

FSTF Meeting Minutes
November 5, 2025
1:30 p.m. - 3:30 p.m.
Virtual Meeting via Zoom

Click [here](#) to view the meeting recording

Task Force Members Present: Jeimil Belamide (HSA/CalFresh); Priti Rane (DPH/Nutrition Services); Tiffany Kearney (DAS); Michelle Kim (DCYF); Marion Sanders (HSH); Mei Ling Hui (SF Park & Rec); Jennifer LeBarre (SFUSD); Cissie Bonini (UCSF/Vouchers 4 Veggies – EatSF); Chester Williams (Community Living Campaign); Katie Jackson (Project Open Hand); Guillermo Reece (SFAAFBC); Noriko Lim-Teppe (SFMFB); Raegan Sales (Children’s Council of SF); Hannah Grant (Meals on Wheels SF)

Task Force Members Not Present: Anne Quaintance (Conard House); Jade Quizon (FAACTS); Lura Jones (Leah’s Pantry); Geoffrey Grier (SF Recovery Theatre)

Also Present: Beth Bodner (SF Environment); Cathy Huang (HSA); Cindy Lin (SFHSA Food Access); Danielle Lundstrom (SFDPH/SNAP-Ed); Eric Chan (SFDPH – Office of Anti-Racism & Equity); Fiona McBride (SF HSA Food Access); Marianne Szeto (SFDPH); Marina Kan (HSA); Priscilla Rodriguez (SFDPH – Office of Anti-Racism & Equity); Susie Smith (SFHSA); Tommy McClain (SF HSA Food Access); Janna Cordeiro (Food as Medicine Collaborative); Kaela Plank (SFDPH – CDS); Kimberly Jower (SFDPD Shelter Health); Laura Urban (Children’s Council of SF); Lea Treoh (UCSF); Leah Walton (SFDAS); Linda Huerta (Homelessness Prenatal Program)

Agenda Item	Discussion	Next Steps
1. Call order to order 1:30 p.m.	Call to order at 1:30 p.m.	None.
2. Land acknowledgment 1:30 p.m.	Priscilla Rodriguez recited the Land Acknowledgement.	None.
3. Welcome, member roll call, introductions, Cissie Bonini (Chair, Eat SF/Vouchers 4 Veggies) 1:35 p.m.	Cissie Bonini did roll call and introduced the agenda. Public Comment: None.	None.
4. CalFresh delays and changes – planning and response, (Susie Smith,	Please refer to the recording for this presentation, linked here . This agenda item starts at the 1:26 minute mark and ends at the 35:56 minute mark.	None.

<p>Human Services Agency), FSTF members, CBOs 1:40 p.m.</p>	<p>Susie Smith with the Human Services Agency (HSA) discussed the latest delays and changes to CalFresh. At the time of this meeting, the federal government was set to issue partial benefits to CalFresh recipients for November. HSA developed a toolkit for community based organizations (CBOs) to use as reference. The CalFresh Emergency Grocery Card Program: Technical Assistance Toolkit is a step by step guide to providing technical assistance to CalFresh recipients of GiveCards. Crankstart stepped up and put \$9 million into providing one-time prepaid grocery gift cards. The San Francisco Mayor and Board of Supervisors also put forth \$9 million from the City’s emergency response fund. The total fund amounts to \$18 million.</p> <p>The CalFresh Emergency Grocery Card Program was San Francisco’s response to the federal government shutdown. A public-private partnership provided one-time prepaid grocery cards to those who were CalFresh recipients as of October 2025. Support was provided as a prepaid card through GiveCard, a financial technology company that helps organizations and governments disburse funds. The card is a prepaid debit card which can be accessed virtually or as a physical card. The card allows people to purchase groceries at most of the same places that accept EBT. The card is not an EBT card, nor is it a replacement. It is a one-time supplement and does not have the same functions as a bank card. The card is also not permitted for the purchase of sugary or alcoholic beverages or tobacco.</p> <p>Community organizations could assist by spreading the word, assisting clients to claim their card, and directing complex questions to HSA. At the time of this meeting, 96% of recipients who claimed the card were able to do so on their own without the help of HSA.</p> <p>Susie provided an overview on how to use GiveCard. For immediate use as a virtual card, recipients could input the card details to order groceries online or add the card to their smartphone wallet. The billing address provided in the account should be used when making online purchases. Alternatively, clients may also choose to request a physical card by clicking “order physical card.” The physical card can be used like a debit card at in-person locations or used online to place orders for groceries. The physical card will arrive within 7 business days following the request.</p> <p>It is important to know that all CalFresh households will receive a letter with instructions for claiming their prepaid grocery card. Clients must claim their cards by December 21, 2025, and must use the funds by March 31, 2026. There is only one gift card per household. GiveCards</p>	
