

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Community Organizations Launch Walla Walla Valley Hunger Relief Coalition to Meet Local Food Needs, Call for Donations of Funds and Food

WALLA WALLA, WA, October 28, 2025 – Dozens of community organizations announced a coordinated response to fighting hunger through a new Walla Walla Valley Hunger Relief Coalition (WWVHRC), led by Blue Mountain Action Council (BMAC), which is the region's food bank for Walla Walla, Columbia, and Garfield Counties. The WWVHRC is asking community members to donate funds and food to the WWVHRC to address the possibility that the federal Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), also known as food stamps, will not issue benefits on November 1 due to the shutdown of the federal government.

SNAP benefits assist over 42 million Americans, including seniors, veterans, disabled individuals, and working families. According to the Department of Social and Health Services, in the broader Walla Walla region, over 4,000 households receive over \$1.3 million monthly to buy groceries from local stores. Our local food pantries and meal programs do not have the capacity alone to respond to the scale of this need. Funds donated through the WWVHRC campaign will primarily support the purchase of food cards from local grocery stores that can be donated to qualifying households throughout the region. This strategy will also help ensure that local grocery stores receive the benefit of this additional revenue.

“Our region has always prided itself on collaboration, and the size of this need is more than any one organization can address. By coordinating our efforts, we will be able to feed more families by purchasing food cards and food in bulk,” said BMAC CEO Danielle Garbe Reser. “We invite all community members and organizations to join with us to support area families and our local grocery stores.”

Ways to join in the effort to fight hunger include:

Fundraising:

- **Monetary Donation:** Donate via this website: <https://secure.qgiv.com/event/wwvhrc/> or by sending a check to BMAC at 8 E. Cherry Street, Walla Walla, WA 99362 with WWVHRC in the memo line. Funds donated for this purpose will be restricted to purchase food cards for eligible households and food for distribution to local food pantries and meal programs.
- **Become a Champion:** Recruit your friends, family, and colleagues to join the program alongside you.
- **Local Donation Partnerships:** Local stores have partnerships to support food needs in the region, including:
 - **Andy's Market** customers can donate their points to BMAC through the end of December.

- **Safeway** clients can purchase “Turkey Bucks” to support local food purchasing.

Food Raising:

- **Donate to BMAC Food Bank:** Donations of shelf-stable pantry items or fresh produce can be dropped off at the BMAC Food Bank, 921 W. Cherry Street in Walla Walla from 8:00am-2:00pm, Monday-Friday. BMAC distributes donated food to all area pantries. See the list of needed items [here](#).
- **Donate via a Donation Barrel:** There are food donation barrels available at the following locations:
 - College Place City Hall, 625 S. College Ave, College Place
 - Super 1 Foods, 710 S 9th Avenue, Walla Walla
 - Local realtor offices in Walla Walla through October 31
 - YMCA, 340 S Park, Walla Walla
- **Host a Food Drive:** Businesses, churches, organizations, or families wanting to organize a food drive can see BMAC’s “Do It Yourself Kit” [here](#).

Anyone in need of food assistance can access the local network of food pantries and meal programs. The current schedule is available on the BMAC [website](#). BMAC will be planning food card distribution days to current SNAP recipients and will announce the dates, times, and location for those distributions in the coming days.

Local food programs have already seen a significant uptick in food need in the region given the higher cost of food in recent years. The Washington State Department of Agriculture estimates that usage at food pantries in our state has increased 77% since 2022 while food availability has only increased 38%. For instance, the Walla Walla Senior Center provides 215 Meals on Wheels meals each day, and its nutrition programs have grown 94% from 2019 to 2024. BMAC’s Food Bank usage has grown 200% since pre-COVID numbers.

Organizations collaborating through the WWVHRC include: Akin, Blue Mountain Action Council, Blue Mountain Community Church, Blue Mountain Community Foundation, Blue Mountain Heart to Heart, Catholic Charities of Walla Walla, City of College Place, City of Waitsburg, City of Walla Walla, First Congregational Church, Communities in Schools, Christian Aid Center, Hope Street, The Pantry at St. Frances Cabrini, Pioneer United Methodist Church, Providence St. Mary Medical Center, Salvation Army, SonBridge Center for Better Living, Skyrocket Church, St. Paul’s Episcopal Church, Sustainable Living Center, Walla Walla Alliance for the Homeless, Walla Walla Chamber of Commerce, Walla Walla Community College, Walla Walla County Department of Human Services, Walla Walla Immigrant Rights Coalition, Walla Walla Senior Center, and the YMCA of Walla Walla.

Any organization, business, or individual wishing to join the coalition can email Walla Walla County Department of Human Services Manager: Sam Jackle at sjackle@wwco.wa.gov or attend a WWVHRC meeting. Meetings will be held on Mondays from 11:00am-12:00pm at the BMAC Main Office, 8 E. Cherry Street. WWVHRC intends to continue operating while

the federal government remains closed to provide local service coordination and assistance.

BMAC is our region's designated community action agency and home to our region's food bank. The BMAC Food Bank has the warehousing, storage, and distribution capacity to support food pantries across Walla Walla, Columbia, Garfield, and Asotin Counties. BMAC also provides other assistance to help people and change lives, including affordable housing, energy assistance, job training and more. Learn more at: <http://bmacww.org>.

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