

ENDING HUNGER ADVISORY COMMITTEE

MAY 29TH 12:30PM - 2PM

AGENDA

- Where are we? *20 min*
 - 2026 Hunger Free Maine legislative recap
 - Environmental scan: External factors impacting our work
- Where are we going? *30 min*
 - Creating operations plan and making the work more tangible
 - Setting policy priorities for next year
- What's next / How to plug in *30 min*
 - Opportunities to help craft operations plan and policy platform leading up to September in person gathering
 - Time for Q&A
- Closing *5 min*

WHERE ARE WE

- Legislative session ended on April 29
- Hunger Free Maine: New coalition formed in Fall 2025 to support Roadmap priorities and act as advocacy arm of Ending Hunger work
- Formed 2026 priorities based on current context and key priorities in Maine's Roadmap



HUNGER FREE MAINE 2026 PRIORITIES

Mitigate Harm of
SNAP cuts

1

- SNAP outreach and application assistance
- SNAP state agency staff capacity and technology improvements
- State SNAP contingency fund
- Protecting immigrant access to SNAP

Address loss of federal
Food Insecurity Data

2

- Statewide food insecurity data collaborative project to address loss of USDA Household Food Insecurity Report

LEGISLATIVE RECAP

- 1** Strengthened Maine's nutrition programs and addressed federal losses:
- Protected **access to SNAP for immigrants**
 - Expanded **universal school meals** to public pre-k programs
 - Committed to exploring how best to address gap in **food insecurity data**
 - Providing additional funding for **nutrition incentives**
 - Increased **staffing and technology upgrades** for OFI
 - **\$20 Heat and Eat Supplement** for SNAP recipients
 - Authorized Gov to access budget stabilization fund **in state of emergency**:
 - \$4 million to food banks, food pantries, and meal programs
 - \$30 million for SNAP and WIC contingency funds
 - \$1.5 million for emergency heating assistance

- 2** Bolstered economic security and anti-poverty programs and services:
- \$3 million for Area Agencies on Aging
 - \$10 million for Childcare Affordability Program
 - \$37 million for affordable housing production
 - \$12 million for Emergency Housing Relief Fund and \$4.75 million for shelters
 - \$11 million for Maine Eviction Prevention Program
 - \$7.5 million for low-income electrical assistance program
 - \$50+ million for MaineCare stabilization fund
 - Codifies and provides ongoing funding for Maine's Free Community College Program
 - Passed Millionaire's tax

LESSONS LEARNED

- Collective wins
 - Food and Agricultural Bond came close
- Effective collaboration with OFI on SNAP bills
- Legislator education is key
- What does support for engagement look like?
What's helpful?



EXTERNAL FACTORS IMPACTING OUR WORK

Continued loss of federal funding

1

- Largest SNAP cuts in the history of the program
- MaineCare cuts and work requirements coming in 2027
- Farm viability funding and Local Food Purchase Assistance funds cut
- Cost of living continuing to rise: gas, rent, groceries...

State taking on unprecedented costs

2

- Significant time and money involved in implementing HR 1 changes
- Increased administrative burden
- State facing up to 50 million in SNAP benefit costs for the first time in FY28 based on SNAP Payment Error Rate

Public benefits/ food assistance access and fear

3

- Narrowed eligibility for SNAP and MaineCare for refugees & asylees
- Fear around data sharing and safety of applying/ renewing benefits
- Increased ICE presence continuing to impact safety and daily life

Major election this fall

4

- New governor and new administration
- New incoming state legislators
- Senate/ CD2 race

WHERE ARE WE GOING

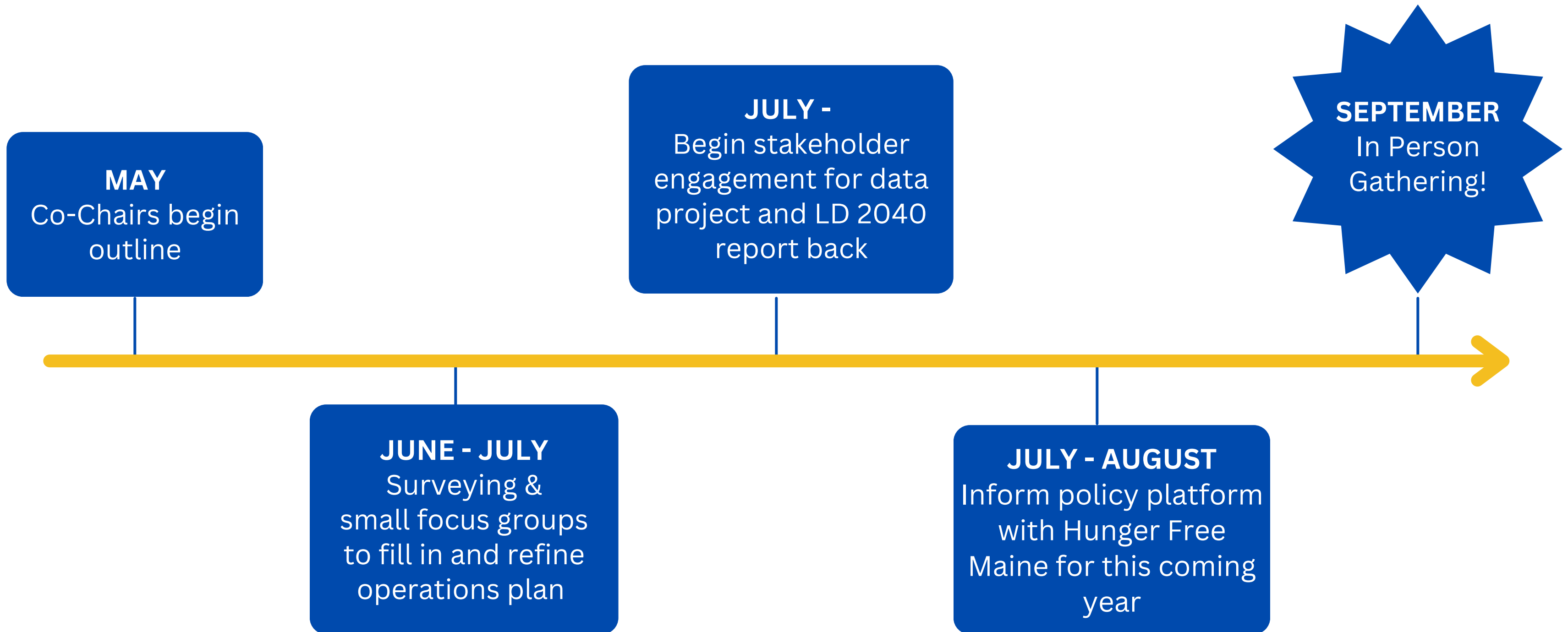
1. Operations planning - making the work more tangible (and fundable!)

- a. Planning process and terminology
- b. Framework of final document, including ‘what, how, who, when’
- c. Priority setting tool and criteria
- d. Next steps: environmental scan, identify specific data points and measurable objectives, identify lead and supporting entities to advance each objective, create plan for reporting and ongoing assessment of the plan
- e. Completion: September 2026

2. Setting policy platform with Hunger Free Maine

3. Addressing question of how we are measuring progress toward the Roadmap amidst cancellation of USDA Household Food Insecurity Report

WHAT'S AHEAD



QUESTIONS? THOUGHTS?