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	<p>amounts are not a household's usual CalFresh EBT amounts but are rather based on average benefit amount for households of similar sizes: 1) 1-2 person household = \$200, 2) 3-4 person household = \$350, and 3) 5+ person household = \$500.</p> <p>Prepaid grocery cards will not impact eligibility or benefit amount for CalFresh, California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids (CalWORKs), County Adult Assistance Programs (CAAP), or MediCal. Only clients who use General Delivery or PO Boxes as their CalFresh mailing address will have the option to pick up their cards in person at HSA's 1235 Mission Street office starting on November 6, 2025. HSA reached out to numerous CBOs and city agencies to spread awareness about the program.</p> <p>A discussion/Q&A followed with additional notes below.</p> <p>Katie Jackson: Are there any plans to have conversation around December planning?</p> <p>Susie Smith: We will know by November 23rd. That is the deadline for when there needs to be federal action to continue December benefits based on where things are with the federal government shutdown.</p> <p>Cissie Bonini: Is there anything the Food Security Task Force (FSTF) can do to help disseminate the information?</p> <p>Susie Smith: Sometimes people take information, and they create their own flyers. We're really trying to give community what they need. It is a complex program in a very short period. We want to make sure that you are using the materials that we have available and if there is something that you need that we don't have you can reach out. The message is to check your mail. The quickest way to get the card is virtually. We're here to help if you need help. If clients don't get their cards by November 10th, then contact us because then we're going to need to do some troubleshooting and figuring out why they didn't get their cards. We also want to convey that it's not a scam. We are worried that people will think it's a scam. People should not share their social security numbers, bank account numbers, or any of that. The only thing they need to activate the card is that unique number they're going to get and their date of birth.</p>	
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	<p>Cissie Bonini: What are some recommendations for talking points to community members who are worried about December benefits and waitlists?</p> <p>Susie Smith: I know the Food Bank is ramping up additional resources, as well. It's advocacy, right? I think all the news and the lawsuit and the profiles, I mean, it's really advocacy. It's \$20 million a month that is issued in CalFresh benefits in San Francisco. Obviously, we're not going to sustain this doing alternative programming. So, we really need to advocate that the government reopens and if you've got friends in other states where it could congressionally be more impactful, get the people to call their own representatives. We're in a food crisis.</p> <p>Susie Smith: We don't want to be like oh federal government, it's okay. Private philanthropy and local governments will step in when you don't do your job right.</p> <p>Cindy Lin: I know that we have a population in San Francisco that might rely on meals more than groceries and of course this impacts them as well. Just want to say that we are supporting GLIDE with additional capacity to add 650 meals per day in addition to what they were doing in their dining room. So that's a resource for those who need meal support rather than grocery support, generally that's a good place to send them.</p> <p>Noriko Lim-Tepper: We are in the middle and have stood up a couple of intervention programs. The first one is we did do an inquiry with our grocery network and our partners to see if there can be an increase in capacity in the different pantries and we've expanded the home delivery grocery program to open it up to more individuals who would like to receive those home delivery groceries to their door because of ICE enforcement impacts that are happening in our community as well. Additionally, we are offering partner and non-partner agencies to pick up grocery bags at the Food Bank. If you would like to inquire, have more questions about it, more than happy to talk and drop a link in the chat if your agency would like to do grocery bag pickups at the Food Bank.</p> <p>Hannah Grant: So, at Meals on Wheels, we've secured private funding to create emergency food boxes for our clients. We're thinking a little bit longer term about what happens. If they're not able to access their card for whatever reason or if the shutdown extends through December.</p>	
