



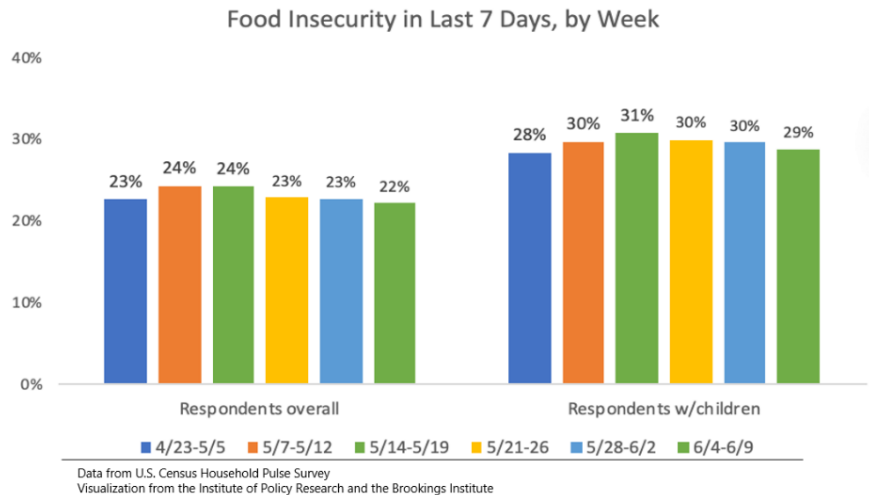
Boost Food Security by Increasing SNAP

Please **tell Congressional leaders to prioritize an increase in the maximum SNAP benefit available to all households by 15% and raise the minimum benefit from \$16 dollars to \$30.** It is imperative that our representatives speak directly to congressional leadership, urging them to **prioritize and combat food insecurity** in the next emergency response bill.

COVID-19 and Hunger in the United States

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) defines food insecurity as a lack of consistent access to enough food for an active, healthy life. In 2018, an estimated 1 in 6 Americans lived in food insecure households — 37 million Americans including 11 million children.

According to the U.S Census Bureau, the number of food insecure households doubled from 11 percent in 2018 to over 20 percent since the onset of the pandemic (see right). Just last week, 22 percent of Americans including 29 percent of families with children reported food insecurity. This crisis is impacting people of color in particular - almost 4 in 10 Black and Hispanic families with children reported food insecurity earlier this month. Researchers at Feeding America have predicted that if the unemployment rate remains greater than 11 percent for the duration of 2020, the annual food insecurity rate will reach 16.7 percent, affecting 54.3 million Americans.



Overall, SNAP is an impactful and flexible program designed to adapt to large-scale economic downturns that affect a families' ability to access nutritional food. In a typical month in 2018, SNAP lifted 3.21 million people above the federal poverty line.

Boosting SNAP as a Defense Against Hunger and an Economic Stimulus

Given the extraordinary increase in need during this pandemic and its related economic crisis, **we urge Congress to strengthen SNAP by increasing the maximum benefit available to all households by 15 percent** until the economy recovers. This would provide an extra \$100 a month for an average family of four. Economists estimate that every dollar in federally funded SNAP benefits during a recession generates between \$1.50 and \$1.80 in economic activity. The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Economic Research Service estimates that every \$1 billion invested in SNAP supports 13,600 jobs. **Congress should act now to make SNAP benefits more robust, which will help feed low-income families and strengthen our economic recovery.**