



Greater Cleveland  
Food Bank

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Contact: Karen Pozna, 216.214.9436

**Greater Cleveland Food Bank Joins National  
Movement to End Senior Hunger**

*40 community organizations work together to increase SNAP enrollment among older adults*

**Cleveland, OH (October 23, 2020)** – The Greater Cleveland Food Bank, in partnership with the [National Council on Aging](#) (NCOA), has joined a nationwide effort to fight senior hunger by dramatically increasing participation by eligible seniors in the [Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program](#) (SNAP).

Even before the COVID-19 pandemic, over 9.8 million older adults experienced food insecurity, meaning they lack consistent access to adequate, nutritious food. Today, those numbers are quickly rising. SNAP is the nation’s most effective and widest-reaching anti-hunger program. Research by Center for Budget and Policy Priorities shows that participation in SNAP reduces food insecurity overall by 30%, yet the U.S. Department of Agriculture estimates that only 48% of eligible older adults aged 60+ participate in the program.

“We’ve heard from older adults and our local partners that accessing and paying for food is a critical need right now,” said [Josh Hodges](#), NCOA Chief Customer Officer. “Food, on average, is the second highest household expenditure for people aged 60+, and too often they have to stretch their food budget in order to make ends meet. That’s where SNAP can help.”

The Greater Cleveland Food Bank is one of 40 community organizations around the country that is stepping up its efforts to assist older adults in applying for SNAP. The organizations will use NCOA’s free online BenefitsCheckUp® tool at [www.BenefitsCheckUp.org](http://www.BenefitsCheckUp.org) to screen older adults with limited income for SNAP eligibility. The initiative aims to help at least 40,000 older adults enroll.

“We’re proud to be part of a Senior SNAP Enrollment Initiative that has the potential to help tens of thousands of low-income older adults improve their health and financial security,” said Tiffany Scruggs, Director of Outreach Services. “The Greater Cleveland Food Bank has a strong history of helping older adults in need. We’re confident that increasing SNAP enrollment with BenefitsCheckUp and other proven outreach methods will have a profound effect on lives of older adults in Northeast Ohio.”

For more information, visit [www.ncoa.org/SeniorHunger](http://www.ncoa.org/SeniorHunger).

###

**About the Greater Cleveland Food Bank**

The Greater Cleveland Food Bank is the largest hunger relief organization in Northeast Ohio having provided more than 50 million meals in FY2019 to hungry people in Cuyahoga, Ashtabula, Geauga, Lake, Ashland and Richland counties. Our mission is working together to ensure that everyone in our communities has the nutritious food they need every day. We do this through both food distribution and SNAP outreach efforts. For more information go to [www.GreaterClevelandFoodBank.org](http://www.GreaterClevelandFoodBank.org)



Greater Cleveland  
Food Bank

### **About NCOA**

The National Council on Aging (NCOA) is a trusted national leader working to ensure that every person can age well. Since 1950, our mission has not changed: Improve the lives of millions of older adults, especially those who are struggling. NCOA empowers people with the best solutions to improve their own health and economic security—and we strengthen government programs that we all depend on as we age. Every year, millions of people use our signature programs BenefitsCheckUp®, My Medicare Matters®, and the Aging Mastery Program® to age well. By offering online tools and collaborating with a nationwide network of partners, NCOA is working to improve the lives of 40 million older adults by 2030. Learn more at [www.ncoa.org](http://www.ncoa.org) and @NCOAging.