



SF-MARIN
FOOD BANK

2025 HUNGER REPORT

sfmfoodbank.org



@sfmfoodbank



“My hope is that everybody has access to food, because it’s a necessity.
– Nicole, Food Bank Participant



“I only get \$50 a month from CalFresh now. It does mean eating less.
Retirement funds don’t go very far after rent is paid. – Ms. Luo, Food Bank Participant



“This isn’t just stuff happening in Washington, D.C. These are decisions
affecting my town, my city, my block, my neighbors. – Katie, Food Bank Volunteer





THE WORSENING HUNGER CRISIS

Food is a basic human right. Yet, today in California, more than 1 in 5 people struggle with food insecurity. Seniors are choosing between food and medicine, parents are cutting back to feed their kids, and working people are worrying if they'll be able to put food on the table after paying the rent. Devastating national efforts to slash critical social safety nets, cuts to local food programs, and immigration policies that make people fearful of accessing basic services will only deepen these challenges.

Hunger is a policy choice, and our Food Bank is bracing for the impact of national policy choices that will push people already struggling to the brink. We are sounding the alarm on the crisis to come.

GUTTING THE SOCIAL SAFETY NET

Earlier this year Congress passed a disastrous budget bill that will slash the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP/CalFresh in California) by **\$186 billion**. Federal SNAP cuts are estimated to result in the loss of 6 billion meals annually — to put that in perspective, the entire Feeding America network distributed enough food for 6 billion meals last year. Food banks simply can't make up the difference.



“My concerns about the cuts are that I need access to healthy food because it helps me continue to survive and thrive living with HIV and AIDS. The hope is that I can continue to get at least a little amount that I get from CalFresh because it does help. This has got me very stressed.”

– Troy, Food Bank Participant

THE IMPACT OF CUTS TO CALFRESH IN SAN FRANCISCO AND MARIN



As many as **7,500 PEOPLE** could lose benefits, according to some estimates¹



6+ MILLION MEALS could be lost annually²

HUNGER IN OUR COMMUNITY



1 IN 5+ PEOPLE ARE FOOD INSECURE IN CALIFORNIA



29% MORE PEOPLE CALLED 211 TO FIND FOOD ASSISTANCE IN SAN FRANCISCO AND MARIN IN THE PAST YEAR COMPARED TO THE PREVIOUS YEAR



NEARLY 8,000+ PEOPLE ARE CURRENTLY ON THE FOOD BANK'S WAITING LIST



NEARLY 1 IN 3 HOUSEHOLDS IN SAN FRANCISCO AND 1 IN 4 IN MARIN DO NOT EARN ENOUGH TO MEET THEIR BASIC NEEDS³

1. Estimate from California Association of Food Banks report: CalFresh Recipients At Risk Due to H.R. 1 Changes (<https://www.cafoodbanks.org/calfresh-recipients-at-risk/>)

2. Based on average benefit amount for adults at risk of losing benefits divided by a standard per-meal cost of \$2.681, based on the 2024 Thrifty Food Plan for a reference family of four.

3. According to the United Way United Real Cost Measure. San Francisco: https://unitedwaysca.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/04/2025-RCM__San-Francisco-County.pdf. Marin: https://unitedwaysca.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/04/2025-RCM__Marin-County.pdf

CALFRESH REFORM IS NEEDED



Only **81%** of eligible people in California are enrolled in CalFresh⁴

SNAP or CalFresh in California is the most effective anti-hunger program we have. It disrupts poverty by putting grocery money directly in people's pockets.

Yet, despite its effectiveness, in California it remains underutilized. California has consistently lagged behind other states in SNAP enrollment with a lower participation rate than at least half of the other states. It is estimated that there are 2.7M people eligible for CalFresh, but not enrolled — resulting in \$3.5B in benefits not used to buy food.



30% of participants not enrolled in CalFresh don't think they are eligible

This is why the Food Bank co-sponsored AB518, a bill requiring the state to identify those eligible for CalFresh and take culturally appropriate steps to enroll them. Meaningful policy change can reduce hunger

California also has one of the highest program administration costs in the country. Urgent reform is needed to make sure the program doesn't become even less accessible and more expensive to operate.

