

SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) is the nation's largest anti-hunger program.

- ▶ Approximately 33 million Americans received monthly food stamp benefits in 2009, up from about 26 million in 2007.¹ All states experienced an increase in people on SNAP—the new federal name for the Food Stamp Program. Nevada had the highest increase of 64 percent and Arkansas had the smallest increase of 8 percent.
- ▶ More than 75 percent of all SNAP participants are in families with children.
- ▶ A recent study estimated that at some point in their childhood, nearly half (49.2 percent) of all American children will live in a household depending on food stamps.²
- ▶ Significant portions of states' populations depend on food stamps to prevent hunger, from 17 percent in Missouri, Tennessee, Mississippi and Washington, D.C., to just 5 percent in Wyoming.



SNAP benefits provide a significant boost to local economies. Federal stimulus legislation increased these benefits.

- ▶ Every \$5 in SNAP benefits generates \$9.20 in total economic activity, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture.³
- ▶ Eighty percent of all benefits are redeemed within two weeks of receipt and, according to the USDA, 97 percent are spent within the month. Most of the spending is in local community stores.
- ▶ The American Reinvestment and Recovery Act increased monthly SNAP benefits by 13.6 percent beginning April 1, 2009, pumping an estimated \$18 billion into state economies between 2009 and 2012. Total increased economic activity in the states will exceed \$34 billion.

The SNAP program is federally funded but administered at the state level.

- ▶ All states now use electronic benefit transfer cards, similar to debit cards with the money preloaded on them. According to the USDA, these debit cards can be used in 162,000 approved retail stores.
- ▶ Federal rules set eligibility based on income and assets available to a household. Only legal immigrants are eligible and, in most cases, individuals must wait five years in legal status before qualifying for benefits. Able-bodied adults between 16 and 60 years old must register for work, participate in training programs and accept or continue employment in order to qualify for the benefits.
- ▶ In 21 states and some counties in four more states, applications can be completed and submitted online. And in 17 of those states, Spanish language applications are also available online. Online applications allow faster processing of benefits.⁴
- ▶ Eligibility screening tools are available on a state Web site in 20 states.⁵ Community-based organizations can use these tools to help qualified individuals access the program. The USDA estimates only 67 percent of eligible individuals participate in SNAP.

¹ U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service, [http://www.fns.usda.gov/pd/18SNAPavg\\$PP.htm](http://www.fns.usda.gov/pd/18SNAPavg$PP.htm), accessed Dec. 22, 2009

² Rank M, Hirschl T "Estimating the risk of food stamp use and impoverishment during childhood" *Arch Pediatr Adolesc Med* 2009; 163: 994–99.

³ Secretary Vilsack News Release No. 0087.09. http://www.usda.gov/wps/portal/ut/pl/s.7_0_A/7_0_1RD?printable=true&contentidonly=true&contentid=2009/04/0087.xml, accessed Dec. 23, 2009

⁴ Center on Budget and Policy Priorities "Food Stamps On-Line: A Review of State Government Food Stamp Websites" Updated December 18, 2009. <http://www.cbpp.org/cms/index.cfm?fa=view&id=618>, accessed Dec. 23, 2009

⁵ Ibid.

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Data (as of Jan. 8, 2010)

