

## Candidate Hunger Action Challenge

# Daniel Lurie



Running for:  
**San Francisco Mayor**

*"We need to treat food security as a core public health issue and use every tool at our disposal, including federal and state funding, to ensure no San Franciscan goes hungry."*



### What do you think are the root causes of hunger, and what do you see as the government's role in addressing them?

I founded and served as CEO of one of the most innovative poverty fighting organizations - Tipping Point Community - because the system was failing those in need. I challenged the status quo to bring accountability and show how to get big things done in San Francisco - particularly for families and people experiencing homelessness.

In San Francisco, far too many people are struggling to make ends meet, and when families are forced to choose between paying rent or buying food, hunger becomes inevitable. It's not just about food scarcity; it's about economic instability and systemic barriers that keep people from achieving financial security.

The root causes of hunger are deeply connected to poverty, inequality, and a lack of access to affordable housing and good-paying jobs. I'm proud to say through my work at TPC we helped house over 40,000 people and kept thousands more from falling deeper into poverty. But philanthropy and nonprofits can only do so much so I am running to change the system from within.

I believe the government has a critical role in addressing hunger by focusing on the larger structural issues. We need to ensure that every San Franciscan has access to the resources they need to thrive. This means expanding affordable housing, strengthening pathways to good jobs, and supporting strong social safety nets, like food assistance programs. But it's not just about providing more services—it's about ensuring those services are easy to access, effective, and equitable.

The government must also invest in long-term solutions that promote food security, such as supporting local food systems, increasing access to healthy, affordable groceries in underserved neighborhoods, and partnering with nonprofits and community organizations that are already doing the hard work on the ground. We need to create a holistic approach that addresses both the immediate need for food and the broader economic conditions that lead to hunger in the first place.

### If elected, how would you ensure coordination between the multiple government departments that fund and administer food assistance programs?

As the only integrated city and county in the state with a \$16 billion budget and over 33,000 employees, San Francisco should have unparalleled levels of coordinated service delivery and collaboration. Yet time and again, residents and service providers are baffled by a City Hall that just can't seem to get out of its own way. Nonprofit service providers face a baffling series of hurdles and rules, are routinely paid late, and yet receive little accountability or support from city departments. My City Hall Accountability Plan is a concrete plan to get our government back to work for all San Franciscans through reforming and centralizing contracting, cleaning up the mess at the Department of Building Inspection, and streamlining construction management.

Additionally, I will bring accountable leadership back into the mayor's office. City Departments are allowed to operate as independent fiefdoms, failing to coordinate and communicate with each other. This creates a confusing and dysfunctional experience for residents and service providers navigating the bureaucracy as well as underutilized city resources. <https://daniellurie.com/priorities/accountability/>

## Studies have shown food can be medicine. If elected, how do you plan to use your position to improve food-related health disparities?

Food is medicine, and with the new CalAIM regulations that allows doctors to prescribe food to Medi-Cal patients, we have a tremendous opportunity to integrate nutritious food into healthcare. This is an exciting step forward in addressing food-related health disparities, and as mayor, I will make sure San Francisco fully leverages this program.

I'll work closely with healthcare providers, community organizations, and local food banks to ensure that eligible residents are receiving these food prescriptions. We'll create strong partnerships to make sure that fresh, healthy food is delivered to those who need it most, especially in underserved neighborhoods. I will also advocate at the state level to make this a permanent Medi-Cal benefit.

I'll also make sure city policies support healthier food environments in schools, public housing, and our healthcare system. We can't separate health from nutrition, and through strategic investments and partnerships, we can tackle food-related health disparities and build a healthier, more equitable San Francisco for everyone.

## The San Francisco-Marin Food Bank will be closing all Food Bank-run Pop-Up Pantries by June 2025 due to cuts in government pandemic funding. This program currently serves 11,400 households, 75% of which are estimated to lose access to free weekly groceries when the funding ends. If elected, what would you do to ensure that all San Franciscans have access to nutritious foods?

I will prioritize ensuring that all San Franciscans have access to nutritious food. We must strengthen our partnerships with community organizations, like food banks, to identify long-term, sustainable solutions that go beyond emergency pandemic funding. Too often, we leave money on the table by not aggressively pursuing federal and state grants that could support food assistance programs. For example, while programs like CalFresh (SNAP) are underutilized, with thousands of eligible residents not enrolled, the city could do more to streamline access and outreach efforts to bring those resources directly to people. Similarly, the CalAIM "food as medicine" initiative is an incredible opportunity to use state funds to provide nutritious food as part of healthcare, but we need stronger partnerships between healthcare providers and community organizations to fully leverage it.

Additionally, San Francisco has been slow to coordinate across departments to tap into broader social safety net programs—like federal funding for emergency food distribution or USDA grants for urban agriculture. By improving coordination, applying for every available grant, and ensuring that food assistance is integrated into housing, healthcare, and social services, we can bring in more resources to meet the needs of vulnerable communities. My administration would ensure that San Francisco actively seeks out and applies for every available dollar to tackle hunger and poverty. We need to treat food security as a core public health issue and use every tool at our disposal, including federal and state funding, to ensure no San Franciscan goes hungry.