



SUMMER 2025

# METROWEST FOOD COLLABORATIVE NEWSLETTER

***Dear MetroWest Community,***

*As summer begins to wind down, I hope that this season has brought for you some healing sunshine and moments of true relaxation.*

*It has not been an easy year, and I am feeling devastated by the passage of the “Big Ugly Bill” and what it means for our communities - as I am sure many of you are, too. Nonetheless, I am grateful for the many advocates we work alongside. Together, we will continue fighting in the coming days, years, and for however long it takes to realize the vision of a food system that serves the needs of every single person and fully values the hard work of all who make it run. My spirits have also been lifted by the opportunity to spend more time at community events in recent months, and I hope to keep this energy going well into the fall. Hope to see you out there!*

*In solidarity,*

***Kali Coughlan***

*MetroWest Food Collaborative Manager*



## **In the News**

- Spread the word: after nearly a year-long advocacy campaign, **HIP benefits have been restored to their previous levels of \$40/\$60/\$80** depending on household size! [Check out our new consolidated farmers market HIP flyers.](#)
- In July, the Healey-Driscoll Administration announced by Executive Order the **formation of an Anti-Hunger Task Force**. We were pleased to see that many of our statewide partners are involved. [Watch the press conference here.](#)
- **Changes are coming to SNAP.** Learn more by reading FRAC's blog post: [The Far-Reaching Harmful Impacts of the Reconciliation Bill](#)

# MWFC UPDATES

## OUT IN THE COMMUNITY

One of the best parts of summer is the opportunity to get out and join the community at a variety of events. A few highlights from this summer included spending time at the Hudson Farmers Market, attending a Summer Eats kickoff, and tabling at food pantries, as well as various health, wellness, and resource fairs. Kali and her daughter Clara also volunteered delivering food from Open Table at the Hudson Mobile Food Pantry. Most recently, Kali and Giuliana attended Congressman McGovern's annual Farm Tour. As always, it was a fun and informational day out, spending time with producers and partners throughout the state.

While out at events, we shared informational resources, planted seedlings with both kids and adults, and handed out some fun and popular swag: apple shaped ice packs, grocery tote bags, stickers and branded jar openers. Kali also ran into two former coworkers at events, which was a lovely surprise!



## SNAP & WIC OUTREACH PILOT

We are thrilled to announce that we received a **second year of funding from the MetroWest Health Foundation**, which will enable Giuliana to continue her efforts as our SNAP and WIC Outreach Coordinator. With this funding, we will keep adjusting and expanding our pilot to become more impactful and supportive.

As a result of some shifts to our approach, Giuliana has seen an uptick in requests for application support, which is an exciting development. Please keep sharing our outreach materials and referring folks to Giuliana! Please also let us know if you'd like us to set up a table to engage with community members at your site.

You can find Giuliana's contact information and a referral form [on our website](#).



Follow us on social media! —————>



# FOOD POLICY UPDATES

## OUR ADVOCACY EFFORTS

- Early in the summer, we **joined urgent phone-banking efforts** in states where Congresspeople most needed to hear from their constituents, in an effort to stop the “Big Ugly Bill.” We were devastated to see this package pass, and we will continue advocating with partners to mitigate the harms from this bill.
- **We met with Senate President Spilka’s office** to support efforts aimed at addressing SNAP benefit theft, including advocating for the implementation of chip EBT cards and for the replacement of stolen SNAP.
- We continued **advocating for supplemental funding to restore previous levels of HIP benefits**, tiered by household size. Efforts included calls and emails, sign-on letters, and coalition meetings.

## FEDERAL AND STATE CHANGES

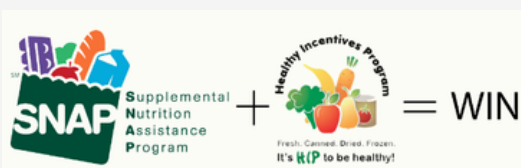
**SNAP work requirements:** On August 1st, DTA began terminating SNAP benefits for adults (“ABAWDs”) who are subject to a 3-month time limit. The rules in place currently impact adults ages 18-54 who are not exempt from or meeting the rules (to learn more, see [MLRI’s Guide on the ABAWD Work Rules](#)). DTA is waiting for federal guidance before taking action to implement a vast expansion of this time limit to include adults up to age 65, families with children 14+, veterans, and others.



**More changes coming to SNAP:** We are sharing some resources that may be helpful for understanding the scope of the reconciliation package, implementation timeline and harm to low income households with regard to SNAP changes.

- [Massachusetts fact sheet](#) from the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities (CBPP). A more in-depth analysis from MLRI is [HERE](#).
- [CBPP timeline](#): When SNAP, healthcare, tax and climate provisions go into effect.

