

SENATE HUMAN SERVICES COMMITTEE

Jesse Arreguín
Chair

Informational Hearing: Hunger in California

March 11, 2025
9:30am, Room 2200

BACKGROUND

INTRODUCTION

For California residents that have low incomes, live in food deserts, or are seniors with limited incomes, food insecurity is a threat to their wellbeing, but also a problem where the state of California can provide assistance. During the COVID-19 pandemic, there was a dramatic increase in the number of people needing food assistance programs and food banks. In response, the federal government and the State of California enacted a number of measures and allocated more funding to address this need. Now, those pandemic era policies have ended and the additional resources given to families and organizations have decreased. However the demand for assistance has not decreased, it is growing. Food banks continue to see the demand for free groceries rise and enrollment in the state’s largest anti- hunger program, CalFresh, continues to increase. As the reasons for the increased pressures on the food assistance system have changed, it is important to review the depth of the problem and assess the tools used to address it.

BACKGROUND

Food Insecurity

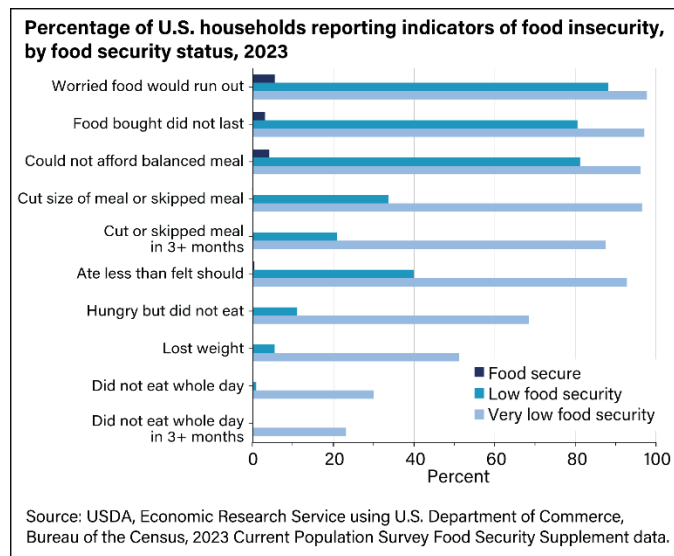
Food security, as defined by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), means “access by all people at all times to enough food for an active, healthy life”.ⁱ The definitions were refined to better describe the level of access households have to food and to appropriately capture the needs of residents in USDA household surveys. Households are categorized according to the following scale:

- **High food security:** no reported indications of food-access problems or limitations.
- **Marginal food security:** one or two reported indications—typically of anxiety over food sufficiency or shortage of food in the house. Little or no indication of changes in diets or food intake.
- **Low food security:** reports of reduced quality, variety, or desirability of diet. Little or no indication of reduced food intake.
- **Very low food security:** reports of multiple indications of disrupted eating patterns and reduced food intake.ⁱⁱ

Practically, very low food insecurity can manifest in various ways, for example:

- A person worried about running out of food before they can afford to buy more
- A person decreasing the amount of food they ate to make it last longer
- A person not eating balanced meals due to a lack of food or money to buy food
- A person being hungry and not eating, losing weight unintentionally, or going a whole day without food because they could not afford it.

The chart of nationwide data below shows that while food secure households also felt some of these concerns, the concerns for food insecure and very insecure households are multi-faceted.



Food insecurity differs from hunger, though the former can include the latter.

- **Food insecurity:** the condition assessed in the food security survey and represented in USDA food security reports—is a household-level economic and social condition of limited or uncertain access to adequate food.
- **Hunger:** an individual level physiological condition that may result from food insecurity.ⁱⁱⁱ

A survey, from 2021 to 2023, showed the prevalence rate of food insecure or very food insecure California households was 11.4 percent. Of that, the rate of very food insecure California households was 4.1 percent.^{iv} According to Feeding America, this puts one in eight people in California at risk of facing hunger.

