



News Release
For Immediate Release
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SEMO FOOD BANK AIMS TO FILL 100 PERCENT OF VOLUNTEER SHIFTS DURING VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION MONTH

SIKESTON, Mo. (March 4, 2026) – April is Volunteer Appreciation Month, and Southeast Missouri Food Bank is inviting the community to help demonstrate just how vital volunteers are by filling 100 percent of volunteer shifts throughout the month at its volunteer centers in Jackson and Sikeston. And, to make it easier for more people to get involved, the Food Bank has expanded volunteer opportunities during April to include select Saturday and evening shifts.

“Volunteers are the heart of the fight to end hunger in Southeast Missouri,” said Joey Keys, president & CEO of Southeast Missouri Food Bank. “Every meal distributed begins with volunteers. If every shift is filled in April, it sends a powerful message that our community stands behind its neighbors and understands how essential volunteers are to this mission.”

In 2025, 4,518 volunteers gave more than 11,370 hours of service, the equivalent of nearly \$350,000 in labor. Those hours helped sort food, pack senior boxes, and prepare distributions that ensure families, children, and seniors have access to meals.

By filling every shift during Volunteer Appreciation Month, the Food Bank hopes to visibly demonstrate that hunger relief in Southeast Missouri is powered by community members who give their time.

“When volunteers show up, families are served,” Keys said. “Reaching 100 percent of our volunteer shifts in April would be a meaningful way to honor the people who make this work possible every day.”

SEMO Food Bank serves families, children, veterans and seniors through a network of 140 partner agencies and direct-service programs across a 16-county service area. Southeast Missouri has some of the highest rates of hunger in Missouri, with 1 in 6 individuals, 1 in 4 children and 1 in 8 seniors living in homes that are food insecure. The five most food-insecure counties in the state are in Southeast Missouri.

Individuals, businesses, churches, and civic groups are encouraged to sign up for a volunteer shift during April. Opportunities are available for both groups and individuals. To learn more or reserve a shift, visit semofoodbank.org/volunteer.

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About Southeast Missouri Food Bank

The mission of Southeast Missouri Food Bank is to end hunger and leverage the power of food to build healthy communities. The food bank provides food to 140 charitable and disaster relief programs in Southeast Missouri. These member agencies include food pantries, soup kitchens, domestic violence and homeless shelters. Southeast Missouri Food Bank also holds regular mobile food distributions and provides monthly boxes of food to 5,600 senior citizens and weekend backpacks of food during the school year to 1,100 students in area school districts. The food bank's 16-county coverage area includes Bollinger, Butler, Cape Girardeau, Carter, Dunklin, Madison, Mississippi, New Madrid, Pemiscot, Perry, Reynolds, Ripley, Scott, Ste. Genevieve, Stoddard and Wayne counties. Those interested in helping can do so by making a tax-deductible contribution, donating food, or scheduling a time to volunteer. Visit semofoodbank.org for more information.