

FOOD INSECURITY FACT SHEET



Food Insecurity is defined as the lack of access to enough safe, affordable, nutritious and culturally appropriate food to maintain a healthy and active life.

In 2016, 7% of the county's population or 77,780 people, including 13.9% (or 33,000) children, were estimated to be food insecure. In 2017, this overall food insecurity rate decreased to 6.3% of the County's population, and 13.3% of children. However, the most recent SNAP and FARMS data for the County indicates an increase in the number of participants, reflecting the reliance of families upon food assistance programs to alleviate their needs.

The cost of living is extremely high in Montgomery County. A family of four must have an annual income of at least \$91,252 to meet basic needs (the "Self-Sufficiency Standard").

Research for the creation of the Food Security Plan found that certain communities within Montgomery County were at increased risk of becoming food insecure:

- Residents with household incomes below the Self-Sufficiency Standard
- Residents lacking access to personal vehicles or living far from public transportation
- Those who are eligible but are not enrolled in federal nutrition benefits programs
- School-aged children in single parent households, especially during weekends or school vacations
- Seniors aging in place who may also have medical dietary restrictions
- Foreign born residents with limited English proficiency who may live in mixed immigration status families, and lack knowledge about basic needs assistance resources, programs or services
- People with disabilities with limited mobility, especially those waiting for case management

- **Mission:** To serve as the central connection point for County stakeholders committed to cultivating a robust, sustainable, equitable, local food system
- Established 2012 through a grassroots initiative with County support
- 4 staff plus interns
- Independent 501c3 nonprofit
- Funded through County and private foundation grants

Food Assistance Resources

The Food Assistance Resource Map

<https://mocofoodcouncil.org/food-assistance-resource-map/>

The Printable 2019 Food Assistance Resource Directory

English

<https://mocofoodcouncil.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/2019-english-fard-3.14-2-merged.pdf>

Spanish

<https://mocofoodcouncil.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/SPANISH-MOCO-2019-directory-merged-2.13.pdf>

The Food Assistance Resource Directory by Zip Code

<https://mocofoodcouncil.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/FARD-by-Zip-Code-Formatted-1.pdf>

Contact the Food Council for more information,
or to explore how to get involved:

info@mocofoodcouncil.org • 806-395-5593
www.mocofoodcouncil.org

FOOD SUPPLEMENT PROGRAM (FSP) FACT SHEET



What is SNAP?

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), formerly known as Food Stamps, is a federal nutrition program that provides qualifying families and individuals with money to help with food purchases each month.

SNAP benefits can be used to purchase food at authorized retail locations. Benefits are provided on an electronic benefit transfer (EBT) card each month.

SNAP is a federal entitlement program. Anyone who is eligible will receive benefits, meaning that you will not be taking any benefits away from someone else by applying.

684,000 Maryland residents, or **11%** of the state population and 42,000,000 participants in the United States, **received SNAP benefits in 2017.**

According to Maryland Hunger Solutions, 64% of Montgomery County residents who are eligible to receive SNAP benefits are not enrolled—the highest rate for any County in Maryland.

Food Security Plan programs have been implemented to address this, such as the Senior Hunger and SNAP Outreach Program.

What is the Food Supplement Program (FSP)?

The Food Supplement Program (FSP) is the name of the SNAP program in Maryland. “Food Stamps,” “FSP” and “SNAP” all refer to the same program.

The Food Supplement Program defines a household as a group of people who live together, buy food, and prepare meals together. The amount of benefits a person receives depends on the number of people in the household and how much income is left after expenses are subtracted.

- The **average monthly benefit** for all Maryland households receiving SNAP benefits in 2017 was **\$221**.
- For **households with children** the average monthly benefit in 2017 was **\$371**.
- **Households with seniors** received an average of **\$100** and **households with non-elderly disabled individuals** an average of **\$164**.

Unfortunately, recent proposed changes to the definition of “public charge” has resulted in many families withdrawing from SNAP or declining to apply due to fear of deportation.

This means that many are going without the benefits that they need, even though the proposed changes will only affect a very small number of people.

Protecting Immigrant Families protectingimmigrantfamilies.org

This organization has a number of resources to guide SNAP applicants and service providers in order to help clarify the application of the proposed rule change.

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