOOL A – Information Package Template /

TOOL B – Federal and Provincial

Policy Recommendations / **TOOL C** – Webinars

and Workshops / **TOOL D** – Sample Media Alert /

TOOL E – Running a Link2Feed Report /

TOOL F – Writing a Letter to your Local Politician



[Return to Table of Contents](#)

TOOL D – SAMPLE MEDIA ALERT

Location, month, day, year

Media Advisory

CONCISE TITLE

What: One short paragraph (2–3 sentences) describing event (or announcement) to media while mentioning those involved.

Date & Time: Include date and time of event start, and proposed time of arrival for media.

Where: Address, how to get there, where to park. If online, indicate.

Who: Description of the organization or organizations that are hosting the event, include sponsors, and detail who will be answering media questions (if at all).

Contacts: Person who will be coordinating with media. Be sure to include email and phone. Also, organization social media handles.

Details: This is not a necessary section; should you choose to include more information about why the event is important, you may add them here.

6. TOOLS

TOOL A – Information Package Template /

TOOL B – Federal and Provincial

Policy Recommendations / **TOOL C** – Webinars

and Workshops / **TOOL D** – Sample Media Alert /

TOOL E – Running a Link2Feed Report /

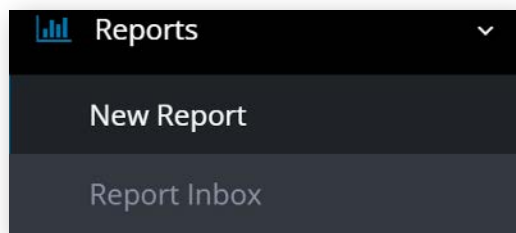
TOOL F – Writing a Letter to your Local Politician

 [Return to Table of Contents](#)

TOOL E – RUNNING A Link2Feed REPORT

How to run a Hunger Count Report in Link2Feed

1. When logged into your Link2Feed account, on the left navigation panel, under “Reports”, select “New Report”



2. In the box labeled “Hunger Count Report”, click on the “Create New Report” button



3. Create a title for your report, indicate who it should be shared with, select the dates and organizations that you want the report to include

6. TOOLS

TOOL A – Information Package Template /

TOOL B – Federal and Provincial

Policy Recommendations / **TOOL C** – Webinars

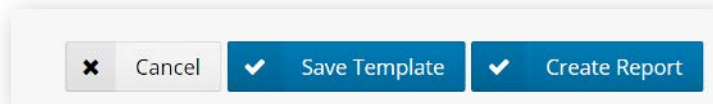
and Workshops / **TOOL D** – Sample Media Alert /

TOOL E – Running a Link2Feed Report /

TOOL F – Writing a Letter to your Local Politician

 [Return to Table of Contents](#)

4. Press the "Create Report" button



5. Your report will be found in your "Report Inbox"

6. The sections are numbered to match the questions in the HungerCount survey

7. You can expand the "Tools" button to copy, PDF, or print each HungerCount question



6. TOOLS

- TOOL A** – Information Package Template /
- TOOL B** – Federal and Provincial Policy Recommendations /
- TOOL C** – Webinars and Workshops /
- TOOL D** – Sample Media Alert /
- TOOL E** – Running a Link2Feed Report /
- TOOL F** – Writing a Letter to your Local Politician

 [Return to Table of Contents](#)

OTHER USEFUL REPORTS

The Statistics Report

Provides aggregated regional and network statistics across a range of metrics. This can be useful for finding data that you don't see included in the HungerCount Report, or if you are looking for a specific number related to an issue you're focusing on. This report also offers easy-to-customize graphics that you can use in promotional material.

The light blue heading represents the title of the section that was chosen to be reported on.

- The dark blue heading describes the section.
- The list items appear on the leftmost column and the totals for each organization are listed in sequential columns.
- The rightmost column will be the total of all columns combined.

Age Group: Household

Gives a break down of the all household members age in groups.

Per page: 10 Search...

	LFBA	Total
0-18 years	12	12
19-24 years	2	2
25-35 years	18	18
36-50 years	13	13
51-59 years	3	3
60+ years	2	2
Total	50	50

Showing 1 to 6 of 6 entries

< Previous 1 Next >


6. TOOLS

TOOL A – Information Package Template /
TOOL B – Federal and Provincial
Policy Recommendations / **TOOL C** – Webinars
and Workshops / **TOOL D** – Sample Media Alert /
TOOL E – Running a Link2Feed Report /
TOOL F – Writing a Letter to your Local Politician

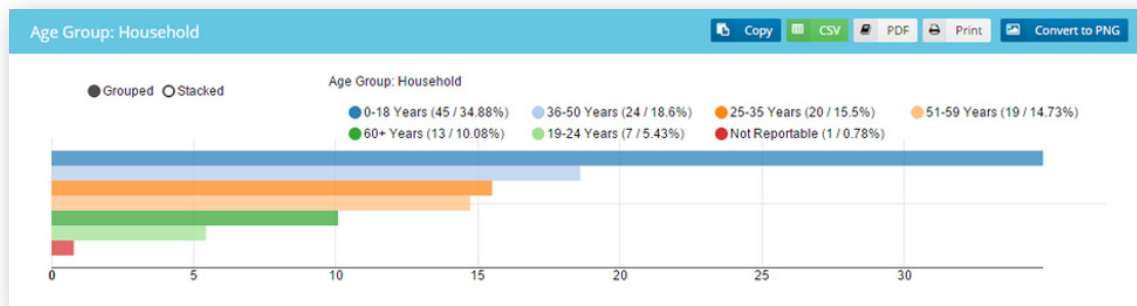
 [Return to Table of Contents](#)

