



HUNGER IN SAN DIEGO

June 2022 Data Release

Nutrition Insecurity Rates

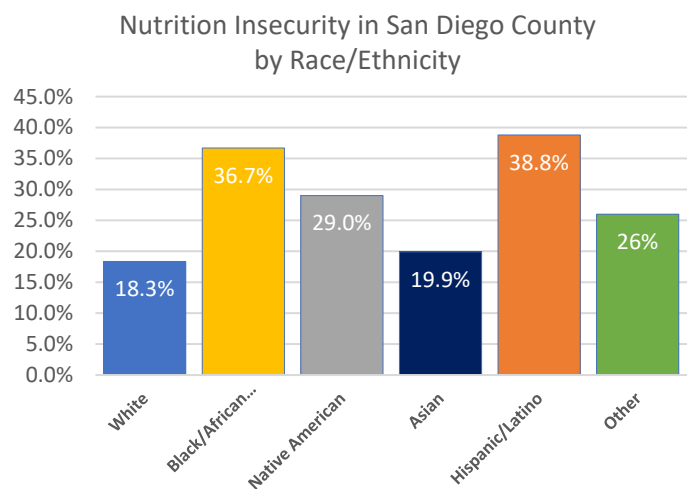
We are happy to report that for the first time since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, nutrition insecurity levels are below the levels achieved in 2019, or pre-pandemic numbers. In June 2022, San Diego Hunger Coalition estimates 23% (755,000 people) of people in San Diego County were nutrition insecure, meaning they did not have sufficient income to purchase three healthy meals per day. Despite the decrease, though, families throughout the county continued to struggle with inflation in June. Due to the combination of higher prices and low wage jobs, the need for food assistance among nutrition insecure households was higher than normal as families experienced a decrease in purchasing power for food.

Nutrition Insecurity Rate by Population			
San Diego County	Children	Older Adults	Population with Disabilities
23%	29%	23%	35%
Nearly 1 in 4	Nearly 1 in 3	Nearly 1 in 4	More than 1 in 3
~ 755,000 people	~ 198,000 children	~ 111,000 seniors	~ 115,000 people

Access to Nutritious Food is an Equity Issue

To examine nutrition insecurity from a standpoint of racial equity, it is important to look at the *prevalence of nutrition insecurity within each race/ethnic group*, among other factors.

The chart to the right shows the degree to which nutrition insecurity disproportionately impacts Black, Hispanic/Latino, Indigenous, and other people of color in San Diego County.





Data Release



Economic Impacts: Why do people continue to face nutrition insecurity?

- **Higher food prices.** The average cost of a meal in San Diego has increased 18% since 2019.
- **Housing.** The price of a home in San Diego rose 28% from April of 2021 to April 2022. Similarly, monthly rents in San Diego have increased 24%. As of December 2022, rent in San Diego is still 22% higher than it was in April 2021 and 38% higher than it was in December 2019.¹
- **Fuel & Energy.** The price of gasoline increased 43% in San Diego from May 2021 to May 2022. Electricity and natural gas prices rose 18% in the same time.
- **Household debt.** Debt increased by \$1.7 trillion in the US since the end of 2019 with 30% of households reporting that they relied on credit card debt to stay afloat during the pandemic.
- **Low-wage jobs.** 30% of full-time workers in San Diego County are still bringing home less than \$35,000 per year.²

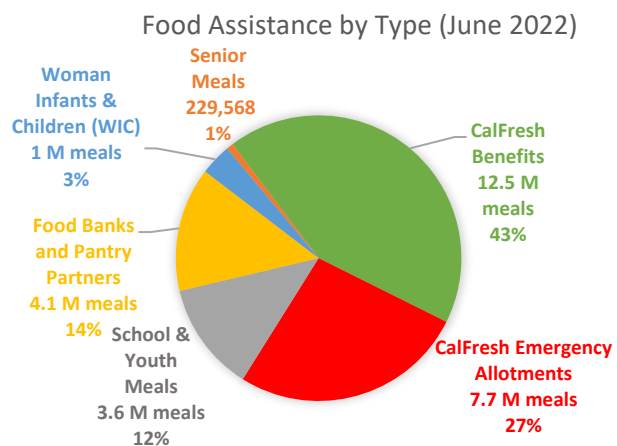
Bottom Line: Are we meeting the need?

Food Assistance Meals Provided and Remaining Meal Gap – June 2022

Food assistance in San Diego County comes in different forms (e.g., funds on an EBT card, free school meals, bags of free food, etc.) and is provided through many different government and charitably supported programs. **In June 2022, all types of food assistance provided 29 million meals to San Diegans, meeting approximately 75% of the need.** The following pie chart demonstrates the effect of CalFresh emergency allotments on total food assistance in San Diego County. These benefits are slated to expire sometime in the first half of 2023. Concurrently, other vital pandemic aid income supports are expiring, including the expanded Child Tax Credit and Pandemic EBT (P-EBT) benefits.

Including the CalFresh emergency allotments, **there was a meal gap of 9.9 million meals in**

June. Without the CalFresh emergency allotments, the June meal gap would have been 17.7 million meals, taking away between \$250 - \$900 per month from families in need depending on household size. With these benefits slated to expire in the new year, the need for food assistance will increase, and hunger could intensify in San Diego County.



29.2 M total meals provided

¹ Data analyzed and obtained from <https://www.zumper.com/rent-research/san-diego-ca>.

² To see the sources from the statistics in this report and a detailed breakdown of our methodology, please visit our March 2022 Issue Brief on our website at <https://www.sdhunger.org/sdhc-research-reports>.