



Building a New York in Which No Child Experiences Hunger

The Promise

All children and families in New York—no matter their income, race, immigration status, or the community in which they live—should have access to nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and cultural traditions, fortifying them to lead healthy, active lives.

The Challenge

Too many New York families struggle to put food on the table. In 2023, roughly 1 in 5 New York children (19%) experienced food insecurity—meaning they sometimes or often didn't have enough to eat.¹ Experiencing hunger as a child can have lasting impacts, including an increased risk of obesity and developmental and mental health challenges.² The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)—the nation's largest and most effective anti-hunger program—was subject to federal funding cuts and administrative changes beginning at the end of 2025. The changes are expected to cause more New Yorkers, including children, to endure hunger.

What We Know

Child hunger in New York is common and widespread.

Lack of access to adequate food affects children across the state, in urban, rural, and suburban communities. Some counties face disproportionate rates of food insecurity—particularly Bronx and Kings counties, which have some of the highest populations of Black and Latino residents. Across the state, food insecurity occurs disproportionately along racial lines: 26% of Hispanic New Yorkers, 25% of Black New Yorkers, and 9% of white New Yorkers reported food insecurity.³

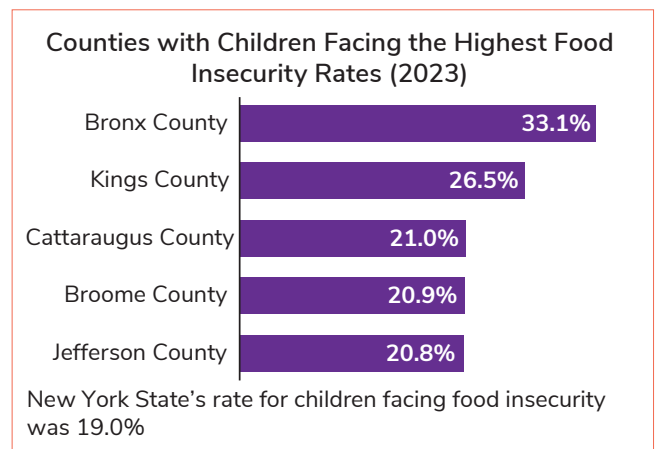
SNAP benefits are being reduced or eliminated for many.

In New York, SNAP provides nearly 3 million people—about 1 in 7 New Yorkers—with nutritional assistance, totaling \$7.35 billion in benefits in 2024. More than 52% of SNAP participants are in families with children.⁴

Despite a large body of evidence demonstrating the effectiveness of SNAP in increasing food security and improving health outcomes, the federal government recently imposed federal funding cuts and policy changes expected to cause hundreds of thousands of New York families to experience a reduction or elimination of their benefits.⁵

A growing number of immigrant families are barred from SNAP.

Federal law has long excluded many immigrant families from participating in SNAP due to their immigration status, including roughly 64,600 New York families with children in 2024 who were income-eligible but excluded from SNAP due to their immigration status.⁶ With the passage of the July 2025 federal tax and budget reconciliation bill—H.R. 1—an additional 41,000 lawfully present refugees, asylees, and other immigrant New Yorkers are expected to be newly excluded from SNAP.⁷



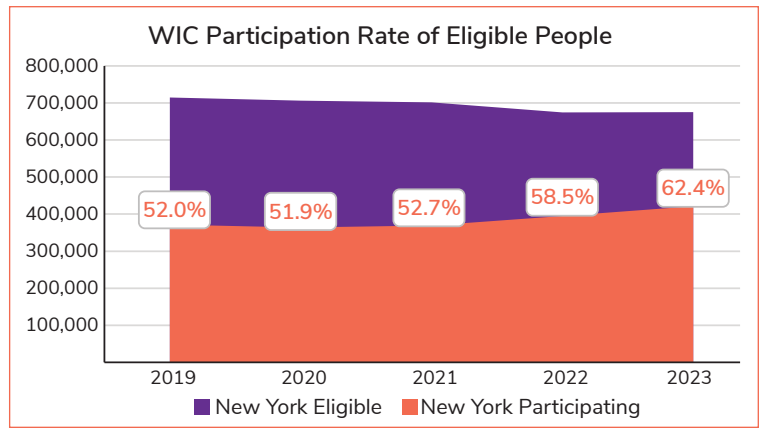
Source: Feeding America. (2025). 2023 Food Insecurity in New York.