Impact of Food Insecurity and Hunger

Food insecurity can lead to chronic health conditions such as diabetes, high blood pressure and heart disease. It can also have long term effects on children including delays in child development, hampered school performance, and increased likelihood of conditions like asthma or behavioral problems.

Hunger can lead to physical and mental health disorders as well, especially in children. One study found that hunger is a significant predictor of future chronic illness for school age children, even

when controlling for other factors like housing and low birth weight. Severe hunger in young children was also highly correlated with behavioral problems and episodes of depression and anxiety. Mothers of young children with severe hunger were more likely to be diagnosed with posttraumatic stress disorder.^v Any health conditions resulting from food insecurity can be an added cost burden to families as well.

Since many people who are food insecure are also in poverty or dealing with economic challenges, food insecurity and poverty go hand in hand. According to the California Health Interview Survey, in 2023, 45% of California adults with incomes under 200% of the federal poverty level were food insecure. Food insecurity disproportionately affects certain communities. According to the study, food insecurity is “higher for families with children (25.8 percent), Black households (28.9 percent) and Latinx households (29.7 percent).”^{vi} In addition, the cost of food has risen for a number of reasons including severe weather, viruses affecting livestock, and geo- political issues and it is not clear when costs will start going down. For beneficiaries of state aid and customers of food banks, food pantries, and other emergency food sources, these costs have an outsized impact and deepen their levels of food insecurity.

Federal and state governments have specific programs to address food insecurity for low income families and individuals as well as for certain populations. The most widely used programs are:

- **CalFresh**- California’s version of SNAP and state’s largest anti- hunger program. The program provides cash assistance for groceries for low income individuals and families.
- **National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and SUNBucks**- Funds lunches for eligible children while at school or during the summer, respectively
- **Women, Infants, and Children (WIC)**- Vouchers for certain foods for low income pregnant women or women with children under five years old.
- **California Food Assistance Program (CFAP)** - Cash assistance for groceries for low income individuals that are not otherwise eligible due to their immigration status.
- **Congregate Meals Program and Home-Delivered Meals Program**- Provides hot meals and meals to go for seniors.

These programs can function with other aid programs and government funded assistance organizations to help the many subpopulations in California facing unique challenges. A few of these subpopulations are described below.

Immigrant communities. In a state as diverse as California there are various reasons people are unable to afford or access the food they need to live a healthy and active life. California has a large immigrant community, but a 2021 study found that 25 percent of low income immigrant adults avoided applying for nutrition programs they qualify for because they were afraid of endangering their immigration status.^{vii} The federal government finalized the Public Charge Ground of Inadmissibility rule in 2022 which clarifies that SNAP, and by extension CalFresh, would not endanger a person’s immigration status. However a legal immigrant that does not qualify for CalFresh due to federal regulations can receive equivalent benefits through the CFAP program.

College and University Students. Students also face unique food insecurity challenges. For those pursuing a degree at a two or four year institution, it can be challenging to complete schoolwork

and maintain a job that pays enough to cover all of their food needs on their own. For those who cannot rely on family, a spouse, or other financial aid, programs like CalFresh and campus food pantries are a helpful, and sometimes critical, resource. Studies have shown students who are food insecure are more likely to graduate later, have lower grades, and report thoughts of dropping out.^{viii}

A recent survey of students at six California college campuses found that 50 percent of the students they surveyed experienced food insecurity and 28 percent skipped meals. They also found half of the students that knew about CalFresh believed they were ineligible for it or did not know how to apply. It also found the rates of self-reported food insecurity was higher at community colleges than four year institutions.^{ix} Those who report being food insecure are also more likely to be former foster youth, first generation college students or disabled, further exacerbating disparities.

Seniors. A particularly vulnerable group in California are seniors. The Older Americans Act, passed in 1965, created a number of programs to support senior food needs such as the Congregate Meal Program. However, seniors with limited income still struggle to obtain balanced nutrition, especially if they have mobility or other health issues. Food insecurity increases the likelihood that seniors will face fast cognitive decline or be more prone to infection. The expansion of CalFresh to allow Supplemental Security Income/State Supplementary Payment (SSI/ SSP) beneficiaries' access to CalFresh led to an increase of senior CalFresh recipients. Nonprofit organizations, both funded by and supplementing government nutrition programs, also help by providing meals directly, but there is still a growing need.