The Interactive Report

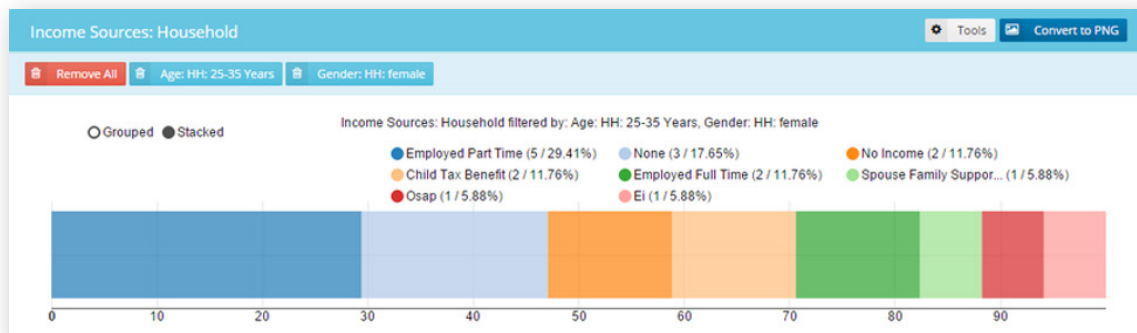
A regional version of the interactive report allowing for the investigation of data through pivots. The Interactive Report includes a data table with counts and percentages. This can be useful for investigation to play around with the data and discover demographics that are struggling more than others.

You can click on “Pivot”  at the end of the row to isolate that item. You can also achieve this by clicking on a section in the graph.

The report is divided by each key metric. It can be shown as grouped or shown as stacked.





When starting to cross-tabulate, each key metric’s title will adjust to show what the section has been filtered by.



6. TOOLS

- TOOL A** – Information Package Template /
- TOOL B** – Federal and Provincial Policy Recommendations /
- TOOL C** – Webinars and Workshops /
- TOOL D** – Sample Media Alert /
- TOOL E** – Running a Link2Feed Report /
- TOOL F** – Writing a Letter to your Local Politician

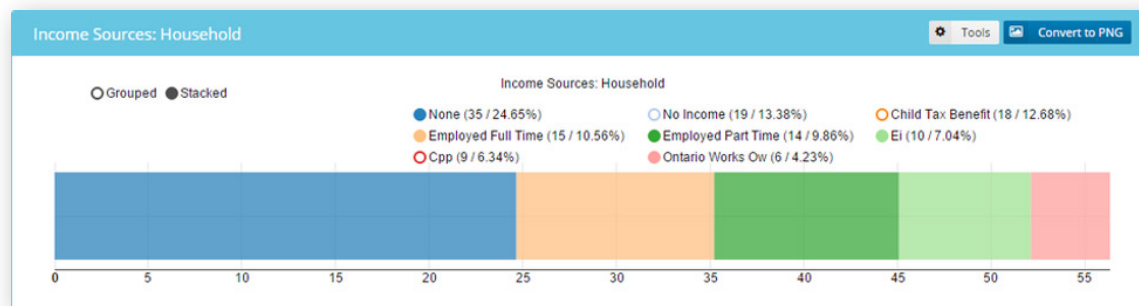
 [Return to Table of Contents](#)

In this case, the income sources have been filtered by household members between the ages of 25–35 and household members who are female. To remove a filter, click on the blue button with its title  Gender: HH: female  Age: HH: 25-35 Years

To remove all filters, click on the “Remove All”  Remove All button.

Hovering over a certain list item within the report will indicate the name of the item and how many people fit within that category.

Employed Part Time
5



Certain list items can also be removed as a variable. Click on the circle beside the list item to remove it from the report. In the example above, Child Tax Benefit, No Income and CPP have been removed.



Link2Feed HAS MANY VIDEOS AVAILABLE ON THEIR YOUTUBE CHANNEL THAT DESCRIBE EACH REPORT. YOU CAN ACCESS THEM [HERE](#)



SIGN UP FOR A FREE **Link2Feed** REPORTING WEBINAR BY VISITING THEIR WEBSITE [HERE](#)

6. TOOLS

TOOL A – Information Package Template /
TOOL B – Federal and Provincial
Policy Recommendations / **TOOL C** – Webinars
and Workshops / **TOOL D** – Sample Media Alert /
TOOL E – Running a Link2Feed Report /
TOOL F – Writing a Letter to your Local Politician



[Return to Table of Contents](#)

TOOL F – WRITING A LETTER TO INFORM YOUR LOCAL REPRESENTATIVE

If you are looking to reach out to a political official at any level of government – whether it’s municipal, provincial, or federal – this template will make the process simple and quick.

Through writing to your local representative, you can show the urgency and importance of food insecurity, make the connection between the problem and policy solutions, and call politicians to action.

GETTING STARTED

1. [Use our letter template](#) to begin the process – simply fill in the blanks or use parts of the template to develop your own letter – you can use the letter to inform, and request a meeting, visit, or written response.
2. For more details on how to use these advocacy tools to help you complete the template, [open our Toolkit Walkthrough](#).



ACCESS A **SIMPLIFIED LETTER TO A POLITICIAN TEMPLATE** [HERE](#)



UTILIZE OUR **TOOLKIT WALKTHROUGH** ON HOW TO COMPLETE THIS LETTER [HERE](#)

6. TOOLS

TOOL A – Information Package Template /
TOOL B – Federal and Provincial
Policy Recommendations / **TOOL C** – Webinars
and Workshops / **TOOL D** – Sample Media Alert /
TOOL E – Running a Link2Feed Report /
TOOL F – Writing a Letter to your Local Politician

 [Return to Table of Contents](#)



Food Banks
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