Recent Federal Changes to SNAP Threaten Food Security^{8,9}

Federal Actions	Impact on New Yorkers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overall, shifts more than \$1.4 billion in annual costs to New York State • Stricter and expanded work reporting requirements • New categories of lawfully present immigrants excluded 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2.9 million New Yorkers across the state participate in SNAP; many of these families and individuals are now at risk of having their benefits impacted • Among those at risk of losing benefits are 300,000 households newly subject to work reporting requirements including families with children over 14 and young people who have aged out of foster care • 41,000 lawfully present immigrants expected to be excluded

Demand for WIC consistently outpaces funding.

The Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) is a federal program designed to ensure expecting parents, infants, and young children have access to sufficient food and other supports. WIC has been shown to improve health outcomes and alleviate food insecurity at critical moments in a child's development.¹⁰ While a growing percentage of eligible residents are enrolled in WIC, nearly 40% of eligible New Yorkers are still not participating due to a lack of awareness, administrative barriers, and limited funded capacity.¹¹



Source: USDA's Food and Nutrition Service. (2025). WIC Eligibility and Participation by State Over Time.

To increase participation, New York strategically implemented a federal waiver that allows participants to attend WIC appointments virtually, including regular health and nutrition check-ins, dramatically improving accessibility. However, due in part to the success of this approach, many WIC sites across the state now operate beyond their funded capacity. This leaves local programs struggling to meet demand, see clients in a timely manner, and retain necessary staff.

State Policy Solutions

- ▶ Invest state funds to make food benefits available to all income-eligible residents regardless of immigration status or ability to meet work reporting requirements.
- ▶ Provide resources to transition SNAP benefits to a secure chip card to prevent the theft of SNAP benefits.
- ▶ Engage in outreach and support to ensure young people formerly in foster care and others newly subject to SNAP work reporting requirements can meet them.
- ▶ Increase state funding for WIC to help local programs serve more children and families.
- ▶ Address the underlying causes of food insecurity among New York's children by undertaking systemic changes that put more money in families' pockets, such as raising the minimum wage, strengthening the state child tax credit, and implementing universal child care.

¹ Feeding America. (2025). [Map the Meal Gap](#).

² Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion. (n.d.). [Food insecurity: Literature summary](#). Healthy People 2030. U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Svs.

³ Feeding America. (2025). [Map the Meal Gap](#).

⁴ Nchako, C. (2025). [A Closer Look at Who Benefits from SNAP: State-by-State Fact Sheets](#). Center on Budget and Policy Priorities.

⁵ Carlson, S., & Llobrera, J. (2022). [SNAP is linked with improved health outcomes and lower health care costs](#). Center on Budget and Policy Priorities.

⁶ New York State Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance. (2024). [Child Poverty Reduction Advisory Council 2024 recommendations and progress report](#).

⁷ NYS Child Poverty Reduction Advisory Council. [Meeting 15 - October 14, 2025](#). Presentation.

⁸ NYS Child Poverty Reduction Advisory Council. [Meeting 15 - October 14, 2025](#). Presentation.

⁹ Hunger Solutions New York. (2025). [SNAP Changes Under the Federal Budget Reconciliation Law](#).

¹⁰ Food Research and Action Center. (2019). [WIC is a Critical Economic, Nutrition, and Health Support for Children and Families](#).

¹¹ USDA's Food and Nutrition Service. (2025). [WIC Eligibility and Participation by State Over Time](#).

*For all sources and computations, go to: <https://scaany.org/sonyc-sources-2026/>