



Buddy System

2024 Impact Report

OUR MISSION

Buddy System MIA is a grassroots non-profit working to end food insecurity by creating innovative ways to engage our Miami community. We empower neighbors to support neighbors, beginning with access to free, healthy food.

OUR VISION

We believe in a world where community members come together to uplift each other and create long-term change for a more compassionate, healthy and just world.

2024 BY THE NUMBERS:

245,644

pounds of repurposed food!

5000+

people received support!

1587

volunteers registered!



Our Programming

COMMUNITY FRIDGE INITIATIVE

Our Community Fridge Initiative is a network of public refrigerators that offers an expansive, dignified, free food program based on the concept of “neighbors helping neighbors.”



“I have 6 kids. We came by the fridge because I barely had anything to feed our kids due to rent. We have been [trying to figure] out what to do till next pay[day]. We got what we needed for dinner and lunch and the kids loved all the messages on the bags on the sandwiches. Thank you so much. I prayed to God: ‘how can we eat today.’ I expected [the fridge] to be empty like most food spots [but] this was amazing. Thank you from our family.”

-Community Fridge Initiative Client

These community fridges are located in food deserts and low-income neighborhoods and see approximately 800 clients each month. We fill our community fridges primarily through food rescues: food that would otherwise go to landfills is picked up by volunteers from local grocery stores, restaurants and farms, and dropped off to the community fridges.



In 2024, we opened new community fridges in Overtown, Hialeah and Little Haiti. We commissioned five local artists to paint public murals for the fridges. We redistributed 245,644 pounds of food, thanks to 569 volunteers picking up at 728 food rescues.

Our Programming

HOMEBOUND FOOD ACCESS PROGRAM

Our Homebound Food Access Program is a community oriented, food access support system for low-income, elderly, and disabled individuals who cannot leave their homes. The program pairs homebound clients with nearby “Buddy” volunteers who pick up and deliver free food from our pantry each month.



In 2024, this program supported 76 food insecure, homebound people across Miami-Dade with 478 free food deliveries thanks to the care and support of 74 dedicated Buddy volunteers! This year's Thanksgiving Distribution was our largest ever, with over 7000 pounds of food including 46 turkeys, donated by volunteers!

We tailor each food box to meet clients' specific dietary and nutritional needs. Beyond providing access to healthy food, the program fosters meaningful, intergenerational connections between clients and their volunteers, which we call “Buddy Pairings.”



"You guys are my lifeline. With you helping me, I know I have something to eat everyday; I don't have to skip eating some days because I know I'll have enough food to eat every day."

- Homebound Food Access Client

Our Programming

TRANS FOOD ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Our Trans Food Assistance Program, in partnership with TransSocial, provides free, healthy food to low-income trans and non-binary individuals who face financial hardship, housing insecurity, or barriers to accessing traditional food distributions.



Since launching in June 2023, we have delivered nearly 300 grocery boxes to LGBTQ+ individuals across South Florida. Most clients cite job loss, housing instability, and lack of familial support as reasons for seeking assistance.

By providing clients with safe, reliable food access, we help protect them from potential discrimination or harm at public food distributions while ensuring a welcoming, affirming experience.



In 2024, this program provided 175 food deliveries to 53 food-insecure trans and non-binary individuals.

“Just wanted to say THANK YOU SO MUCH! You all were literally a lifesaver this month. So so grateful to you and Buddy System. Truly a gem.”

- Trans Food Assistance Client

Our Programming

EMERGENCY FOOD ACCESS PROGRAM

Our Emergency Food Access Program provides immediate relief for people experiencing acute food insecurity. When someone reaches out to us as a last resort, we act quickly— accessing our food pantry the same day to ensure no one goes hungry.

In 2024, we partnered with Shipt to provide emergency clients with a one-time customized, free grocery order, delivered straight to their homes.



COMMUNITY FOOD DISTRIBUTIONS



Our Community Food Distribution Program provides free, healthy food to anyone in need through large-scale public, walk-up distributions. Held at least once per month, these events create a welcoming space where individuals and families can access nutritious groceries — no questions asked.

In 2024, we hosted 23 walk-up food distributions, supporting approximately 2,500 people total.

Our Programming

CLIENT TESTIMONIALS

"I had only juice and water in the house – no food. I haven't eaten today. I have nobody to ask for help. I am an elderly woman and I can't even afford my groceries anymore. This food is an amazing help to me. Thank you."

- Emergency Food Access Client



"I'm literally crying. I was very nervous this week that I wouldn't be able to feed my kids. And you all brought me peace for my family."

- Emergency Food Access Client



"You guys are my savior today! I haven't eaten today and don't know where to go while I get back on my feet. I came to the Coconut Grove Fridge and you guys have sandwiches and carrots and salads for me! This is a miracle."

- Community Fridge Initiative Client

"Thank you all so much for everything. Everything was amazing. I am so grateful for people like you who look out for those in need. My [Buddy volunteer] was an amazing gentleman! It's so nice to see people who genuinely care about their community."

