



## HELP WEATHER THE PERFECT STORM

By Karen West

**The Time is NOW.** Helpline House is sending out an urgent **Call to Action** as it navigates economic uncertainty, skyrocketing grocery prices, and a 25 percent increase in households to support. All while the food bank is undergoing a reduction of over 40% in the Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP) commodities and has lost its Local Food Purchase Assistance (LFPA) resources.

*"Food insecurity is at an all-time high," says Helpline House Food Bank Manager Lianne Ristow. "Our community's support is needed now more than ever. We don't have enough food to serve our community, especially meats, dairy and fruit supplies."*

"Helpline House **fed 851 families with 972,835 pounds** of food last year," the Executive Director Maria Metzler said, noting that demand is already trending higher this year.

Helpline House remains dedicated to supporting everyone who is experiencing food insecurity, but is facing several challenges:

- Government support that Helpline House has relied on for years is in jeopardy.
- Food prices are going up.

- Anxiety among clients is on the rise. "Folks have lost their jobs and are scrambling for what's next," Ristow says.

Ristow describes the dramatic increase in the number of households served each week by Helpline House as coupled with the equally challenging decrease in the supply chain. *"It's impossible to predict when we might lose certain [commodities] and how this will affect our food bank operations," says Ristow. "As a result, we can't stock our food bank as much as we have in the past."*

## Get Involved and Give Back - Your Way!

**There are many ways to support our food bank—choose what works best for you!**

- Donate food that fits your lifestyle. Visit [helplinehouse.org/in-kind-donations](https://helplinehouse.org/in-kind-donations) to learn what's needed and stay up to date.
- Volunteer at local farms like Peaceful Morning Farm or Rock Farm to help grow fresh produce for our community.
- Grow and share—donate extra fruits and veggies from your home garden.
- Join monthly food drives at local schools, neighborhoods, churches, or businesses.

**Every action counts. Together, we can nourish our neighbors!**

To ensure Helpline House is informed about potential changes, staff and leadership are participating in county and regional conversations with agencies such as Food Lifeline and Northwest Harvest. The Kitsap Food Bank Coalition meets regularly to share resources and when needed, food.

## DRIVE-THRU DROP OFF

Tuesday - Friday, Closed Mondays  
Same hours: 10 AM - 4 PM OR Drop off anytime in the bins at





Michael Wright & Clay Eaton

## The Partnerships like Michael Wright and others

Michael, a former Helpline House board member, has long been one of our most dedicated volunteers – dare we say, a **Super Volunteer**.

When we moved from Knechtel to our temporary Hildebrand space, Michael made it his full-time job—setting up an office and getting us moved out and into our new location in just three days.

He coordinated with no less than seven vendors, from movers to a crane operator, to pull off the impossible. What's more, Michael has an uncanny ability to rally incredible volunteers. He taps into a deep network of community-minded folks, bringing together people with the right skills and the right attitude. Even when plans shift last minute, Michael calmly delegates with purpose and clarity.

He's also one of the driving forces behind our beloved fundraiser, Gobblefest. Truly, is there anything Michael can't do? We're endlessly grateful for his commitment and heart.

***Save the date! Gobblefest Bainbridge 2025 is coming November 22. Join us for a rockin' night of local bands, dancing, and fun—all to support Helpline House. Stay tuned!***



## A Growing Need for Financial Assistance

Since the start of 2025, appointments for energy financial assistance at Helpline House have increased over 50% compared to last year. This increase reflects the mounting economic pressure many neighbors are facing, especially with rising utility and rent costs.

Our Case Management team walks alongside clients, offering personalized support with Social Security applications, rental and utility assistance, and referrals across the Kitsap Peninsula. As costs rise, more families are seeking help.

*"It's a privilege to support our neighbors when they need it most,"* says Zoe, an experienced case manager. Recently, the team helped an elderly gentleman transition from living on a boat to securing safe, long-term housing, along with access to his Social Security benefits.