A BROKEN ECONOMY FORCES TOUGH CHOICES

The cost of living in Marin and San Francisco is so high that an individual would need to work approximately 1.5 full time minimum wage jobs in San Francisco and 1.75 in Marin just to cover their basic expenses.⁵

67% of surveyed Food Bank participants report working, and **68%** are also experiencing food insecurity.



THE RENT STILL EATS FIRST

Ever-rising prices and an unattainable cost of living are forcing families to choose between housing and food, transportation and food, healthcare and food. With so many fixed expenses, **food is often the area families cut back to try to stretch their budget**



29% report eating less than they should because there wasn't enough money for food



26% report cutting back on meal size or skipping meals because there wasn't money for food

For parents the tradeoffs can be even more challenging. When many families are paying nearly as much for childcare as they are for housing⁶ it's no wonder **the rate of food insecurity among parents using our services is 21% higher** than among households without children. Parents are cutting back to make sure their children have enough.



37% OF PARENTS report eating less than they should because there wasn't enough money for food



33% OF PARENTS report cutting back on meal size or skipping meals because there wasn't money for food

“I do know a lot of parents who oftentimes will have to defer and give the food to their kids, and they're not eating enough themselves. That's something that is often overlooked, and I think something needs to be done about that.”

– Greer, Food Bank Participant

4. According to the USDA, Reaching Those in Need: Estimates of State Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Participation Rates in 2022 (<https://fns-prod.azureedge.us/sites/default/files/resource-files/ear-snap-Reaching-Those-in-Need-2022.pdf>)

5. Based on United Way's Real Cost Measure (<https://unitedwaysca.org/realcost>) and a \$16.50 minimum wage in Marin County and a \$19.67 minimum wage in San Francisco County. Full time is defined as 40 hours per week, 50 weeks per year

6. Based on United Way's Real Cost Measure (<https://unitedwaysca.org/realcost>)

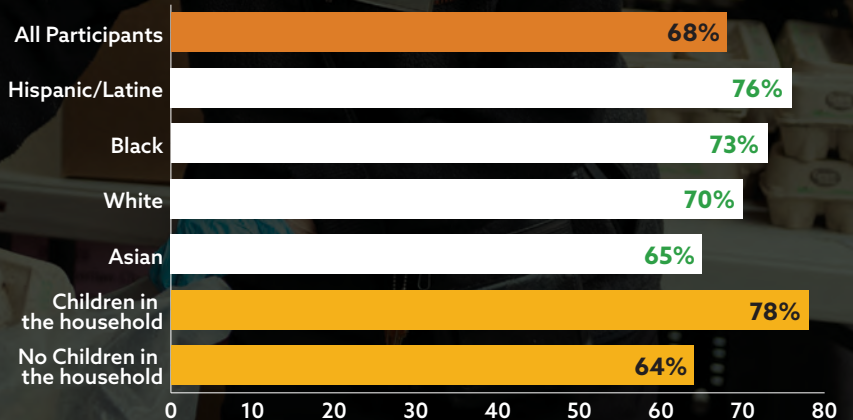


WE CAN'T 'FOOD BANK' OUR WAY OUT OF THE HUNGER CRISIS

The Food Bank serves 36,000 households weekly in San Francisco and Marin or **1 in 12 households** in both counties — a number that is projected to go up this year. For those families, our services are working. Our participants are 15% less likely to experience food insecurity than those on our waitlist. The Food Bank is relieving the pressure of the tough choices our community is making between food, housing, healthcare, childcare and other basic needs.

But it's not enough. Our services are supplemental, **68% of people enrolled in our program are still at risk of hunger**. When 1 in 5 Californians are food insecure, food banks can't reach everyone. To truly end hunger we must not only ensure people have access to the food they need today, but also transform policies and eradicate hunger's root causes.

FOOD BANK PARTICIPANTS EXPERIENCING FOOD INSECURITY



No matter your political persuasion, we should all want to end hunger.
To do that we need innovative solutions and bold action from our policy makers and supporters.
Join us in the fight to end hunger: donate, volunteer and make your voice heard.



Learn more: sfmfoodbank.org/advocacy

OUR PARTICIPANTS

