2024 MINNESOTA FOOD SHELF VISITS

KEY INSIGHTS

- **2024 WAS ANOTHER RECORD YEAR** for food shelf visits in Minnesota.
- **HUNGER IS A STATEWIDE ISSUE** impacting both URBAN and RURAL communities.
- **FOOD SHELVES HAVE EXPANDED SERVICES** to meet the need.
- **FOOD ASSISTANCE NEEDS HAVE DRAMATICALLY INCREASED** from pre-pandemic levels.
- **INCREASED FOOD PRICES AND DECREASED SNAP BENEFITS** are driving rising need.
- Food shelf visits are a measure of **RESPONSE TO INCREASED FOOD INSECURITY.**

ABOUT THE FOOD GROUP

The Food Group is a local food equity non-profit. For nearly 50 years, we have worked to provide food for today and change for tomorrow for neighbors who need it most in our community. We work at the intersection of food access, equity, and nutrition statewide.

The Food Group is proud Hunger Solutions became part of our organization in 2024.

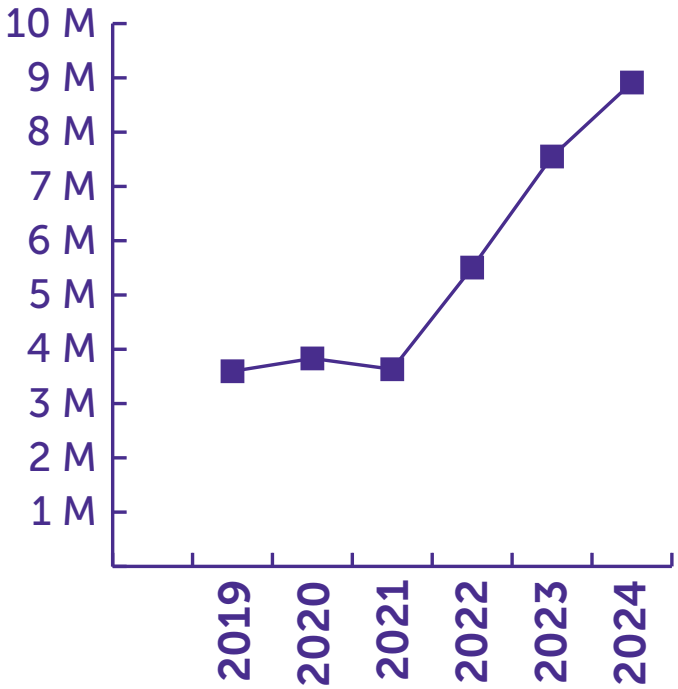
Data Collection & Transparency

Food shelf data is collected by The Food Group in partnership with the Minnesota Department of Children, Youth, and Family. The Food Group is committed to transparent data collection process and oversight. Our food shelf data comes from Minnesota's food shelves and is calculated based on the number of visitors reported by each food shelf. The food shelves represented are TEFAP-eligible and are monitored by the Department of Children, Youth, and Family's Office of Economic Opportunity and local food banks.

DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN, YOUTH, AND FAMILIES

Total Food Shelf Visits

Change 2019 to 2024



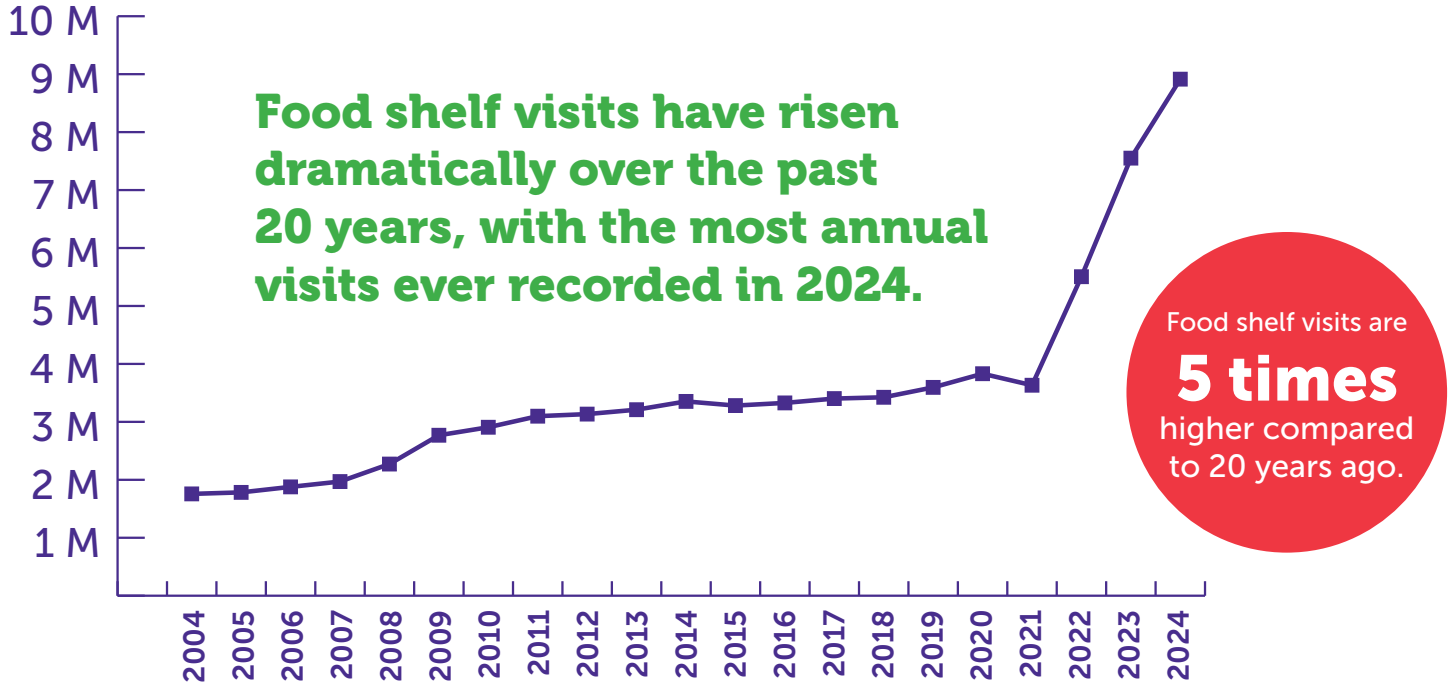
Minnesotans made nearly 9 million visits to food shelves in 2024, shattering records for the fourth consecutive year.