THANKS TO YOU, this work is possible. Your support brings hope, stability, and dignity to those who need it most—and as demand grows, your generosity matters more than ever. Spread the word, share our mission, and remember: every in-kind donation and monetary gift makes a real difference.





## Building a Better Bainbridge – We're Almost There!

### Helpline House Capital Campaign

Over a year ago, we launched our Capital Campaign to create a new, welcoming Helpline House facility—and thanks to your incredible support, we've raised enough to start construction!

Our groundbreaking ceremony at 282 Knechtel Way NE was a heartwarming celebration of what we can achieve together—one that focuses on compassion, dignity, and neighborly care for everyone.

"This place is more than a food bank, more than a building. It is a sanctuary of dignity, a promise to every neighbor who finds themselves in a moment of need: you are not alone," said Washington State Representative Greg Nance.

The needs are growing and evolving, and so are we—with renewed energy, bold vision, and a deep gratitude for a community that shows up again and again," our executive director, Maria Metzler, shared.

### Finishing the Job

The grand opening for the new building is scheduled in less than a year. Between now and then, our capital campaign committee will work hard to raise the over \$700,000 still needed to reach our \$12 million campaign goal.



**Head to [HelplineHouse.org](https://HelplineHouse.org) to see what's new and how you can make a difference. Share with your community!**



## Celebrate our Community's Spirit and Resilience.

**You're invited to a special exhibit of Art & Community at**

**First Friday Art Walk:**



**240 Winslow Way East  
Bainbridge Island**

Thanks to your support to Build a Better Bainbridge for the next 50 years we're excited to encourage you to view our community's journey through our shared history and hopeful future - construction of a new home for Helpline House! This important milestone will enhance our ability to serve the Bainbridge Island community.

Warm thank yous to photographer and Helpline House board member Rachel Hofer's brilliant vision and local artist Molly Brahmer's vibrant canvas mural. Together they brought our theme to life with bold images and creativity.

A special thank you to Kim Baker for connecting us with Realogics Sotheby's International Realty's office manager Marilyn Turner and her generous heart & hospitality, and to the entire team for their support in making this exhibit possible.

# Spring Into Action

Need is rising on Bainbridge Island

## Ensuring No One in Our Community Goes Hungry.

*A Call to Action from  
Executive Director  
Maria Metzler*



**HELPLINE HOUSE** | Food Bank  
Social Services  
For a Healthy & Whole Community  
**282 Knechtel Way Northeast,  
Bainbridge Island, WA 98110**

NONPROFIT ORG  
US POSTAGE  
PAID  
SEATTLE, WA  
PERMIT #3228

**WE'VE** Temporary location:

**MOVED** 901 Hildebrand Lane NE, Bainbridge Island, WA 98110

HelplineHouse.org | 206.842.7621 | helpline@helplinehouse.org



Social Services Hours: Monday to Friday | 9 AM - 5 PM

Food Bank Hours: Tuesday - Friday, Closed Mondays | 10 AM - 4 PM

**THANK YOU  
SO MUCH**

*Mark  
YOUR  
Calendar*

## Bainbridge for making a real difference!

## You Brighten Their Summer & Build Their Tomorrow



**Kids' Pantry  
Summer break  
June 24 - September 5**

Grab a free Kids' Pantry bag with meals and snacks for each child—plus weekly groceries for any family. Helping families make ends meet this summer.



**Summer Helpers  
July 7 through Aug 29**

Parents—volunteer with your kids (ages 7–13) for a one-hour shift! Bring up to two children and give back together.



**EVERY STUDENT COUNTS  
Project Backpack**



**Project Backpack Dates  
Thu Aug 14: 10am - 4pm  
Fri Aug 15: 10am - 1pm**

No registration necessary  
Need help with school-related costs like registration or program fees? Call to schedule an appointment with a case manager at 206.842.7621