



# Military Initiative



Thousands of low-income, active-duty military families stationed in San Diego County use the Food Bank’s services to put food on the table.

Many people find it surprising that the Food Bank serves low-income military families, but military families experience the same financial difficulties that other low-income families face.

The average military family of four that the Food Bank serves has an annual income of less than \$39,000.

These families struggle with our region’s high rent, utilities, and food prices. In addition, 43% of military spouses are not in the labor force which is due in part to frequent relocation and lack of affordable childcare. Nationally, 25% of the nation’s total active-duty and reserve personnel receive food assistance from food pantries and charitable programs across the country.



Low-income military family at the Food Bank’s food distribution in Tierrasanta.

## Serving Military Personnel & Dependents

Currently, the San Diego Food Bank serves nearly 39,000 veterans, active-duty military personnel and their dependents every month. Many are junior-level, enlisted military personnel who are supporting a spouse and children.

| Nonprofit Partner                  | Pounds Distributed |
|------------------------------------|--------------------|
| Assistance for Veterans            | 2,533              |
| Brother Benno                      | 100,675            |
| Family Assistance Ministries       | 4,652              |
| Jewish Family Service              | 65,366             |
| Ladle Fellowship                   | 45,982             |
| Military Outreach Ministry         | 24,588             |
| Murphy Canyon Bread Ministry       | 375,340            |
| SD Armed Services YMCA             | 157,885            |
| SDFB Mariner's Park                | 153,719            |
| Spirit of Sharing                  | 27,480             |
| US 4 Warriors Foundation           | 2,299              |
| USO Council of SD (Airport Center) | 9,070              |
| Veterans Village of SD             | 42,215             |
| Coronado Unified School District   | 1,891              |
| SD Military Outreach Ministries    | 2,765              |
|                                    | 1,016,460          |

The Food Bank distributes food monthly at military bases including Naval Base San Diego (32<sup>nd</sup> Street) and Camp Pendleton. We deliver truckloads of food to bases every month and distribute the food to low-income military families.

We also provide food to nonprofits that solely serve military personnel including the Armed Services YMCA, Brother Benno, Military Outreach Ministry, and the USO. These military nonprofits pick up food from the Food Bank’s warehouse to stock their food pantries, and

they hand out the groceries to military families when they need emergency assistance.

In addition, elementary schools with a large proportion of children from military households are members of the Food Bank's *Food 4 Kids Backpack Program*. Children on the program sometimes have little or no food at home, and they receive weekend backpacks full of food to see them through the weekend until they return to school and receive free breakfast and lunch through school feeding programs Monday through Friday.

**New Mobile Food Pantry**

The Food Bank is expanding our services to military families with our new Mobile Food Pantry.

The Mobile Food Pantry will provide much needed additional assistance to our partners because many of our military nonprofit distribution partners are unable to store fresh produce and other food items because they lack proper refrigeration and storage space.



The Food Bank's new Mobile Food Pantry is serving low-income military families at 24 locations throughout San Diego County every month.

While we are helping our military nonprofit partners build their capacity in this area, our Mobile Food Pantry is distributing food at 24 strategically chosen sites throughout San Diego County that serve military families. The Food Bank distributes at least 7,500 pounds of fresh, nutritious food at each distribution site. In addition to food, these distributions will also include diapers for families who struggle to afford this essential item.

**Military Food Insecurity Coalition**

In March of 2019, the Food Bank established a Military Food Insecurity Coalition that includes fourteen military-based nonprofit partner agencies that provide hunger-relief and other services to low-income military families. This recently formed coalition is examining policies, sharing best practices, and creating a regional strategy for the coordination of hunger-relief services to food-insecure military families living in San Diego County.

| <b>San Diego Food Bank<br/>Military Food Insecurity Council</b> |
|---|
| Assistance for Veterans   |
| Brother Benno (25% military)                                    |
| Jewish Family Service (33% military)                            |
| Ladle Fellowship (25% military)                                 |
| Military Outreach Ministries                                    |
| Military Outreach Ministry - South                              |
| Murphy Canyon Bread Ministry                                    |
| San Diego Armed Services YMCA                                   |
| San Diego Armed Services - Bayview                              |
| San Diego Food Bank - Mariner's Park                            |
| Spirit of Sharing   |
| Support the Enlisted Project                                    |
| US 4 Warriors Foundation  |
| USO Council of San Diego  |

Within the next year, the council's goals include expanding the number of distribution sites and services available to military families, centralizing resources for the acquisition and distribution of food, expanding the coalition's membership, and creating a unified voice to advocate for policy changes to support our military living in high-cost-of-living regions of the country.

With the help of our donors, the Food Bank is proud to support the brave men and women who serve our country every day.

**[SanDiegoFoodBank.org](http://SanDiegoFoodBank.org)**

**[NorthCountyFoodBank.org](http://NorthCountyFoodBank.org)**