

## **Food Bank Food Fight Postponed in Wake of Hurricane Florence**

**FAYETTEVILLE, NC– September 17, 2018**– Due to extensive flooding and damaged roads throughout Cumberland County, it is with sadness that Action Pathways/Second Harvest Food Bank of Southeast North Carolina (SHFB) announces its approaching 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Food Bank Food Fight has been postponed. For the health and safety of the community, the food bank plans to reschedule the event, previously planned for Sept. 23, with future announcements to be made online: [www.hungercantwait.org](http://www.hungercantwait.org).

Each day at the food bank is another step in the organization's mission to feed, advocate, and empower residents of southeast North Carolina. The Food Bank Food Fight is traditionally part of the organization's Hunger Action Month programming, and a way to celebrate the area's accomplishments in the fight to end childhood hunger. Hunger Action Month, recognized each September by members of the Feeding America network, raises awareness of the nation's hunger crisis. Though the month's plans have changed in wake of Hurricane Florence, SHFB continues working towards its vision of improved access to sufficient, nutritious foods – serving now as crisis responders. Already in communication with member agencies, Red Cross organizers, and emergency management officials throughout its seven-county service area, SHFB is assessing the community's needs and working to get on the ground as quickly and as safely possible.

During this time, the importance of Hunger Action Month's message continues to ring clear. The hunger crisis, often deemed "invisible," will now be at the forefront of media coverage in the coming weeks as hurricane victims seek relief. Leadership and staff at the food bank know that each flooded home belongs to a family now displaced without the same means to cook a hot, healthy meal; and every sinkhole and closed bridge limits a community's access to much-needed groceries and medications. For North Carolina, Hunger Action Month ends with a renewed sense of urgency.

Though the impacts of Hurricane Florence are expected to surpass some of the devastating records of Hurricane Matthew in October 2016, SHFB leadership, staff and volunteers are prepared to serve with the same compassion and diligence as they did two years ago. They learned much then, not only about building their emergency response, but about the resilience and heart of our community.

Food donations can be made to the food bank and any of its 260+ partner agencies which serve as food pantries throughout its seven-county service area. Additionally, those in need may enter their current address into the organization's agency locator to find the facility closest to them: <https://hungercantwait.org/find-help/find-food>. Please call ahead and consult with county government resources to ensure your safety if traveling to a pantry site.

Monetary donations are also highly appreciated, as they allow the food bank to efficiently address each county's unique needs. To donate online and stay updated with relief efforts, visit: [www.hungercantwait.org/florence](http://www.hungercantwait.org/florence).

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**ABOUT SECOND HARVEST FOOD BANK OF SOUTHEAST NORTH CAROLINA:** A proud member of Feeding America, Second Harvest Food Bank of Southeast North Carolina serves seven counties: Bladen, Cumberland, Duplin, Harnett, Hoke, Robeson, and Sampson. With a large rural service area, the organization relies on strong partnerships with over 260 churches, food pantries, and other nonprofits to distribute food to those in need. In southeast North Carolina, over 18 percent of people are at risk of hunger. Led by the principles of "Feed – Advocate – Empower," SHFB is committed to improving access to healthy foods; advocating for those in need; and empowering the community with emergency assistance and education.