**Addressing SNAP benefit theft in Massachusetts:** Following [advocacy efforts](#), Governor Healey recently signed into law an FY25 supplemental budget that includes \$15.5 million for DTA to issue chip EBT cards to prevent benefit skimming. Unfortunately, the package does not include funds to replace stolen SNAP.



**Restoring HIP to prior levels:** A nearly year-long advocacy campaign resulted in the passage of funding to restore HIP benefits to their original \$40/\$60/\$80 per month, depending on household size. This change took effect on September 1st!

***Interested in joining a working group?***

Email us at: [MetroWestFoodCollaborative@gmail.com](mailto:MetroWestFoodCollaborative@gmail.com)

# PARTNER UPDATES

## MAKE HUNGER HISTORY WORKING GROUPS

If you'd like to get involved with the [Make Hunger History Coalition](#), you can sign up to join a working group. They are taking submissions [through this form](#).



## UNDERSTANDING SNAP CUTS WEBINAR



Make Hunger History Coalition members Project Bread and MLRI are offering a free policy webinar on Wednesday, September 25th from 2-3pm, to provide information on how changes to SNAP from the federal reconciliation bill will impact Massachusetts residents. [Learn more and register](#).

## PROJECT JUST BECAUSE FUNDRAISER

Project Just Because is holding a Comedy Night Fundraiser on Friday, October 24th, at 7pm at the Italian American Post 40 in Milford. You can contact [sales@projectjustbecause.org](mailto:sales@projectjustbecause.org) for more information or [get tickets here](#).



## RIDE FOR FOOD FUNDRAISER



You can support this fundraising event from Three Squares New England by registering to ride or walk on Sunday, October 5th, or making a donation to a team, rider or walker. [Learn more and get involved here](#).

## MARK YOUR CALENDAR: COALITION MEETINGS

**MetroWest Emergency Food Resource Meeting:** this group convened by MWFC had its first meeting and will meet quarterly. [Reach out to Kali](#) to get involved.

**Make Hunger History Coalition:** 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of the month, 12pm - 1pm. Join the Coalition list [here](#) to receive future invites.

**MA SNAP Coalition:** 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday of the month, 10am - 11:30am. To join, contact: Pat Baker at [pbaker@mlri.org](mailto:pbaker@mlri.org) or Vicky Negus at [vnegus@mlri.org](mailto:vnegus@mlri.org).

***Want an update shared with our network?***

Email us at: [MetroWestFoodCollaborative@gmail.com](mailto:MetroWestFoodCollaborative@gmail.com)



# ADVOCACY OPPORTUNITIES

## 1 SNAP ADVOCACY SUPPORT



As the Governor's Anti-Hunger Task Force gears up, MLRI and the other organizations appointed to the Task Force want to hear from you about strategies that can mitigate the harm.

MLRI is also asking to hear about any clients who were cut off from SNAP due to the ABAWD Work Rules. You can use [this form](#), or [email Vicky](#). They need case examples to advocate for improvements with DTA - both now and in the future when these rules expand.

## 2 TRANSPORTATION & AGRICULTURE TESTIMONY



We encourage you to submit written testimony for these bills:

- [H.3623](#) *An Act relative to fare free buses*
- [H.3658](#) *An Act establishing a special commission on micro-transit.* (this is related to establishing on-demand and demand-responsive transportation systems to get residents to jobs, appointments, and services).
- [S.55/H.112](#) *An Act fostering agricultural resilience in Massachusetts (the FARM bill)* (this includes a number of reforms to support farms and farmers and preserve valuable farmland)
- [S.56/H.109](#) *An Act protecting our soil and farms from PFAS contamination.* (Senator Comerford's office has requested to be CC'd on written testimony [jo.comerford@masenate.gov](mailto:jo.comerford@masenate.gov)).

## 3 HUNGER ACTION MONTH

September is Hunger Action Month, the Feeding America network's annual nationwide campaign aimed at inspiring people to take action to end hunger in the U.S. You can find a toolkit and a list of specific ways to get involved this year on the [Greater Boston Food Bank's website](#).



### Questions about Advocacy?

Contact us: [MetroWestFoodCollaborative@gmail.com](mailto:MetroWestFoodCollaborative@gmail.com)

# RESOURCES FOR YOU

## Food Access Calendars & Food Resource Flyers by City/Town

*(In English, Spanish, Portuguese,  
and Haitian Creole)*

[Click here](#)

## Connect with Giuliana for SNAP/WIC help

[Click here](#)

UPDATED  
RESOURCE!

## Local Farmers' Markets Info & HIP Flyers

*(In English, Spanish, Portuguese,  
and Haitian Creole)*

[Click here](#)

## Project Bread's FoodSource Hotline: 1-800-645-8333

Monday-Friday: 8am-7pm  
Saturday: 10am - 2pm

*Assistance in 180 languages.*

## Trouble with SNAP? Get Help When you Can't Reach DTA

[Click here](#)

## What to Do If You've Experienced Benefit Theft

[Click here](#)