



**Kane County Hunger Relief Network**  
**April 8, 2026, 1:00 – 2:00 p.m.**

**AGENDA**

- 1. Welcome** – Christine Birns  
Meeting called to order; attendees welcomed.
- 2. KCHRN Website Update** – Dianna Strong
  - a. Website is live on the Kane County Health Department website.
  - b. Includes overview of the Hunger Relief Network, meeting materials, and resources.
- 3. Northern Illinois Food Bank (NIFB) Update** – Matt Carlson & Ann Jumonville
  - a. Overview of current funding and food availability across the service area.
  - b. Multiple funding sources supporting distribution (state SNAP-related funding, Pritzker Foundation support, NIFB funds).
  - c. **Kane County ARPA Update:**
    - i. Program ends June 30, 2026; all food must be distributed then.
    - ii. Agencies encouraged to order and stock up; produce distributions continue through mid-May.
    - iii. Available items include a variety of shelf-stable and pantry staples.
  - d. Additional updates included upcoming events, trainings, and use of the pantry locator tool (Vivory.org).
- 4. Sustainability Assessment for Small Food Businesses** – Zach Samaras (U of I)
  - a. Free sustainability assessments available for food pantries and organizations through 2026.
  - b. Assessments include waste/recycling and energy usage.
  - c. Participation involves a short application, phone call, and one-hour site visit.
  - d. No requirement to implement recommendations.
  - e. Contact Zach Samaras for more information.



5. **Hospital Initiatives Addressing Food Insecurity** – Mariana Martinez (RUSH Copley) & Michelle Zepeda (Loaves & Fishes)
  - a. Overview of “Promise Pantry” program:
    - i. Eight micro-pantries across hospital and outpatient settings.
    - ii. Provides pre-packed foods to patients experiencing food insecurity.
  - b. Key components include pantry bags, screening for food insecurity, and weekly Loaves & Fishes distribution.
  - c. Impact includes significant pantry bag distribution across sites.
  - d. Additional Information efforts include backpack programs, resource lists, and exploration of referral systems for social needs.
6. **Discussion/Questions**
  - a. Positive feedback shared on hospital-pantry partnerships and collaboration.
7. **Organizational Agency Spotlight & Hunger Action Month**
  - a. Future meetings may include brief partner spotlights.
  - b. Planning underway for social media campaign partnership with the health department.
8. **Member Feedback & Next Meeting**
  - a. Next meeting date: **July 8, 1:00pm-2:00pm**
  - b. **Link for member feedback:** <https://redcap.link/kchnr-meeting-feedback>
9. **Adjourn**
  - a. Meeting adjourned.

**Attendees (as noted):** Dianna Strong, Christine Birns, “Kane County,” Zach Samaras, Shari Frieders, Joe Rodriguez, Ann Jumonville, Dulce Vargas, Liz Alleman, Julia Perez, Lynn Queen, Mariana Martinez, Matt Carlson, Michelle Esquivel, Michelle Zepeda, Orlando Vazquez, Tiffany Trewartha