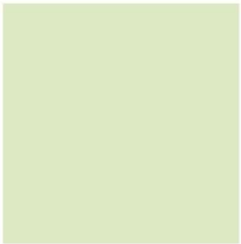




ANNE ARUNDEL COUNTY  
FOOD BANK

# 2023-2025 Strategic Plan



## **Summary**

The Anne Arundel County Food Bank was incorporated in 1989, in response to growing recognition that a food redistribution organization was an essential resource to meet the increasing challenge of food insecurity in Anne Arundel County. Over the course of the next three decades, the AACFB evolved and grew, expanding its programming and stretching beyond its initial mission of supporting food access.

With the onset of the Covid-19 Pandemic in early 2020, the Anne Arundel County Food Bank saw a dramatic change in the need for food redistribution in our community as well as a significant influx of both monetary and food resources. Out of this unexpected and severe event came the need to reevaluate the direction of the AACFB. Specifically, AACFB recognized the opportunity to lay the groundwork for rooting our organization squarely within the continuum of services and interventions in Anne Arundel County that address the root causes of food insecurity. At that moment in its history, the Anne Arundel County Food Bank embarked upon the creation of its first Strategic Plan.

This three-year, comprehensive plan will steer our path forward and guide our decision-making as we make the alleviation of food insecurity in our County our primary goal. It is our intention to strengthen our focus, deepen our impact, and accelerate our efforts to alleviate food insecurity throughout Anne Arundel County and for all our neighbors in need.

## **Process**

The strategic planning process included the following key elements:

- The development of a Strategy Team to guide this work, comprised of staff and board members;
- Monthly Strategy Team meetings;
- Individual interviews with staff, board members, member agencies, volunteers, and key community partners;
- Survey input from staff, neighbors accessing pantry services, board members, member agencies, volunteers, and community partners;
- Completion of a comprehensive Environmental Scan, including an organizational assessment, reviews of foundational AACFB guiding documents, and a comparative analysis;
- Completion of a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) analysis;
- A strategic planning retreat with board, staff, and key volunteers to develop goals and objectives;
- Creation of strategies and implementation steps, in alignment with goals and objectives;
- Development of an implementation plan to track progress against the plan; and
- Creation of a public-facing strategic plan document.

At the conclusion of this process, Anne Arundel County Food Bank's 2023-2025 Strategic Plan was approved by its Board of Directors in December 2022.

## **Mission, Vision, and Core Values (effective January 1, 2023)**

The mission, vision, and core values statements will guide the AACFB's work over the next three years.

### **Mission:**

To alleviate food insecurity in Anne Arundel County by partnering across our community to obtain and distribute nourishing food to our neighbors in need.

### **Vision:**

All Anne Arundel County residents are free from food insecurity through regular access to nourishing food.

**Core Values Statement:** The Anne Arundel County Food Bank will guide and inform its work through its commitment to the following values:

- Accountability
- Adaptability
- Compassion
- Integrity
- Resiliency
- Respect

## **Anne Arundel County Food Bank Strategic Plan: Goals and Objectives**

AACFB's future direction, as outlined in this inaugural strategic plan and its corresponding goals, was developed in 2022 by considering feedback from a wide variety of stakeholders. This plan emphasizes the Anne Arundel County Food Bank's continued commitment to expand its organizational capacity to meet the complex challenges faced by our neighbors experiencing food insecurity by refining programs, leveraging expertise, and expanding organizational infrastructure with an overarching emphasis on sustainability.

### ***GOAL 1: Strengthen our food distribution program.***

Blending our rich history of community support with a strong intention to grow our impact sets the tone for Goal 1 in our strategic plan. Though the AACFB's mission is straightforward, the logistics of procuring, receiving, and distributing food, as well as ensuring product quality, are complex and challenging, especially as the needs of our community change and grow. Through this cycle, we will strengthen our food distribution program proactively, to support County residents further as they face challenging conditions, such as a changing job market and economic uncertainty. Specifically, we will strengthen our Member Agency Network, enhance food access, improve our facility, and enhance data collection to inform program planning.

**Objective 1:** Build a more robust Member Agency Network.

**Objective 2:** Increase food access in identified communities.

**Objective 3:** Improve program data collection to inform program development and implementation.

**Objective 4:** Ensure the AACFB facility can support our community's ongoing need for easily accessible and nourishing food.

**Objective 5:** Improve our ability to distribute food without duplication of effort.

***GOAL 2: Support systems-level change to reduce food insecurity.***

AACFB served as a critical resource for food distribution to Agency Partners during the Covid-19 pandemic and emerged as an increasingly important voice in community planning to address food insecurity in more impactful ways. Our future direction emphasizes this role as a change agent using a holistic lens to reduce food insecurity, with a focus on advocacy and partnerships that pave the way.

**Objective 1:** Expand advocacy to increase AACFB stakeholder awareness of policies that improve food access and address the root causes of food insecurity.

**Objective 2:** Strengthen partnerships to increase collaborative initiatives that provide a holistic approach to addressing the root causes of food insecurity.

***GOAL 3: Ensure organizational sustainability and operational excellence.***

In recent years, the AACFB has invested in multiple efforts to evaluate all aspects of its leadership, management, and operations, including an organizational assessment from the nonprofit Standards for Excellence. With such guidance, the AACFB will continue to strengthen its governance structure and multiple internal systems (communications; finance; human resources, justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion; and resource development) across the organization in this strategic planning cycle. These efforts will ensure that the AACFB has the organizational capacity to remain a critical resource for its Anne Arundel neighbors experiencing food insecurity.

**Objective 1:** Increase awareness of AACFB and our role in alleviating food insecurity.

**Objective 2:** Continue to improve the accuracy of financial tracking and reporting, and ensure compliance with funder requirements.

**Objective 3:** Continue to build a reputable, engaged, and informed Board of Directors whose core values align with AACFB's mission.

**Objective 4:** Continue to develop a skilled and competent team of AACFB employees who share a passion for our mission.

**Objective 5:** Develop a comprehensive Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion strategy and apply it to all aspects of stakeholder relationships.

**Objective 6:** Develop a robust resource development infrastructure that supports our annual and long-term resource development goals.

**Objective 7:** Apply for and maintain accreditation through the nonprofit Standards for Excellence.

### **Implementation**

This strategic plan is a guide, based upon the current needs of the Anne Arundel community and the Anne Arundel County Food Bank's stage in its developmental lifecycle. It is important to note that changes in economic conditions, as well as the political and cultural climate, may warrant periodic reviews and refinements.

As a companion document to the strategic goals and objectives, an implementation plan was created. This implementation plan translates high-level goals and objectives into more discrete strategies and work items, providing a roadmap to support the plan's execution.

Implementation will be monitored and documented using this implementation planning tool, which will also provide a mechanism for accountability to the Board. Reviews of this plan will occur quarterly between the management team and CEO. In addition, strategic planning reviews with the Board will be conducted at least twice annually.