



Harry Chapin Food Bank
OF SOUTHWEST FLORIDA

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Media Contact:

Irma C. Lancaster, Director of Communication & Marketing, Harry Chapin Food Bank, ilancaster@hcfb.org or 239-334-7007 x103

Dave Breitenstein, Priority Marketing, Dave@PriorityMarketing.com, 239-267-2638 or 239-317-5424 (cell)

Harry Chapin Food Bank declares emergency as federal shutdown extends into fifth week

FORT MYERS, Fla. (October 31, 2025) — Harry Chapin Food Bank has declared an emergency as the federal government shutdown enters its fifth week. Thousands of Southwest Florida families are struggling to put food on the table as SNAP benefits remain paused and federal employees in critical roles such as transportation and public safety continue to go unpaid.

“We are deeply concerned by the current situation,” said Richard LeBer, President & CEO of Harry Chapin Food Bank. “The longer this continues, the more significant the suffering it will cause for thousands in our community. We hope you will join us in asking our elected representatives in Washington D.C. to resolve this situation as soon as possible. In the meantime, we will continue to care for our neighbors, with your help.”

The food bank remains fully committed to serving children, families, and seniors across its five-county service area, including Charlotte, Collier, Glades, Hendry, and Lee counties, but warns that community support is urgently needed to sustain operations.

While food donations are always valued, monetary donations are most critical during this emergency. Each dollar allows the food bank to purchase and distribute far more food than can be bought at retail stores. An anonymous donor has pledged a \$25,000 matching gift, doubling the impact of every donation made during this crisis period.

In addition, the organization’s Thanksgiving Turkey & Ham Drive is underway through November 20. Frozen turkeys and hams can be dropped off at Harry Chapin Food Bank’s Fort Myers and Naples locations. [Monetary contributions can also be made online](#) to ensure every family has food to share this holiday season.

To support the food bank’s efforts, visit harrychapinfoodbank.org to make a donation or sign up to volunteer. Anyone in need of food can find a list of mobile distributions and partner pantries on the website.

“Now is the time to come together,” said LeBer. “Your action today can make the difference between a family having a meal or going hungry.”

About Harry Chapin Food Bank

Harry Chapin Food Bank, a Feeding America partner food bank, is the largest hunger-relief organization in Southwest Florida and serves 300,000 neighbors monthly through its Feeding Network of 175 agency partners. In 2024, the nonprofit distributed 39.5 million pounds of food, the equivalent of 32 million meals, at food banks and mobile pantries across Charlotte, Collier, Glades, Hendry and Lee counties. The food bank is privately funded and receives support from individuals, businesses, foundations, grocery stores and food distributors. Harry Chapin Food Bank is an Agency Partner of United Way and a Blueprint Partner of the Naples Children Foundation , rated as a Four-Star Charity by Charity Navigator and Platinum-rated by Candid's GuideStar. For more information, please visit HarryChapinFoodBank.org or call 239-334-7007.

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