

FALL 2026

You're Giving Fresh Food and a Fresh Start

Welcome to Mission Services of Hamilton, where healthy food is just the beginning, thanks to the support of caring people like you.

"Take what you need."

It's a simple phrase, but at Mission Services of Hamilton, it represents something much bigger.

Every day, neighbours walk through Mission Services' Good Food Centre and choose the foods that are right for their families, much like they would at the grocery store. Foods like fresh produce, bread, milk, meat, and pantry staples.

Within these walls, neighbours don't just find healthy food. They find relief, stability, the dignity of choice, and the comfort of knowing they have a caring community beside them.

"We build relationships with everyone who comes here," shares Jim O'Keeffe, Associate Director of Food Services.

Whether it's a single parent, a senior on a limited income, or a newcomer in search of a better future for their family, every person who walks through the doors is welcomed with compassion and respect.

You're helping meet the rising need

At a time when many more neighbours are relying on food



support, the Good Food Centre team works tirelessly to be there for everyone in need.

"They have to trust us that we're not going to run out of food," Jim says.

With the support of Hamilton Food Share and caring neighbours like you helping keep the shelves full of fresh, healthy food, Mission Services of Hamilton can continue being that trusted place.

You're helping neighbours move forward

For over 65 years, Mission Services of Hamilton has changed lives in countless ways, from

shelter and housing supports, to addiction services and community programs. Healthy food is often the first step forward, Jim shares.

He recalls one mother who comes to the food bank while caring for three children with complex disabilities. Between medical appointments, specialized equipment, and the day-to-day costs of raising her family, every dollar is already spoken for. But with the support of Mission Services of Hamilton and people like you, she can focus on taking care of her loved ones, instead of worrying about grocery bills.



A MESSAGE FROM RADHIKA

My heartfelt thanks for being there



Dear Friend,

With Thanksgiving coming, I find myself thinking about how much comfort and connection food can bring.

Cooking cherished family recipes in a kitchen filled with laughter.

Making memories around a full table. The simple relief of knowing there's enough for everyone.

With all my heart, thank you for helping ensure every household in Hamilton can share in these moments, no matter what circumstances they're facing.

I'm especially grateful that you helped families get through another difficult summer. When school meal programs paused, you really stepped up. Thanks to you, kids across Hamilton spent a carefree summer fuelled by healthy food; and parents had precious peace of mind.

I know that together, we can ensure that everyone in Hamilton

can celebrate around a full table this Thanksgiving. And I know that together, we can give families warmth, comfort, and relief as the weather grows colder, ensuring people don't have to make impossible choices, like whether to turn on the heat or buy something to eat.

Once again, thank you for everything you do for your neighbours and for our community.

Wishing you and yours a wonderful Thanksgiving,

Radhika Subramanyan
Chief Executive Officer

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You're touching countless lives across Hamilton

Every day, Jim sees the difference the community makes, and it isn't just measured in full shelves. He witnesses countless moments of relief, gratitude, and hope, made possible with the support of a compassionate community.

Jim thinks of Terry*, a longtime client who is unhoused and lives with mental health challenges. Some days, Terry arrives upset and overwhelmed. But over time,

he has come to trust the Mission Services of Hamilton team.

"For him, this is a safe space," Jim shares. "He knows we'll invite him in, get him something to eat and drink, and make sure he's okay."

Thank you for helping Mission Services of Hamilton provide much more than food. With your support, Terry and so many others know they will always have somewhere to turn for nourishment, dignity, comfort, and hope.

*Name has been changed



You're Giving Food That Feels Like Home

Thanks to your generosity, families coming to Mishka Social Services can choose foods that reflect their culture, traditions, and the comforts of home.

For many of us, grocery shopping is second nature.

But imagine arriving in a new country and trying to feed your family while learning a new language, and finding yourself surrounded by foods you've never seen before.

At Mishka Social Services, food is about much more than filling empty stomachs. It's about culture, familiarity, family traditions, and the comfort of preparing the meals you've always shared with the people you love.

That's why Barakah Box, one of Mishka's largest community programs, means so much to the families it serves.

Every month, families receive nutritious food or grocery gift cards they can use to shop for the foods that meet their families' needs, like halal items.

"We try to meet every client's needs," shares Rama Hatem, manager of the Barakah Box program. "People know they're heard."

You're giving families the gift of choice

"Barakah" means 'blessing' in Arabic. It carries the idea that what is given can go further than expected, bringing comfort, nourishment, and hope to those who receive it.



For Rama, that's exactly what the program represents.

Every day, she witnesses what it means to the families who come to Mishka Social Services.

"When you're struggling, you can only buy the basics," she shares. "But with the gift card, sometimes when their child asks, 'Can I have this chocolate?', their parents can finally say yes."

Those small moments of choice and joy, can mean the world to a family. And you help make those moments possible.

You're helping meet the rising need

The need has never been greater. Today, more than 300 families are waiting for support through

the Barakah Box program.

Your generosity helps Mishka continue to be there for as many families as possible.

Hamilton Food Share helps Mishka Social Services offer healthy options for families, as well as foods that reflect their culture, traditions, and tastes.

As Rama puts it, "What Hamilton Food Share is providing is making a huge difference. Our clients are very happy to be able to access this food."

Thank you for helping give more than nourishment. Together, we're ensuring families the dignity of choice, and the reassurance that they're part of a caring community.

VR Pro: Going the Distance for Hamilton



For more than 30 years, VR Pro has brought Hamilton together through races that challenge runners, celebrate community, and inspire neighbours to give back.

Today, every finish line helps create something much bigger.

Over the past several years, VR Pro's races have raised more than \$26,000 for Hamilton Food Share,

providing an incredible \$130,000 worth of nutritious food. At the same time, race participants have donated more than 10,000 pounds of healthy food for neighbours facing hunger.

For co-CEO Kelly Arnott, supporting Hamilton Food Share was a natural step.

"The need is so great, and people really want to help," she says. "When they hear that a \$5 donation can provide \$25 worth of food, they really see the difference they're making," she adds. "Even if people can't give money, they can bring food on race day."

That spirit of generosity shines through, race after race. Race participants Steve and Nancy summed it up perfectly with their donation message:

"No child should ever go hungry in Canada."

Thank you, VR Pro, for proving that we can create a stronger, healthier, food secure Hamilton, one step at a time.

Inspired by VR Pro? Whether you're organizing a workplace fundraiser or planning a community event, you can help put healthy food on neighbours' tables. Check out our website at hamiltonfoodshare.org/how-you-can-help to learn more about how you can get involved.



THIS HONOUR BELONGS TO YOU, TOO

This spring, Hamilton Food Share was honoured to be named the 2026 Not-for-Profit of the Year by the Hamilton Chamber of Commerce, through its Outstanding Business Achievement Awards.

While we're incredibly proud and grateful for this recognition, this award belongs to all of us.

Every pound of healthy food shared, every neighbour supported, and every moment of comfort, relief, and hope is possible because caring people like you stand beside us. Thank you for helping build a stronger, healthier Hamilton where everyone has the food they need to thrive. It truly wouldn't be possible without you.