



SNAP OUTRACH PROGRAM

IMPACT

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP, formerly “food stamps”) is the nation’s largest nutrition assistance program administered by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). SNAP serves as the first line of defense against hunger and undernutrition and is an effective anti-poverty initiative. This invaluable program has a critical role, not only in reducing food insecurity, but also in improving the health of the nation and bolstering local economies. SNAP together with emergency food programs like the food bank provide a more sustainable solution to ending hunger.

For every meal the emergency food network provides, SNAP provides 9.

Personal Impact

- 61% of SNAP participants in PA are in households with children; 46% are in households with a senior or disabled member; nearly 85% of all SNAP benefits go to such households.
- While losing a job is the most common cause to seek SNAP, 46% of participants are in working families.
- Half of all American children will receive SNAP at some point during childhood, as will half of all adults between the ages of 20 and 65.

1 in 7 Pennsylvania residents participate in SNAP.

Food Security

- SNAP participation reduces the likelihood of being food insecure and very low food secure by 31 and 20%, respectively.
- Among low-income households with children experiencing food insecurity, the odds of being food secure 2 years later were almost 4 times higher for SNAP participants compared to non-participants.

SNAP reduces childhood food insecurity by at least 8.1%.

Economic Impact

- SNAP lifts approximately 330,000 Pennsylvanians out of poverty every year. Nearly 40% are children.
- Because SNAP benefits are so urgently needed, they are spent quickly — 97% of benefits are redeemed by the end of the month of issuance. This helps stimulate local economies.
- In times of crisis, SNAP is among the most effective government responses. SNAP reacts quickly and robustly to economic problems. And as when the economy slowly improves, SNAP caseload and spending declines accordingly.

Every SNAP dollar = \$1.54 in local economic activity.

Freedom and Equity

- Freedom to purchase the foods their family wants and needs:
 - Culturally relevant foods (CRF)
 - Religious considerations
 - Allergies and other dietary restrictions (gluten, nuts, dairy)
 - Locally-sourced and locally sold foods
- Power to purchase more nutritious foods.

Culturally Relevant Foods (CRF) are food items that hold significance for a particular culture or subcultural group. Improving access to healthy CRF may be important for improving the diets of minority populations, who are disproportionately affected by poor diet quality, obesity, and chronic disease.

Health, Education, and Housing

- Research has found that receipt of SNAP benefits in early childhood improved high school graduation rates, adult earnings, and adult health.
- Access to SNAP in utero and in early childhood increased women's economic self-sufficiency as measured by increased educational attainment, earnings, and income. It also reduced poverty and public assistance program participation in adulthood.
- Families receiving all three—housing subsidies, SNAP, and WIC (Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children) benefits—were 72 percent more likely to be housing secure (defined as living without overcrowding or frequent moves within the last year), compared to those families receiving only housing subsidies.

For those who receive food assistance as children, SNAP improves health and academic performance in the short-run, as well as health, educational attainment, and economic self-sufficiency in the long-run.

