



## NEWS RELEASE

### **Sandhills Food Bank Purchases Current Distribution Center in Southern Pines**

*Director and Council Look to Make Improvements to Increase Capacity to Serve*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

January 25, 2021

**SOUTHERN PINES, NC** – The Food Bank of Central & Eastern North Carolina (the Food Bank) today announced it has purchased their distribution center at 195 Sandy Avenue in Southern Pines. The purchase will support the goal of improving efficiency and strengthening community relationships and support in the Sandhills area. As facility owners the Food Bank can now make improvements to the building, such as increasing space for healthy, perishable foods.

Together with Alona Briley Sloan, the new Regional Council Chairperson of the Sandhills Branch, Director Michael Cotten will be looking to make improvements to the facility to increase capacity to serve the network of 80 partner food pantries, shelters, soup kitchens, and other emergency providers. Ms. Sloan brings a wealth of community service and nonprofit experience to her role as Council Chairperson, including several years as the Adult Services Supervisor with the Moore County Department of Social Services.

“We are deeply committed to ending hunger in this community,” said Cotten. “The purchase of our facility and having someone as dedicated as Ms. Sloan lead our council are the next natural steps in our progression.”

The Food Bank just marked 40 years of operations and the Sandhills Branch was the first of the five branches to begin operation outside of the Triangle area. The Sandhills Branch services four counties: Lee, Moore, Richmond, and Scotland, where nearly 50,000 people are facing hunger. Last year, they distributed 5.6 million meals worth of food to friends and neighbors in need.

**Media Contacts:**

Jennifer Caslin  
910-508-0547  
jcaslin@foodbankcenc.org

**About the Food Bank of Central & Eastern North Carolina**

The Food Bank of Central & Eastern North Carolina is a nonprofit organization that has provided food for people at risk of hunger in 34 counties in central and eastern North Carolina for 40 years. The Food Bank serves a network of more than 900 partner agencies such as soup kitchens, food pantries, shelters, and programs for children and adults through warehouses in Durham, Greenville, New Bern, Raleigh, the Sandhills (Southern Pines), and Wilmington. In fiscal year 2019-2020, the Food Bank distributed nearly 92 million pounds of food (over half of which was perishable) and non-food essentials through these agencies. Sadly, hunger remains a serious problem in central and eastern North Carolina. In these counties, nearly 760,000 people struggle to access nutritious and adequate amounts of food necessary for an active and healthy life. Website available in Spanish and English: [foodbankcenc.org](https://www.foodbankcenc.org).

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