

How to use this document:

First of all, thank you for your interest in helping those who need better access to affordable foods. It is because of people like you that anything at all has been, is being, or will be done.

This document features a letter that you can use to send to your elected officials to incite change in the city of Indianapolis. You can fill in the information that is in brackets in the letter, then email it, mail it, or use it as a guide to call your elected officials.

If you are an Indiana resident, use this [link](#) to find your current elected officials. Then you can either use their website to submit a message or use the contact information provided below to reach out. For Indianapolis specifically, use the information for the Mayor and the City-County Council below.

If you are not an Indianapolis resident, you can also contact your local officials, if food deserts and food insecurity are also a problem in your community. Just be sure to correct any information that only pertains to Indianapolis to information that applies to your community.

To find your Indiana legislators, click [here](#);

To find any of your Federal, State, or Local Elected Officials, click [here](#)

Governor of Indiana - Eric Holcomb

Phone Number: 317-232-4567

Address: Office of the Governor
200 W. Washington St
Room 206
Indianapolis, IN 46204-2797

Email: Follow this [link](#) and fill out the form provided.

Mayor of Indianapolis - Joe Hogsett

Phone Number: 317-327-3601

Address: City of Indianapolis
2501 City-County Building
200 E. Washington St
Indianapolis, IN 46204

Email: Follow this [link](#) and fill out the form provided

City-County Council

Phone Number: 317-327-4242

Address: 200 E. Washington St.
T241
Indianapolis, IN 46204

Email: city-county.council@indy.gov

State House of Representatives serving Indianapolis

For any State of Indiana House of Representatives serving House Districts 86-100:

Phone: 800-382-8741 (Republicans) or 800-383-8742 (Democrats)

Address: [Representative name]
200 W. Washington St.
Indianapolis, IN 46204

Email: Click on your District Number and fill out the form provided:

[86](#), [87](#), [88](#), [89](#), [90](#), [91](#), [92](#), [93](#), [94](#), [95](#), [96](#), [97](#), [98](#), [99](#), [100](#)

State Senators serving Indianapolis

For any State of Indiana Senators serving Senate Districts 20, 23, 28-36

Phone: 800-382-9467

Address: [Senator name]

Email: Click on your District Number and fill out the form provided:

[20](#), [23](#), [28](#), [29](#), [30](#), [31](#), [32](#), [33](#), [34](#), [35](#), [36](#)

Once you have contacted your legislators, go back to indyfood.carrd.co to find local organizations that are working to give access to fresh, affordable food to their local communities. If you are able, consider donating to these organizations, so they can continue to do the work they are doing.

The text for the email or letter is found on the next page. Please copy and paste it into a word processor or the contact forms above, and add the correct names. The solutions that have I proposed in the email are my ideas, and if you disagree with them in any way, feel free to change them as you see fit. They are there as suggestions, and you are not required to send those solutions.

The information provided in the letter comes from:

Contributor, Guest. 2019. "Year in Review: Work to end food deserts continues" *Indianapolis Recorder Newspaper*. [URL](#)

Fernhaber, Stephanie A, Terri Wada, Pamela Napier, Shellye Suttles. 2018. "Engaging diverse community stakeholders to co-create solutions in food deserts: A design-thinking approach" *Journal of Public Affairs*, vol. 19 (3): e1874. <https://doi.org/10.1002/pa.1874> [URL](#)

Miguel Andres, U., Nowlin, M. & Tepe, 2019. Getting groceries: Food access across groups, neighborhoods, and time. The Polis Center. Indianapolis, IN. [URL](#)

Pak-Harvey, Amelia. 2021. "We've been neglected for years': Indianapolis battles food deserts with new food division" *IndyStar*. [URL](#)

Dear [Insert Elected Official's Name Here],

I, [Your Name], am writing to you today to urge you to take action about the dire situation of food deserts in Indianapolis. As of 2019, 22 percent of Indianapolis residents lived in a food desert. With the various impacts of COVID-19, these numbers are likely even higher, now. As of 2014, Indianapolis was ranked the worst city for food deserts. It is time that Indianapolis takes action to reduce the number of people living in food deserts and make sure our residents have plenty of food.

One solution that I would like to propose is serious investment in local grassroots movements and organizations that are currently already working to provide access to affordable food to communities in Indianapolis. Some examples include: the members of the Indiana Black Farmers Co-op, Growing Places Indy, Society of St. Vincent de Paul, and Garcia's Gardens, among many others. Many of these organizations were started by the members of the communities that are currently suffering as a food desert. All of the work should not be on them and providing them with funding would greatly increase their impact on their community.

Another solution would be to expand and upgrade the public transportation system in Indianapolis. Many Indy residents that do not have access to vehicles rely heavily on the public transportation system to get to and from the grocery stores. As of 2019, there are 236,000 residents of Indianapolis who are either more than a quarter mile from a bus stop or more than a 10 minute bus ride to a grocery store. Additionally, one third of the households in Indianapolis have limited or no access to a car. While the Lyft Pilot Program was a great start, it is only available to those on the far eastside of Indianapolis. This program should be expanded to include all of Indianapolis, especially while the city works on expanding and upgrading its public transportation system.

A third solution that I would like to propose is a ban on edible food waste from retailers and restaurants in the city of Indianapolis. There are many cities that have enacted laws like this, so it is not unprecedented, and those cities could be the example that Indianapolis follows. This would reduce the amount of food that is going into landfills. Many retailers like grocery stores and supermarkets throw away a lot of fresh foods, like fruits, vegetables, and meats, every day because they are past their sell-by dates or look a little wacky. These foods are often still edible and could make a difference in the lives of those who are hungry. These foods could be sold at a reduced cost by the store, or they could be donated to a local food pantry. These donations would be tax deductible for the business and would serve to feed the hungry. Either way, this solution would serve to reduce food insecurity and food waste in Indianapolis.

Thank you for your time and consideration and the actions you have already taken to end food insecurity in Indianapolis. I hope that these solutions will inspire some legislature to be drafted and actions to be taken. The more than 200,000 people who currently live in a food desert have waited long enough for action to be taken for their benefit, so let's act quickly to get food in their communities and on their tables.

Sincerely,
[Your Name]