



## 104TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY

### State of Illinois

2025 and 2026

HB5235

Introduced 2/10/2026, by Rep. Sonya M. Harper

#### SYNOPSIS AS INTRODUCED:

New Act  
20 ILCS 1305/10-65

Creates the Comprehensive Charitable Food System Coordination Act. Provides that, in administering or appropriating State or State-managed federal grant funds for hunger relief, each State agency must: (1) consult and coordinate with specified actors in the charitable food system; (2) ensure that grant solicitations and funding criteria reflect the interconnected roles of food providers, distributors, producers, facilitators, and data systems; and (3) consider proposals that strengthen coordination, efficiency, resiliency, and equity across the charitable food system. Provides that State agencies are encouraged to establish advisory groups or working groups comprised of actors in the charitable food system. Requires certain reports. Amends the Department of Human Services Act. Provides that the Department of Human Services shall make grants from the Hunger Relief Fund to food banks and providers (currently, food banks only). Effective July 1, 2026.

LRB104 17381 HLH 30806 b

1 AN ACT concerning finance.

2 **Be it enacted by the People of the State of Illinois,**  
3 **represented in the General Assembly:**

4 Section 1. Short title. This Act may be cited as the  
5 Comprehensive Charitable Food System Coordination Act.

6 Section 5. Purpose. The purpose of this Act is to ensure  
7 that State-administered hunger relief programs and grantmaking  
8 activities strengthen the entire charitable food system by  
9 considering all key actors involved in food access,  
10 distribution, and coordination.

11 Section 10. Definitions. As used in this Act:

12 "Actor in the charitable food system" means a person or  
13 entity that is included in one or more of the following  
14 categories:

15 (1) food providers, including food banks, food  
16 pantries, community-based organizations, non-profit  
17 organizations, schools, hospitals, mutual aid  
18 organizations, retailers, and meal programs;

19 (2) food distributors, including last-mile delivery  
20 organizations, and food wholesalers;

21 (3) food producers, including farmers, agricultural  
22 cooperatives, and community gardens;

1           (4) facilitators, including logistics providers,  
2           warehousers, storage facilities, aggregators, outreach  
3           coordinators, and operational support agencies; and

4           (5) operators of data systems used for the tracking,  
5           measurement, and reporting of food and other edible  
6           commodities.

7           "Charitable food system" means the network of  
8           organizations, entities, and systems that procure, transport,  
9           distribute, or facilitate access to food or edible  
10          commodities, or the products of food or edible commodities,  
11          for individuals and families experiencing food insecurity.

12          Section 15. State grant coordination requirements.

13          (a) In administering or appropriating State or  
14          State-managed federal grant funds for hunger relief, each  
15          State agency must:

16               (1) consult and coordinate with, to the extent  
17               practicable, all of the categories of actors in the  
18               charitable food system listed in Section 10;

19               (2) ensure that grant solicitations and funding  
20               criteria reflect the interconnected roles of food  
21               providers, distributors, producers, facilitators, and data  
22               systems; and

23               (3) consider proposals that strengthen coordination,  
24               efficiency, resiliency, and equity across the charitable  
25               food system.

1 (b) State agencies are encouraged to establish advisory  
2 groups or working groups comprised of representatives from the  
3 categories of actors in the charitable food system listed in  
4 Section 10 to assist in developing funding priorities,  
5 performance metrics, and partnership guidelines.

6 Section 20. Reporting; evaluation. Each State agency  
7 administering hunger relief grant funds must submit an annual  
8 report to the appropriate State oversight entity describing:

9 (1) how actors in the charitable food system were  
10 engaged in grant planning, allocation, and evaluation;

11 (2) measurable impacts on food access, food quality,  
12 and community resilience; and

13 (3) barriers or opportunities identified through  
14 cross-sector collaboration.

15 Section 25. Authorization of appropriations. The General  
16 Assembly shall provide by law for appropriations in such sums  
17 as may be necessary to carry out this Act.

18 Section 900. The Department of Human Services Act is  
19 amended by changing Section 10-65 as follows:

20 (20 ILCS 1305/10-65)

21 Sec. 10-65. Hunger Relief Fund; grants.

22 (a) The Hunger Relief Fund is created as a special fund in

1 the State treasury. From appropriations to the Department from  
2 the Fund, the Department shall make grants to food banks and  
3 providers for the purpose of purchasing food and related  
4 supplies. In this Section, "food bank" means a public or  
5 charitable institution that maintains an established operation  
6 involving the provision of food or edible commodities, or the  
7 products of food or edible commodities, to food pantries, soup  
8 kitchens, hunger relief centers, or other food or feeding  
9 centers that, as an integral part of their normal activities,  
10 provide meals or food to feed needy persons on a regular basis.

11 (b) Moneys received for the purposes of this Section,  
12 including, without limitation, appropriations, gifts,  
13 donations, grants, and awards from any public or private  
14 entity must be deposited into the Fund. Any interest earned on  
15 moneys in the Fund must be deposited into the Fund.

16 (c) As used in this Section, "provider" means a public or  
17 charitable organization that is unaffiliated with a food bank  
18 and maintains an operation involving the provision of food or  
19 edible commodities that, as an integral part of their normal  
20 activities, provide meals or food to feed needy persons on a  
21 regular basis.

22 (Source: P.A. 96-604, eff. 8-24-09; 97-333, eff. 8-12-11.)

23 Section 999. Effective date. This Act takes effect July 1,  
24 2026.