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	<p>We're very fortunate to be able to secure that and we're working on getting those out in the next two weeks.</p> <p>Katie Jackson: We at Project Open Hand are doing something similar for our folks. We were kind of anticipating that there would be some delays for some folks that didn't get cards. We'll be doing something similar here and then planning and thinking about December in the event that's still an issue. Hopefully, it won't be.</p> <p>Jennifer LeBarre: We have reminded all our families that breakfast and lunch continue to be served at no charge in all our schools. We remind them that it is a resource. We also worked with our afterschool programs where they're serving supper to make sure that they know that they should be welcoming any child. It gets a little complicated but essentially if you're enrolled in our schools, you're welcome. If you're 19 years younger, you're welcome. If you are part of our special education community, 22 years and younger, you're welcome to have free supper at whatever schools are offering that. We've posted those lists up. I haven't really seen an uptick in meals but it's just Wednesday so I think it takes a little bit of time for word to get out. Our after school programs were very happy to do this and understanding and willing. A few of them have already reached out to us asking for increase in meals so that they are able to do so. That's what we have going on right now. We're not sure if we're going to be able to do more, but this is what we can do within the confines of our current funding.</p> <p>Jeimil Belamide: States have received a couple of memos from Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) about the implementation dates for the new Able Bodied Adults Without Dependents (ABAWD) criteria and the new non-citizen criteria. We're still waiting for California Department of Social Services (CDSS) to gather the details. There's no official state implementation date that's been communicated to the counties. Counties are just kind of in this wait for additional guidance from the state mode and we're still waiting for our systems to be updated to be coded to the new rules. Counties are still waiting for additional guidance from CDSS. We're preparing material to train our staff as soon as we get the word that needs to be implemented on a specific date. I think once the ABAWD changes kick in, there's going to be a whole bunch of people that are going to need to meet the work requirement. The earliest those cuts could</p>	
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	<p>happen would be at the end of March. Starting April, people will start to feel it. If you're not meeting the requirements or have an exemption, that's when it will start to be discontinued.</p> <p>Michelle Kim: The Department of Children, Youth and Their Families (DCYF) wants to be intentional with our support. We released a survey for our DCYF grantees to see what support they would need. One is we can provide extra meals to program participants and their families. It doesn't necessarily have to be youth enrolled in the program, but their families enrolled in the program. We're trying to figure out how many meals that would be and when is the earliest they can help distribute those meals. The second option we are also looking into is providing weekend meals, shelf stable meals that the families can pick up on a Friday that will last them throughout the weekend. We're surveying our CBOs to see who might be able to do that because we are relying on our CBOs to help with that support. Once we get all the information, I could probably send a better update in terms of all the numbers.</p> <p>Public comment:</p> <p>Linda Huerta: I just wanted to say thank you to everybody for being a community and together. I want to also say that we are doing everything possible to support our families with updating their gift cards. Hopefully within the next couple days you'll see an increase in participation with that.</p>	
5. Approval of minutes from October 1, 2025 and October 29, 2025 2:15p.m.	<p>Raegan Sales makes motion to approve October 1, 2025 minutes. Hannah Grant seconds the motion.</p> <p>12 approved. 0 opposed. 1 abstained. Motion is passed.</p> <p>Chester Williams makes motion to approve October 29, 2025 minutes. Jennifer LeBarre seconds the motion.</p> <p>9 approved. 0 opposed. 3 abstained. Motion is passed.</p>	None.