Providing Nutrition Programs in California

Nutrition Program Enrollment Increasing. The many state and federally sponsored nutrition programs are critical to the food insecure population. In 2024, approximately 5.4 million people received assistance purchasing food through CalFresh and that number is expected to increase. According to the Legislative Analyst's Office (LAO), CalFresh enrollment has increased 60 percent since the 2019- 2020 fiscal year due to a number of factors like the addition of SSI recipients and the COVID- 19 pandemic's effect on the economy. Growth is also expected in the California Food Assistance Program.^x

There are also many other state and federally funded programs that provide cash assistance to purchase food that will be described below. There are emergency food programs that provide food directly through distributions from food banks, including programs for specific populations like college students through campus pantries or seniors through Meals on Wheels. These programs provide for individuals and families trying to make ends meet.

Despite the increase, California is still behind the national average enrollment rate for SNAP. It is estimated that 2.7 million eligible Californians are not enrolled in CalFresh. Reasons commonly cited are lack of awareness about their eligibility (especially among college students) and difficulty applying. Application difficulties are especially acute among populations whose first language is not English and people with disabilities. In addition to the initial application, the process of recertifying eligibility or "churn" can decrease enrollment. Churn refers to the instance when a family that is on CalFresh and eligible, is automatically unenrolled because they did not complete

the paperwork necessary to certify they are still eligible. They may later return but have disrupted access to resources.

Federal Role. The federal government funds the benefits and some of the administration costs for a number of nutrition programs that the state oversees and the county administers. The federal government, through the USDA Food and Nutrition Service (FNS), sets basic eligibility requirements and other regulations for how the benefits are provided but provides funding largely through block grants. The primary programs are:

- **Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)**- Known as CalFresh in California, provides cash assistance for groceries for low income individuals and families.
- **Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP)**- Provides food to food banks and other emergency food organizations.
- **Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP)**- Provides food to low income seniors through food banks or programs like Meals on Wheels
- **Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP)**- Provides funding for food at child care and adult day care centers.
- **National School Lunch Program (NSLP)**- Funds lunches for children while at school
- **Summer Food Service Program (SFSP)**- Provides meals and snacks low income children during the summer.
- **SUNBucks**- Provides additional funds on EBT cards to families with school age children during the summer.
- **Women, Infants, and Children (WIC)**- Vouchers for certain foods for low income pregnant women or women with children under five years old.
- **Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR)**- Provides food to low income families living on reservations.

State Role. While the largest anti- hunger programs are funded and regulated by the federal government, the state adds specificity to laws about eligibility determination, the application process, data collection and other actions through the California Department of Social Services. California also partially funds the administration of these programs, sharing the cost with the federal and county governments. However, there are a number of nutrition programs whose administration and benefits are both funded by the state. Specifically:

- **California Food Assistance Program (CFAP)**- Cash assistance for groceries for low income individuals that are not otherwise eligible due to their immigration status.
- **CalFood**- Funding for food banks to purchase, store, and transport of food grown and/or produced in California to feed people in need.
- **Tribal Nutrition Assistance Program (TNAP)**- Provides grants to eligible tribes and tribal organizations to address food insecurity.
- Several CalFresh supplemental programs that provide additional benefits to CalFresh recipients.

County Role. Many anti- hunger programs are administered on the county level, including the largest one, CalFresh. California is one of ten states that administers CalFresh through a county

based system. Counties oversee the administration of the program including eligibility determination, enrollment, fraud investigation and outreach activities. Though the counties are funded by the state for these activities and follow state laws and regulations, how funding is allocated to these administrative activities is up to each county. This means CalFresh recipients may have a different experience using the CalFresh program based on the county they live in but benefit amounts remain the same. The unique demographics, geography and population size of each county also play a role in CalFresh participation rates. In order to unify and automate various processes, the state invested in the California Statewide Automated Welfare System (CalSAWS) and required all counties to use it. Its functions include eligibility determination, benefit computation, benefit delivery, case management and information management for certain welfare programs including CalFresh. As of October 2023, all counties are using the system.

