



# News Release

**For Immediate Release**

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## **SEMO FOOD BANK LAUNCHES NEW SYSTEM TO MAKE IT EASIER FOR GROUPS TO VOLUNTEER**

Sikeston, MO (April 27, 2022) – Southeast Missouri Food Bank is making it easier to volunteer with a new scheduling tool online.

“The traditional way of booking a volunteer event usually involved multiple back-and-forth communications between me and a member of the group,” said Candice Blaylock, volunteer coordinator at the food bank. “This can cause delays in scheduling or double bookings. But the new online scheduling allows groups the freedom to reserve a day and time that works best for them. Volunteers are able to add the event to their calendar and, if they can't make it, they have the option to cancel the appointment themselves online.”

Volunteers at the food bank often pack boxes of food for senior citizens or sort and label canned food items. According to Blaylock, the food bank asks that groups have between 10 to 20 people, but if you have more or less that is okay.

“If you plan to have more than 20, that’s great, just let me know so we can plan accordingly,” she said. “It is also important to have one to two people in your group who can lift up to 35 pounds to stack the packed boxes onto the pallet.”

The new scheduling system will also make it more efficient when the food bank opens an additional location in Jackson later this year.

“Expanding volunteer opportunities was one of the many reasons we decided to add a second location,” said Joey Keys, chief executive officer of SEMO Food Bank. “A lot of our volunteers are from the Cape and Jackson area, so this program will make it easier for them to volunteer more often and a little closer to home.”

The food bank purchased the former Sappington Pro building in Jackson in fall 2021. It is currently undergoing renovations with plans to open mid-summer. Keys said it will add needed warehouse, office and volunteer space for the food bank.

Groups, businesses, sports teams and civic organizations can schedule a time to volunteer at SEMO Food Bank online at [www.semofoodbank.org/donate-time/](http://www.semofoodbank.org/donate-time/). Individuals may also volunteer during monthly Help More, Feed More open volunteer

days, which are 1 to 4 p.m. the third Thursday of each month and 9 a.m. to noon the fourth Wednesday of each month.

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**About Southeast Missouri Food Bank**

Southeast Missouri Food Bank provides food to 140 food pantries, soup kitchens, and shelters in 16 southeast Missouri counties. They include Bollinger, Butler, Cape Girardeau, Carter, Dunklin, Madison, Mississippi, New Madrid, Pemiscot, Perry, Reynolds, Ripley, Scott, Ste. Genevieve, Stoddard, and Wayne counties. The food bank also provides mobile food distributions, monthly boxes of food to eligible seniors and weekend backpacks of food to 1,200 in 31 school districts. The mission of Southeast Missouri Food Bank is to end hunger and leverage the power of food to build a healthy community. The food bank is affiliated with Feeding America, the nation's largest food bank network, and has received the highest possible rating from Charity Navigator, attesting to its adherence to best practices. Those interested in helping can do so by making a tax-deductible contribution, donating food, or volunteering. Visit [SemoFoodBank.org](http://SemoFoodBank.org) for more information.