	Public Comment: None.	
6. General public comment 2:20 p.m.	None.	None.
7. Homelessness and supportive housing updates, Lisa Rachowicz (Department of Homelessness and Supportive Housing) 2:25p.m.	<p>Please refer to the recording for this presentation, linked here. This agenda item starts at the 41:28 minute mark and ends at the 1:25:25 minute mark.</p> <p>Lisa Rachowicz is the Director of Outreach and Shelter for the Department of Homelessness and Supportive Housing (HSH). Lisa presented on HSH’s homelessness response system (HRS) and food service in shelter.</p> <p>Due to increased efforts, San Francisco identified 437 homeless families, a 94% increase since 2022. The federal definition of homelessness includes individuals and families with a primary nighttime residence not meant for human habitation, living in a shelter or transitional housing, people fleeing violent situations that make them afraid to return to their primary residence, and people at imminent risk of homelessness who will lose their residence within 14 days and have no other housing resources. San Francisco (SF) uses a broader definition that includes families who are “doubled up” or living in single room occupancy (SRO) units. HSH serves over 15,000 people daily through the HRS.</p> <p>The Homelessness Oversight Commission, which serves as the main oversight body for HSH, launched in 2023 with seven members who are responsible for approving budgets, setting performance goals, conducting audits, and submitting annual requests. Lisa discussed their strategic plan’s 5-year goals which include decreasing homelessness, reducing racial inequities and other disparities, increasing the number of people exiting homelessness, supporting people to succeed in housing, and preventing homelessness.</p> <p>HSH’s work is organized into several core components which include homelessness prevention, coordinated entry, outreach, shelter, housing problem solving, and housing. The SF Homeless Outreach Team (SFHOT) works to engage and stabilize people experiencing homelessness. In the last 12 months, there have been 43,454 outreach engagements including 2,007 shelter placements and 2,627 coordinated entry assessments. To prevent people from homelessness,</p>	None.

	<p>HSH provides flexible financial assistance for needs tied to securing or retaining housing. HSH engages with partner systems such as schools and workforce development to identify households at risk of homelessness. Coordinated entry (CE) is a federally mandated consistent, streamlined, standardized process to match people experiencing homelessness with housing and other resources. CE organizes the homelessness response system using a centralized data system that creates a “by name” database of clients. It is a prioritization method for available HSH-funded housing. Shelters provide temporary places for people to stay while accessing other services and seeking housing solutions. Transitional housing provides a place to stay and services for up to two years. Current programs are for families and youth ages 18-24. Based on fiscal year (FY) 2024-2025 data, HSH served 10,161 people in shelter and 520 people in transitional housing.</p> <p>HSH has permanent solutions to homelessness. The HSH housing team contracts with nonprofits to fund subsidies, supportive services, property management services, and leasing and operations. For permanent supportive housing (PSH), tenants pay up to 30% of income in rent and receive voluntary support services. For site-based programs, there are more than 9,300 units in over 150 buildings across the City. For scattered-site programs, there are more than 2,600 units. Rapid re-housing (RRH) is a time-limited rental assistance for up to 2-5 years with supportive services. The housing ladder is an ongoing subsidy for former residents of PSH to live in a more independent site-based or scattered-site unit with a lower level of supportive services. All HSH housing goes through CE access points.</p> <p>Lisa discussed the homelessness response system’s meal services. For family emergency shelter programs, clients are given 3 meals per day (some exceptions). For adult and youth emergency shelter programs, clients are given 2 meals per day. No regular meals are provided in scattered site hotel voucher programs, although grocery vouchers may be available. For facilities with a kitchen, CBOs cook meals in-house. For facilities without a kitchen, HSH provides meals through their meal vendor, Meals on Wheels. In some cases, CBOs will subcontract their own selected meal vendor. In a few programs, grocery vouchers/gift cards are provided instead of meal service when kitchens or kitchenettes are available to guests.</p>	