Food Banks and Other Organizations' Role. It is estimated that 10 percent of Californians are supplementing their food costs with free food from an organization that is supplied by the food bank. Food banks distribute food to food pantries, community and senior centers that serve hot food, student pantries on college campuses and other organizations that provide free food to those who need it. California food banks receive funding from the USDA but also have received funding from the state since 2011 through the CalFood program. The CalFood program allocates funding to California's network of food banks to purchase food primarily sourced from California. Originally funding was \$8 million per year but when the pandemic disrupted the economy, the state significantly increased CalFood funding to an average of \$62.7 million per year. The Governor's Budget presented in January 2025 reverts CalFood funding back to \$8 million. Last year, the state codified the State Emergency Food Bank Reserve Program which authorizes CDSS to fund food distribution and reimbursing food banks during a state of emergency.

COVID- 19 Pandemic Impact. The COVID- 19 pandemic had a major impact on the economic stability of millions of people and many looked to government nutrition programs for help. A U.S. Census survey conducted from April to July 2020 showed that food insecurity in California rose to 23.1 percent. Applications for CalFresh increased from 148,170 in February to 346,492 in April 2020 and food banks report a statewide increase of 73 percent in food distributed. Though the growth rate of CalFresh enrollments has slowed since 2020, the number of people that receive food assistance at food banks has remained higher than before 2020.

In response to the pandemic, the federal government also authorized states to increase CalFresh benefits and benefits were increased for every recipient up to the maximum amount allowed for their household. Households were also eligible for a \$95 emergency monthly allotment. That increased benefit ended in February 2023. This meant, on average, households lost an average of \$82 a month. These increased benefits were a powerful tool to keep families out of poverty. The California Poverty Measure (CPM) found that "CalFresh kept 500,000 Californians out of poverty just prior to the pandemic and 1.1 million out in early 2023." Certain application and certification requirements were also waived during the pandemic making it easier to apply for, and stay on, CalFresh. A study by the Public Policy Institute of California showed that though the boosted allotments helped many families, giving all recipients one flat allotment amount instead of an

allotment based on their percentage of income, decreased the impact of the boosted allotment for families with lower incomes.^{xi}

The federal government also authorized Pandemic-EBT which provided food to children who are eligible for free or reduced priced school meals but unable to access those meals due to school closures during COVID-19. The state of California allocated \$50 million for food banks during the 2020-2021 fiscal year and have continued to provide increased funding through the CalFood program.

FOOD ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

California Department of Social Services Nutrition Programs

CalFresh. CalFresh is California’s version of the federal Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), an entitlement program that provides eligible households with federally funded monthly benefits to purchase food. CalFresh food benefits are 100 percent federally funded. CalFresh administration costs are funded with 50 percent federal funds, 35 percent General Fund, and 15 percent county funds, except for state-mandated program changes. CalFresh food benefits are issued through an Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) card which cardholders can use at point-of-sale terminals authorized by the United States Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service (FNS). Grocers and other retailers are paid directly by the federal government for the dollar value of purchases made with CalFresh food benefits. Monthly benefits per household vary based on household size, income, and deductible living expenses—with larger households generally receiving more benefits than smaller households and relatively higher-income households generally receiving fewer benefits than lower-income households. The average benefits in 2024 was \$279 a month for all households, \$496 for households with children, and \$166 for households with older adults.

CalFresh is critical to California’s anti- hunger efforts. According to a study by the Public Policy Institute of California (PPIC), approximately 4.8 million Californians are on CalFresh.^{xii} In their study on income instability, PPIC found that CalFresh helped families get through times of economic instability by providing a resource stability that can be very impactful for families when their income first becomes unstable versus when they access CalFresh after a time of longer unemployment and used up other resources.^{xiii}

Recent efforts to increase CalFresh access and enrollment among specific subgroups include a 2019 law that allows people that receive income through Social Security Insurance (SSI) to enroll in CalFresh. This was one of the biggest expansions to CalFresh and happened right before another large boost in enrollment due to the COVID-19 pandemic. There have also been a number of laws passed to strengthen outreach to college students and increase data transparency about college student enrollment.