- Homebound Food Access Client

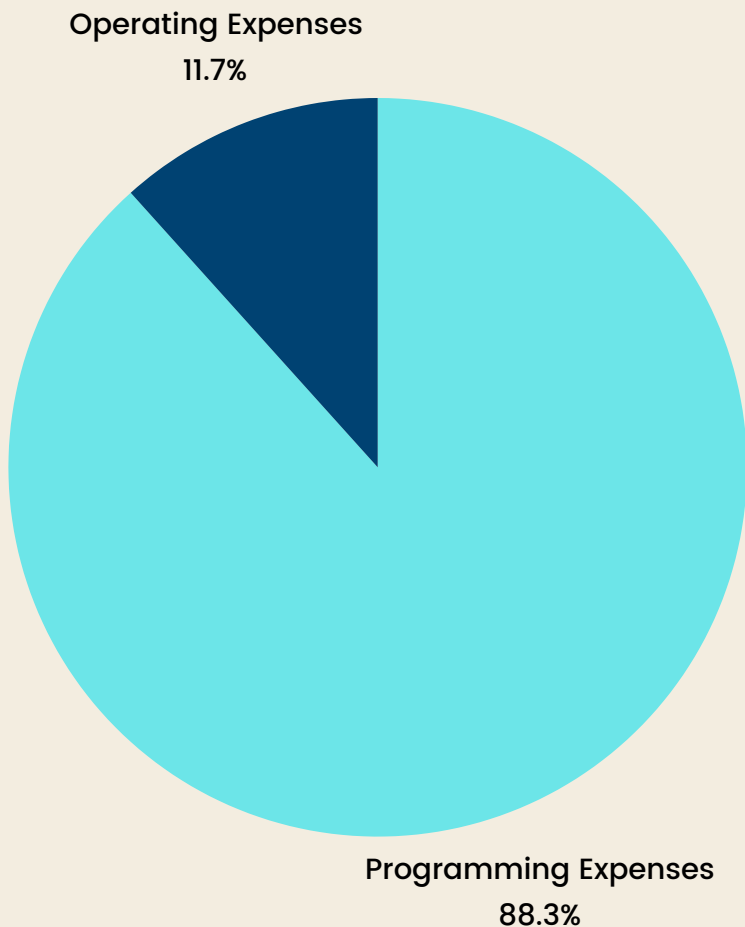
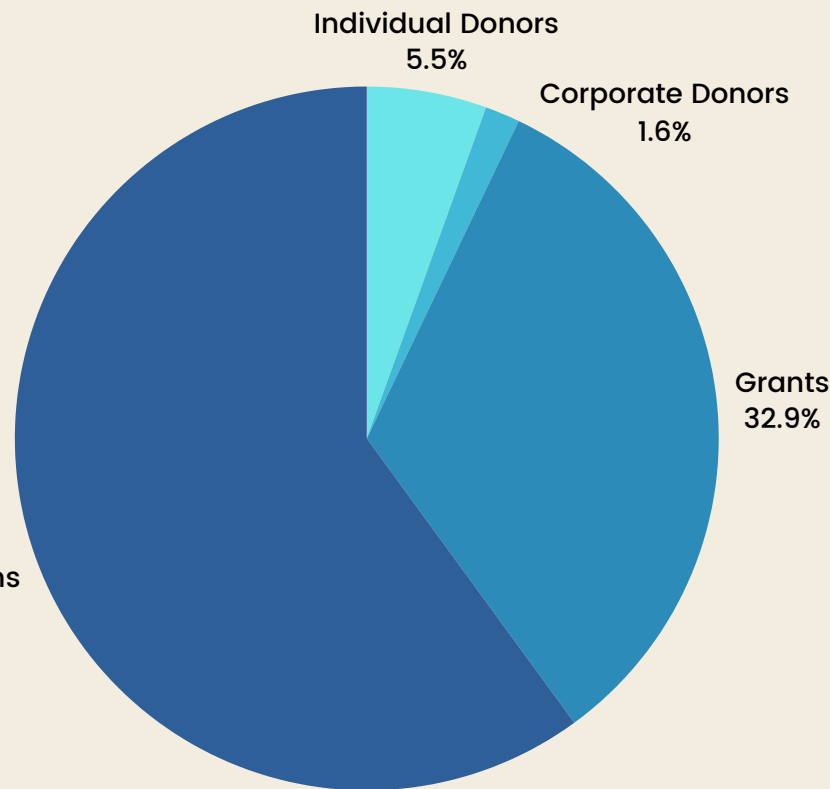


Financial Breakdown

Thanks to your generous support in 2024 we raised:

\$746,493.47

Including \$447,900.56 in in-kind food donations!



We're honored to be recipients of the following grants in 2024:

NBC Local Impact
Shipt Community
Miami Climate Alliance
Miami Foundation Community
Miami Open for Business
Miami Beach CDBG
Venable Foundation
OurFund LGBTQ Health & Wellness
Florida DOH Health Equity
Urban Health Partnerships In
CommUNITY Grant

We couldn't have
done it without your
generous *support!*

And we look forward to
continuing to support
our community
alongside you in 2025!

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Thank you!