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	<p>The Department of Public Health (DPH) Shelter Health Team staffs a registered dietician (RD) dedicated to supporting food service in HSH shelter programs. RD services ensure consistent, professional nutrition and food service technical support to meet the SF Shelter Standards of Care (SOC) and nutrition, health, and food safety guidelines for shelter residents.</p> <p>HSH's meal service provider, Meals on Wheels, serves 16 adult and youth shelter programs, mostly navigation centers. Two meals per person are provided a day – frozen or hot. 3,334 meals are provided a day – 463 hot meals and 2,871 frozen meals. A total of 1,159,059 total meals is provided per year.</p> <p>A discussion/Q&A followed with additional notes below.</p> <p>Chester Williams: I have a two-part question. Does homelessness continue to increase in the City? If it doesn't, what type of individuals are still coming into San Francisco that are from different parts of the country?</p> <p>Lisa Rachowicz: That's a very smart question. I don't know if I can answer that right on the spot. I'd have to go back to our data team. Marion, do you have anything to add?</p> <p>Marion Sanders: I was pulling up our point in time count. I would defer you there, but I mean, by and large, there's more people falling into homelessness locally than there are people coming into the City from other parts of the country. We have an inflow problem so traditional things like economic reasons, people losing their jobs, domestic violence. Those types of reasons are causing folks to fall into homelessness. We did see an uptick of migrants coming into San Francisco but again proportionally that's not the biggest kind of influx into the City. We do have folks coming in regionally. It's a rumor more so than anything that there are a ton of people coming from other states into San Francisco. I think that's by and large something that is believed but there's no data that backs that to be true. I hope that answered your question.</p> <p>Katie Jackson: You may have shared this in the data, and I may have missed it, but do you have information around someone who is more chronically without housing or if there are shorter stints of people being unhoused? Do you know what the makeup of that is in the City?</p>	
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	<p>Marion Sanders: Affordability is the largest problem to solve homelessness. You need housing, period. We don't have enough housing. It really is that basic. Lisa also mentioned all the systemic racism which is very compounded. You have the economic drivers, you have the health drivers, all those things. By and large we don't have enough housing, enough affordable housing. Affordability is really the largest issue.</p> <p>Cissie Bonini: One of the things that the Food Security Task Force (FSTF) has recommended in the past years is to look at food programs for residents of supportive and affordable housing. The thought here was looking at trying to stabilize folks in their housing so that they don't become homeless, which I think is one of your goals when you're talking about prevention. Can you tell us a potential approach to this? Do you see gaps in food for people that are unsheltered?</p> <p>Lisa Rachowicz: One of the key areas that I oversee is outreach and shelter. We do see outreach folks who are dealing with food insecurity. It's something that they talk to their outreach workers about for a variety of health reasons or other reasons. Sometimes it's difficult for folks to go somewhere to get food. There are some resources in the City of course where they're providing food for folks who are unsheltered but they're not necessarily everywhere in every community around the City and it sometimes can be difficult for some folks to access those.</p> <p>Lisa Rachowicz: I would just add, some of our housing programs, they do have case managers, and they do have some flexible ability at times when folks are dealing with food insecurity emergencies to potentially supplement with a gift card or grocery voucher. They do have those types of resources, but it's not at the level where if someone's having ongoing food insecurity issues, it's more challenging. It's really meant to try to sub in for a period to really help that person get connected with community resources.</p> <p>Marion Sanders: I was pulling up the data so I wouldn't be talking but from our point in time count last year before folks became homeless: 59% of folks were housed in San Francisco, 30% other places in California, and only 11% were out of state. You see proportionately most folks becoming homeless are from here.</p>	
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	Public Comment: None	