CalFresh Pilots.

- California Minimum Nutrition Benefit pilot program: The program will provide some CalFresh households with a state supplement to raise the current minimum benefit from \$23 to \$50.

- **CalFresh Fruit and Vegetable Pilot Program:** This pilot provides a dollar-for-dollar match, up to \$60 per month, when a recipient buys fruits or vegetables at participating retailers. That match can be used to purchase other CalFresh eligible foods anywhere allowing recipients benefits to stretch further. It has proven to be more successful and popular than anticipated as funds allocated to the program have run out twice before they were expected to.
- **CalFresh Safe Drinking Water Pilot:** Gives CalFresh recipients that live in areas with failing water systems an additional \$50 benefit to purchase clean water.

Able-Bodied Adults without Dependents (ABAWD) Federal Rule. Since the 1996 Federal Welfare Reform, someone receiving CalFresh who is determined to be an “Able-Bodied Adult Without Dependents,” or ABAWD, is only allowed three months of CalFresh within a 36-month period unless they meet an exemption. California currently has a statewide ABAWD waiver in place, which expires on October 31, 2025. Federal changes in the Fiscal Responsibility Act of 2023 increased the ABAWD population to include those ages 50-54, and included a variety of additional exemptions to the rule.

California Food Assistance Program (CFAP). CFAP provides food benefits to approximately 35,000 legal permanent residents who meet CalFresh eligibility criteria but are excluded from SNAP due to federal welfare reform enacted in 1996. Other immigrants, including undocumented immigrants, are not eligible for CFAP benefits. CFAP is funded entirely through the General Fund and benefits are delivered through an EBT card identical to CalFresh. The 2022 budget approved \$35.2 million to expand CFAP to all Californians 55 years and older regardless of immigration status but the implementation has been delayed by subsequent budgets. CDSS estimates that 75,000 individuals will be eligible for CFAP when the expansion is implemented.

Child and Adult Care Food Program. The Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) is a federal and state funded program overseen by the USDA. The program provides reimbursements to organizations for nutritious meals and snacks that are served in care settings. Eligible organizations include child care centers, family day care homes, afterschool care centers in low-income areas, adult day care centers, and emergency shelters for homeless families. Participation in the CACFP is intended to support day care quality and make nutrition affordable and accessible.

SUNBucks. SUNBucks provides an eligible family with additional cash aid for groceries for the summer months when children are out of school. Families are eligible for \$120 per child per summer. The program is administered primarily through CDSS with support from the California Department of Education. SUNBucks is a federally funded program overseen by the USDA and administered by CDSS.

Disaster CalFresh. This program addresses the needs of people who have experienced a natural or manmade disaster and temporarily need help purchasing food. It provides disaster victims a month’s worth of benefits on an EBT card whether that person is eligible for the regular CalFresh or not. In order for it to be available a Presidential Major Disaster Declaration for Individual Assistance must be declared, commercial food distribution channels have been disrupted and restored, and the state was approved to implement Disaster CalFresh. During major disasters,

CDSS can apply for other federal waivers such as the Timely Reporting Waiver which extends the 10-day deadline for CalFresh recipients to report food loss and request replacement benefits to 30 days, and the Automated Mass Replacement Waiver which allows CDSS to replace a certain percentage of a household's benefit allotment if they live in the affected area without the recipient applying for a replacement. After the fires in Los Angeles County, CDSS was approved for both of these waivers. A Hot Foods Waiver was also approved which allowed victims to temporarily purchase "hot foods" in the affected zip codes.

