

Data Release

HUNGER IN SAN DIEGO SNAPSHOT 2017 FOOD INSECURITY DATA RELEASE

RELEASED SEPTEMBER 2019

SUMMARY: THE NEED FOR FOOD ASSISTANCE IN SAN DIEGO REMAINS HIGH

Similar to slight decreases across California and the nation, San Diego County's food insecurity rate fell from 15% of the population in 2016 (an estimated 486,000 people) to 14% in 2017 (an estimated 443,000 people). While food security in San Diego County continues to improve, the overall rate remains high, with 1 in 7 people facing hunger in 2017.

Why is this? San Diegans' ability to purchase enough food has improved very little over time. This is a result of limited wage growth since the 2008 recession and the rapidly rising cost of living in our region. More than half (55%) of adults experiencing food insecurity are employed, but 32% of San Diegans currently make less than \$14.35/hour (\$29,848/year)¹.

Until wages catch up to the cost of living in San Diego County, people will need food assistance to prevent the detrimental, long-term effects of hunger and malnutrition. That is why San Diego Hunger Coalition and our partners are committed to a Hunger Free San Diego where anyone facing hunger can readily access food assistance sufficient to see them safely through their time of need.

SAN DIEGO COUNTY 2017 FOOD INSECURITY RATE



1 IN 7 SAN DIEGANS
DON'T ALWAYS HAVE ENOUGH TO EAT.

443,000 people in San Diego experienced food insecurity in 2017. This represents 302,000 adults and 141,000 children who did not always have enough to eat.

WHO MAKES UP 1 in 7?



1 IN 5 CHILDREN (19%)



1 IN 8 ADULTS (12%)



1 IN 10 SENIORS (10%)

WHO IS FOOD INSECURE IN SAN DIEGO?



More than half (55%) of adults experiencing food insecurity are employed and 43% are working full-time.



50% of adults experiencing food insecurity are living with a disability.



41% of low-income adults and 43% of low-income children are living in a food insecure household.



Nearly half (46%) of low-income single parent households are food insecure.



More than half (55%) of food insecure adults are Latino; 29% are White; 7% are Asian; and 5% are Black.

WHAT DEFINES A "FOOD INSECURE" HOUSEHOLD?

Because of lack of money and resources:

- Eating patterns change. (Meager or skipped meals.)
- The quality of food decreases. (More cheap, processed foods.)
- There isn't always enough to eat for a healthy and active lifestyle.
- The household struggles to avoid hunger at some point during the year.

WORKING HARD, FALLING SHORT




One-third of employed San Diegans are low-wage earners, many in need of food assistance. However, a family of four with two small children cannot earn more than \$48,000/year to qualify for Reduced Price School Meals and WIC, or more than \$51,500 to qualify for CalFresh/SNAP.

In comparison, the California Family Needs Calculator² estimates that a family of four needs an income of \$83,000 to meet their most basic needs (housing, childcare, healthcare, food, transportation, taxes, and personal/household incidentals). This leaves families with incomes between \$48,000 and \$83,000 stuck between earning too much to qualify for assistance, but not enough to make ends meet.

HOUSEHOLD EXPENSES (FAMILY OF FOUR)²

Expense	Monthly Cost
Housing	\$1,816
Child Care	\$1,886
Health Care	\$460
Food	\$871
Transportation	\$533
Miscellaneous	\$557
Taxes	\$763
Monthly Income Needed	\$6,886 / mo
Hourly Wage (per adult)	\$19.56 / hr
Annual Income Needed	\$82,620 / yr

THE IMPACTS OF HUNGER ON HEALTH³

 <p>Kids who are food insecure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are more likely to miss school & have behavioral problems. • Suffer impairments to physical & cognitive development. • Have 3X the risk of obesity if hungry during preschool years. 	 <p>Adults who are food insecure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are 47% more likely to visit the ER or be hospitalized. • Spend 54% more days in the hospital. • Have 2X the risk of developing type 2 diabetes. 	 <p>Seniors who are food insecure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Represent 50% of older adults who are hospitalized. • Are 40% more likely to have congestive heart failure. • Have 2X the risk of suffering from depression.
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ABOUT THIS REPORT

The estimates in this brief represent the most reliable and up-to-date information that exists on food insecurity in San Diego County and were developed by San Diego Hunger Coalition in partnership with UCLA's Center for Health Policy Research. These estimates are based on data from the California Health Interview Survey (CHIS)⁴. The CHIS food insecurity survey questions are only asked of households with income below 200% Federal Poverty Level (FPL). Because we know families above 200% FPL still experience food insecurity, the data provided in the release is a conservative estimate of food insecurity in our region.

Please note that these estimates may differ from CHIS data referenced by other organizations, as the San Diego Hunger Coalition's analysis includes children in food insecure households, whereas publicly-available CHIS data only includes adults experiencing food insecurity. Visit sdhunger.org/research for the full issue brief and methodology.

This research was conducted for Hunger Free San Diego, a collaboration of agencies facilitated by San Diego Hunger Coalition that applies a data-driven approach to end hunger. Thank you to our funders of Hunger Free San Diego, including Kaiser Permanente, Kasperick Foundation, Moxie Foundation, Price Philanthropies, Food 4 Less, and the Charles A. Frueauff Foundation.

ABOUT THE SAN DIEGO HUNGER COALITION

San Diego Hunger Coalition leads coordinated action to end hunger in San Diego County supported by research, education and advocacy. San Diego Hunger Coalition's vision is that everyone in San Diego County has enough food for an active, healthy life. To learn more, visit the San Diego Hunger Coalition online at www.sdhunger.org.

REFERENCES

¹Determined by the U.C. Berkeley Labor Center using data from the Current Population Survey conducted by the United States Census Bureau, July 2019

²Based on the California Family Needs Calculator (formerly the Self-Sufficiency Standard) developed by Dr. Diana Pearce with the University of Washington for the Insight Center. Retrieved July 2019 from: <https://insightcced.org/>

³Berkowitz, S. A., Seligman, H. K., Rigdon, J., Meigs, J. B., & Basu, S. (2017). Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) participation and health care expenditures among low-income adults. *JAMA Internal Medicine*, published online ahead of print.

⁴California Health Interview Survey. CHIS 2017 Adult, Adolescent, Child Public Use Files. [computer files]. Los Angeles, CA: UCLA Center for Health Policy Research, February 2019.