8. Status of Food Security Task Force and next steps, Cissie Bonini (Chair, Eat SF/Vouchers 4 Veggies) 3:00 p.m.	<p>Please refer to the recording for this presentation, linked here. This agenda item starts at the 1:25:25 minute mark and ends at the 1:39:30 minute mark.</p> <p>Cissie Bonini led a discussion on the FSTF's next steps. She provided updates on several topics. This first was an update on the Commission Streamlining Task Force's decision to eliminate the FSTF. The meeting started at 1 pm and the FSTF was not heard until after 9:30 pm. Not much discussion was had regarding their decision to eliminate the FSTF. One argument the Commission provided was that City staff can handle the duties of the FSTF. The FSTF is slated to sunset on July 1, 2026.</p> <p>Some FSTF members have been meeting with Board of Supervisor (BOS) offices to advocate for an Office of Food and a community food advisory body. Many BOS offices have shown interest in reauthoring the FSTF or introducing legislation for an Office of Food and a community advisory body. Next steps include the FSTF providing an outline for what the new food coordination structure could look like in SF.</p> <p>One of the concerns brought up by a BOS office was the possibility of public-private partnerships. Katie Jackson mentioned another thing that came up in those meetings. It was about the efficiencies that are created through working as a council and having folks on the same page and being able to leverage the City and community relationship through the council.</p> <p>Cissie asked for volunteers to help develop a plan/outline for a potential food coordination structure in SF. This group would go back to the FSTF and run it by them for feedback.</p> <p>Public Comment: None</p>	Smaller group will meet to discuss a potential food coordination structure in SF.

<p>9. Updates and Emerging Issues 3:15 p.m.</p>	<p>Please refer to the recording for this presentation, linked here. This agenda item starts at the 1:39:30 minute mark and ends at the 1:46:22 minute mark.</p> <p>Katie Jackson: We have an open house this week at Project Open Hand. It is tomorrow, 11/6. I'll drop the flyer in the chat. This is really intended as our clients, providers, members of the community. We'd love to have you drop by and visit us. It's at 7:30 pm, but I'll put the flyer in the chat.</p> <p>Noriko Lim-Tepper: I wanted to flag for everyone that the US Department of Agriculture (USDA) just published a notice for proposed rulemaking to update the stable food stocking standards for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). The proposed rule is for SNAP retailers to stock a greater variety of staple foods and perishable items. That is going to vastly impact a lot of our neighborhoods, especially the Tenderloin where they don't have access to a wide variety of grocery stores. It's something to flag, especially for that subgroup that's working specifically for the tenderloin. I believe people have until November 24th to submit comments.</p> <p>Priti Rane: I have a quick update on the Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) Supplemental Nutrition Program. We are going to continue to stay funded through the end of December. We got news from USDA that there will be \$450 million pushed out to the WIC program nationwide. That should take us through the end of December. It's good that we continue to stay funded. We're still pushing out a lot of messaging around CalFresh benefits and sharing out all the resources that Susie Smith and her team have been sharing.</p> <p>Jennifer Lebarre: I think I shared this, but we have been notified by both California Department of Social Services (CDSS) who handles our child and adult care food program and by California Department of Education who handles our national school breakfast and lunch program that they have received funding through November for both those programs. We haven't heard anything about December yet but October and November are good.</p> <p>Public Comment:</p>	<p>None.</p>
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	Beth Bodner: SF Environment (SFE) welcomed C40 cities. We hosted a food waste and procurement workshop a couple weeks ago. It was neat to have a bunch of different cities come and one of our biggest takeaways was the prioritization of food and our general City. Having an office of food or centralized food was a topic that came up about including food priorities in the climate action plan. So, I just wanted to put this on everyone's mind if there's ways that food procurement and waste policies could fall under the climate action plan. It's something that we're thinking about moving forward.	
10. Adjournment 3:30 p.m.	Meeting adjourned at 3:30 p.m.	None.