California Department of Food and Agriculture Nutrition (CDFA) Programs

Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program (SFMNP). The program is federally funded and administered federally by FNS and in California, by the California Department of Food and Agriculture. The goal of the California SFMNP is to provide fresh, nutritious, unprepared, locally grown produce, cut herbs, and raw honey through Certified Farmers' Markets to low-income seniors. The program provides coupons or checks are issued to eligible SFMNP participants to buy eligible foods from farmers, farmers' markets, roadside stands, or CSAs. Soon, in California SFMNP benefits will be provided to eligible seniors on an EBT card, called a Farmers' Market Card, instead of paper checks.

California Department of Public Health (CDPH) Nutrition Programs

Women, Infants and Children (WIC). CDPH administers a federally-funded program called the California Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children. WIC provides, at no cost to participants, supplemental foods, nutrition education, and health care referrals to low-income pregnant, breastfeeding and postpartum women, infants, and children up to age five who are determined to be at nutritional risk. To be eligible for WIC, applicants must be determined by a health professional to be at nutritional risk (i.e., have certain medical-based or diet-based risk conditions).

California Department of Aging Nutrition Programs

Older Californians Nutrition Program. The Department of Aging oversees nutrition programs that provide meals for older adults through the Congregate Meals Program and Home-Delivered Meals Program. These services are typically offered at sites like senior centers or through home delivered meals. Both congregate nutrition and home delivered meals serve broad populations, with preference given to those in the greatest economic or social need. Many older adults receive nutrition assistance in congregate settings, such as in senior centers, which is administered through Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs).

The Federally funded Home-Delivered Nutrition Programs, commonly referred to as Meals on Wheels, is a longstanding program that delivers healthy meals to older adults who cannot go out and purchase food and/or prepare meals in their homes. This is becoming more crucial in California as more adults are aging and isolation among older adults is increasing. According to Meals on Wheels, over 1.2 million California seniors are food insecure and approximately 537,000 are on CalFresh. Currently, approximately 108,000 seniors are receiving home-delivered meals under federal aid programs.

California Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) Nutrition Programs

DHCS administers nutrition related programs including the Medically Tailored Meals (MTM) Pilot Program that is being integrated into California Advancing and Innovating Medi-Cal (CalAIM) reform. The program allows insurers to cover food prescriptions that help a person regain or maintain their health if that person is a Medi-Cal recipient. Food insecurity cannot be the only criteria to prescribe someone a MTM, but there are intersections between Medi-Cal recipients and those who are food insecure.

California Department of Education (CDE) Nutrition Programs

School Nutrition Programs. The CDE's School Nutrition Programs (SNP) include meal, snack, and milk programs offered at public and private nonprofit schools and residential child care institutions. SNP includes the National School Lunch Program, School Breakfast Program, Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program, Special Milk Program, and Seamless Summer Option.

- National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program are federally funded programs overseen by the USDA. Both programs assist schools in providing nutritious lunches to children at reasonable prices. Additionally, the National School Lunch Program provides donated commodity foods to help reduce lunch program costs.
- Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program is a federally funded program overseen by the USDA. The program provides an additional free fresh fruit or vegetable snack to elementary school students during the school day. The Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program is also intended to help children adopt healthy eating habits through increased consumption of and exposure to fruits and vegetables.
- Special Milk Program is a federally funded program overseen by the USDA. The program assists schools in providing milk to children at reasonable prices. Milk is rich in calcium, vitamin A, and vitamin D, which aid in the development of strong bones and teeth. While the Special Milk Program is open to all enrolled students, only certain agencies that do not participate in other nutrition programs are eligible to participate in the program.

Universal Meals Program. California became the first state to implement a statewide Universal Meals Program for school children in the 2022–23 school year. California's Universal Meals Program builds on the foundations of two federal programs, the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program. The Universal Meals Program has three pillars:

1. Local educational agencies, including public school districts, county offices of education, and charter schools serving students in transitional kindergarten through 12th grade (TK-12) to provide both a nutritiously adequate breakfast and lunch available for all children each school day, regardless of their free or reduced-price meal eligibility.
2. Local educational agencies with high poverty schools must participate in a federal universal meal service provision. A school is considered high poverty if 40 percent or more of enrolled students are determined eligible for free school meals through direct certification or identification as homeless, migrant, foster, or runaway.
3. The CDE, with funding appropriated by the Legislature, provides meal reimbursement to local educational agencies for all nutritionally adequate meals served to students.

