



# Empowering Voices to End Hunger: Lived Experience Leadership Cohort



Each year, The Food Group invites 10 individuals with lived experience of food insecurity to turn their stories into powerful tools for change. Whether they've received SNAP in the past, are impacted by recent federal cuts to public benefit programs, or rely on their local food shelf for support, their voices are vital in reshaping the systems meant to serve communities across our state.

Through storytelling, advocacy skill building, and shared reflection, participants explore different parts of the food system.

## PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS:



**Professional Development:** Participants will gain in-depth training in food systems, the legislative process and advocacy, along with hands-on experience in public speaking, media engagement, and more.



**Storytelling for Change:** Participants will learn how to craft and share their stories in ways that resonate with decision makers, media, and their communities - and use their voices to push for solutions.



**Create Policy Solutions:** Participants will bring their lived experience to the table to identify gaps in hunger relief programs and help shape policy solutions that better support families across Minnesota.

## PROGRAM DETAILS

- **Duration:** Six months, from November 2025 to April 2026
- **Meetings:** One in-person meeting in St. Paul, followed by five monthly virtual meetings. Virtual meetings will take place in the evenings.
- **Compensation:** Participants will receive \$100 per month for their involvement in the program. Additional opportunities to engage in the cohort and related activities may also be available and will be compensated separately. Travel stipends will be provided for in-person gatherings or engagement opportunities.

**Questions? Contact Rachel Holmes at [rhomes@thefoodgroupmn.org](mailto:rhomes@thefoodgroupmn.org)**