State	Average Monthly Participation (Total Individuals)			% Population Receiving SNAP Benefits 2009	Federal Stimulus Funding 2009–2012 (\$ millions)	Total Economic Impact (\$ millions)	Online Application Availability		
	FY 2007	FY 2009	Change 2007–2009				Online Application	Online Spanish Application	Online Eligibility Screening Tool
Alabama	545,955	679,138	24%	15%	\$389	\$716	no	no	no
Alaska	56,181	64,385	15%	9%	\$36	\$66	no	no	yes
Arizona	544,688	813,987	49%	13%	\$381	\$701	yes	yes	no
Arkansas	379,768	411,153	8%	14%	\$269	\$495	no	no	yes
California	2,048,185	2,670,341	30%	7%	\$1,466	\$2,697	some counties	yes	no
Colorado	250,704	319,121	27%	6%	\$181	\$333	no	no	no
Connecticut	212,562	258,165	21%	7%	\$152	\$280	no	no	yes
Delaware	67,185	90,933	35%	10%	\$46	\$85	yes	no	no
District of Columbia	86,519	103,311	19%	17%	\$63	\$116	no	no	yes
Florida	1,232,803	1,952,362	58%	11%	\$879	\$1,617	yes	yes	yes
Georgia	950,038	1,286,078	35%	13%	\$666	\$1,225	yes	yes	no
Hawaii	89,629	114,599	28%	9%	\$66	\$121	no	no	no
Idaho	87,068	136,243	56%	9%	\$65	\$120	no	no	no
Illinois	1,246,400	1,462,421	17%	11%	\$890	\$1,638	yes	yes	no
Indiana	587,156	706,695	20%	11%	\$409	\$753	some counties	yes	yes
Iowa	238,349	295,106	24%	10%	\$161	\$296	yes	yes	yes
Kansas	182,407	219,265	20%	8%	\$127	\$234	yes	yes	yes
Kentucky	602,022	701,757	17%	16%	\$427	\$786	no	no	no
Louisiana	650,357	723,738	11%	16%	\$461	\$848	no	no	no
Maine	162,602	201,248	24%	15%	\$114	\$210	no	no	no
Maryland	317,825	454,196	43%	8%	\$219	\$403	yes	no	yes
Massachusetts	456,192	627,611	38%	10%	\$317	\$583	yes	no	yes
Michigan	1,204,409	1,450,272	20%	14%	\$800	\$1,472	yes	yes	yes
Minnesota	276,414	344,790	25%	7%	\$175	\$322	no	no	yes
Mississippi	426,116	505,920	19%	17%	\$296	\$545	no	no	no
Missouri	823,915	1,033,249	25%	17%	\$562	\$1,034	no	no	no
Montana	79,969	92,453	16%	10%	\$57	\$105	no	no	no
Nebraska	120,634	133,623	11%	7%	\$83	\$153	yes	yes	yes
Nevada	122,224	200,056	64%	8%	\$84	\$155	no	no	no
New Hampshire	59,101	78,942	34%	6%	\$38	\$70	no	no	no
New Jersey	414,503	499,853	21%	6%	\$297	\$546	yes	yes	yes
New Mexico	233,918	291,073	24%	15%	\$172	\$316	no	no	no
New York	1,801,984	2,322,742	29%	12%	\$1,289	\$2,372	some counties	yes	yes
North Carolina	882,946	1,137,294	29%	12%	\$616	\$1,133	no	no	no
North Dakota	45,122	53,070	18%	8%	\$30	\$55	no	no	no
Ohio	1,076,764	1,357,412	26%	12%	\$756	\$1,391	no	no	no
Oklahoma	421,316	472,908	12%	13%	\$302	\$556	no	no	no
Oregon	438,498	581,025	33%	15%	\$307	\$565	no	no	no
Pennsylvania	1,135,146	1,337,803	18%	11%	\$779	\$1,433	yes	yes	no
Rhode Island	76,315	102,303	34%	10%	\$52	\$96	yes	no	yes
South Carolina	545,293	687,508	26%	15%	\$383	\$705	yes	no	no
South Dakota	60,246	73,981	23%	9%	\$42	\$77	no	no	no
Tennessee	864,870	1,072,055	24%	17%	\$608	\$1,119	yes	yes	yes
Texas	2,422,198	3,003,156	24%	12%	\$1,812	\$3,334	some counties	yes	yes
Utah	123,475	185,282	50%	7%	\$94	\$173	yes	yes	no
Vermont	52,612	72,125	37%	12%	\$34	\$63	no	no	no
Virginia	515,032	651,725	27%	8%	\$355	\$653	yes	no	yes
Washington	536,333	761,220	42%	12%	\$392	\$721	yes	no	yes
West Virginia	269,343	305,960	14%	17%	\$187	\$344	yes	no	no
Wisconsin	382,770	547,878	43%	10%	\$246	\$453	yes	yes	no
Wyoming	22,608	26,762	18%	5%	\$17	\$31	no	no	no

Sources: SNAP program data: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service <http://www.fns.usda.gov/pd/15SNAPpartPP.htm>, accessed Jan. 12, 2010. State population data: U.S. Census Bureau <http://www.census.gov/compendia/statab/rankings.html>, accessed Dec. 22, 2009. Federal stimulus data: American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009: State-by-State Estimates of Key Provisions Affecting Low- and Moderate-Income Individuals. Center on Budget and Policy Priorities. March 3, 2009. <http://www.cbpp.org/files/1-22-09bud.pdf>. On-line features data: Center on Budget and Policy Priorities <http://www.cbpp.org/cms/index.cfm?fa=view&id=618>, accessed Dec. 23, 2009. Percentage and rank calculations by The Council of State Government.