Summer Meal Programs. The Summer Meal Programs include the Summer Food Service Program and the Seamless Summer Option (SSO). The programs provide meals during out-of-school time to children in communities of need where at least 50 percent of enrolled children at a nearby school site have been determined eligible for free or reduced-price school meals. Meals can be provided at community or recreational centers, libraries, camps, schools, and other eligible summer meal sites.

The Seamless Summer Option is a federal and state funded program overseen by the USDA. The program supports school food authorities (school food service operations) to provide meals in low-income areas during the summer. School food authorities may operate the Seamless Summer Option at community or recreational centers, libraries, camps, and schools.

TACKLING HUNGER IS AN ONGOING ISSUE

California has a number of programs, both established and new, to fight food insecurity but as policy changes happen at the federal level and state budgets decrease, the resources to fight our growing food insecurity problem are changing. The efforts to expand CalFresh benefits through waivers and pilot programs, make school lunch and breakfast universal, and the implementation of many other programs to help especially vulnerable groups have given more families the tools to prevent hunger. The temporary policy changes during the COVID- 19 pandemic, though imperfect, showed the impact California can have on growing needs. As the regulatory and funding landscape changes and needs grow, California can look for ways to adapt by learning from the past for long term sustainability.

ⁱ United States Department of Agriculture, Economic Research Service. 2025. [Food Security in the U.S.](https://www.ers.usda.gov/topics/food-nutrition-assistance/food-security-in-the-us)
<https://www.ers.usda.gov/topics/food-nutrition-assistance/food-security-in-the-us>

ⁱⁱ United States Department of Agriculture, Economic Research Service. 2025. [Food Security in the U.S.- Definitions of Food Security.](https://www.ers.usda.gov/topics/food-nutrition-assistance/food-security-in-the-us/definitions-of-food-security) <https://www.ers.usda.gov/topics/food-nutrition-assistance/food-security-in-the-us/definitions-of-food-security>

ⁱⁱⁱ *ibid*

^{iv} United States Department of Agriculture, Economic Research Service. 2025. [Food Security in the U.S.- Key Statistics and Graphics.](https://www.ers.usda.gov/topics/food-nutrition-assistance/food-security-in-the-us/key-statistics-graphics#map) <https://www.ers.usda.gov/topics/food-nutrition-assistance/food-security-in-the-us/key-statistics-graphics#map>

^v Linda Weinreb, Cheryl Wehler, Jennifer Perloff, Richard Scott, David Hosmer, Linda Sagor, Craig Gundersen; Hunger: Its Impact on Children’s Health and Mental Health. *Pediatrics* October 2002; 110 (4): e41. 10.1542/peds.110.4.e41

^{vi} Senate Budget Sub 3, April 27, 2023

^{vii} <https://healthpolicy.ucla.edu/our-work/food-insecurity>

^{viii} Fricano, Mike. 2025. [Many California college students experiencing food insecurity aren’t getting the assistance they’re eligible for.](https://newsroom.ucla.edu/releases/california-college-students-food-insecuritycalfresh#:~:text=50%25%20of%20California%20college%20students,and%2042%25%20of%20UC%20students) UCLA Newsroom. <https://newsroom.ucla.edu/releases/california-college-students-food-insecuritycalfresh#:~:text=50%25%20of%20California%20college%20students,and%2042%25%20of%20UC%20students>

^{ix} *ibid*

^x Legislative Analyst’s Office. 2025. [The 2025- 2026 Budget: Food Assistance Programs.](#)

^{xi} Thorman, Tess; Patricia Malagon, and Caroline Danielson. 2024. [Learning from CalFresh Pandemic Boosts.](#) Public Policy Institute of California

^{xii} Danielson, Caroline, and Tess Thorman. 2022. The Role of CalFresh in Stabilizing Family Incomes. Public Policy Institute of California. <https://www.ppic.org/publication/the-role-of-calfresh-in-stabilizing-family-incomes/>

^{xiii} *ibid*