



August 4, 2021

Dear Members of the Frontline Worker Pay Working Group,

Hunger has reached unprecedented levels, including approximately 1 in 5 Minnesotans experiencing food insecurity and nearly double that rate for communities of color. In tough times, Minnesotans take pride in taking care of one another. In 2020, food shelves across Minnesota served a record level of over 3.8 million visits.

Since the beginning of the pandemic food shelf staff and volunteers have stepped up on the frontlines to meet the increased need across the state to ensure that Minnesotans can safely access food and not go hungry. They put their hungry neighbors ahead of their own health and deserve to be compensated for their efforts.

Food shelf staff didn't have the option to work remotely or close their doors to protect themselves against COVID-19. Instead, they put in long hours to adapt their models to serve clients in new ways, such as stretching their limited indoor facilities to maximize distancing between workers or moving operations outdoors regardless of inclement weather. Many shelves launched new services such as food delivery, resulting in the need for additional hours and staffing to respond to the changes and overwhelming need.

Despite their best efforts to mitigate exposure, several food shelves were forced to temporarily close due to COVID-19 exposures. Out of an abundance of caution, food shelf staff readily self-quarantined when there were any concerns of exposure and took in stride their lost work hours as a result.

These are just a few examples of how food shelf staff went above and beyond to serve their clients and make a difference for thousands of families across the state. We ask that you consider them when deciding recipients eligible for the Frontline Worker Pay Program.

Please contact Peter Woitock pwoitock@hungersolutions.org or 651-789-9850 with any questions.

Sincerely,

Executive Director, Hunger Solutions
Minnesota