That's 1.4 million more visits than in 2023.

While food shelf visits continue to rise statewide, they aren't rising as quickly as 2022 to 2023.

Minnesotans made 2.5x more visits in 2024 than pre-pandemic 2019.

Change by Year Since 2004



Food shelf visits have risen dramatically over the past 20 years, with the most annual visits ever recorded in 2024.

Food shelf visits are **5 times** higher compared to 20 years ago.

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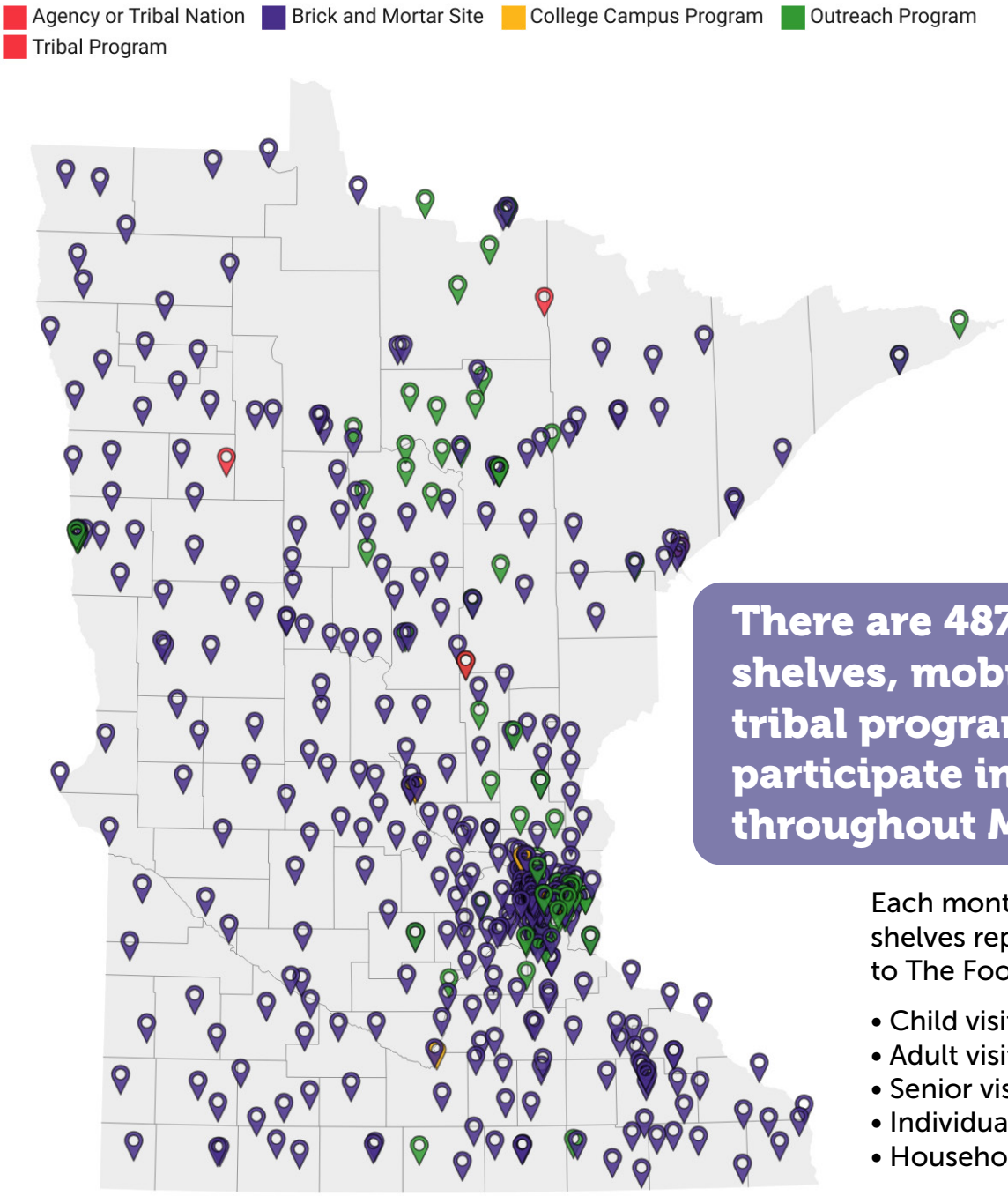
Minnesota Food Shelf Locations

Minnesota food shelves have been strategically expanding their programs to meet rising need.



There are 487 food shelves, mobile, and tribal programs that participate in TEFAP throughout Minnesota.

Each month TEFAP food shelves report their visit data to The Food Group:

- Child visits
- Adult visits
- Senior visits
- Individual visits (total)
- Household visits

Created with Datawrapper

What is TEFAP?
The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP) is a federal program that distributes food at no cost to food banks and tribal groups.

Source: https://www.datawrapper.de/_/hjRTr/

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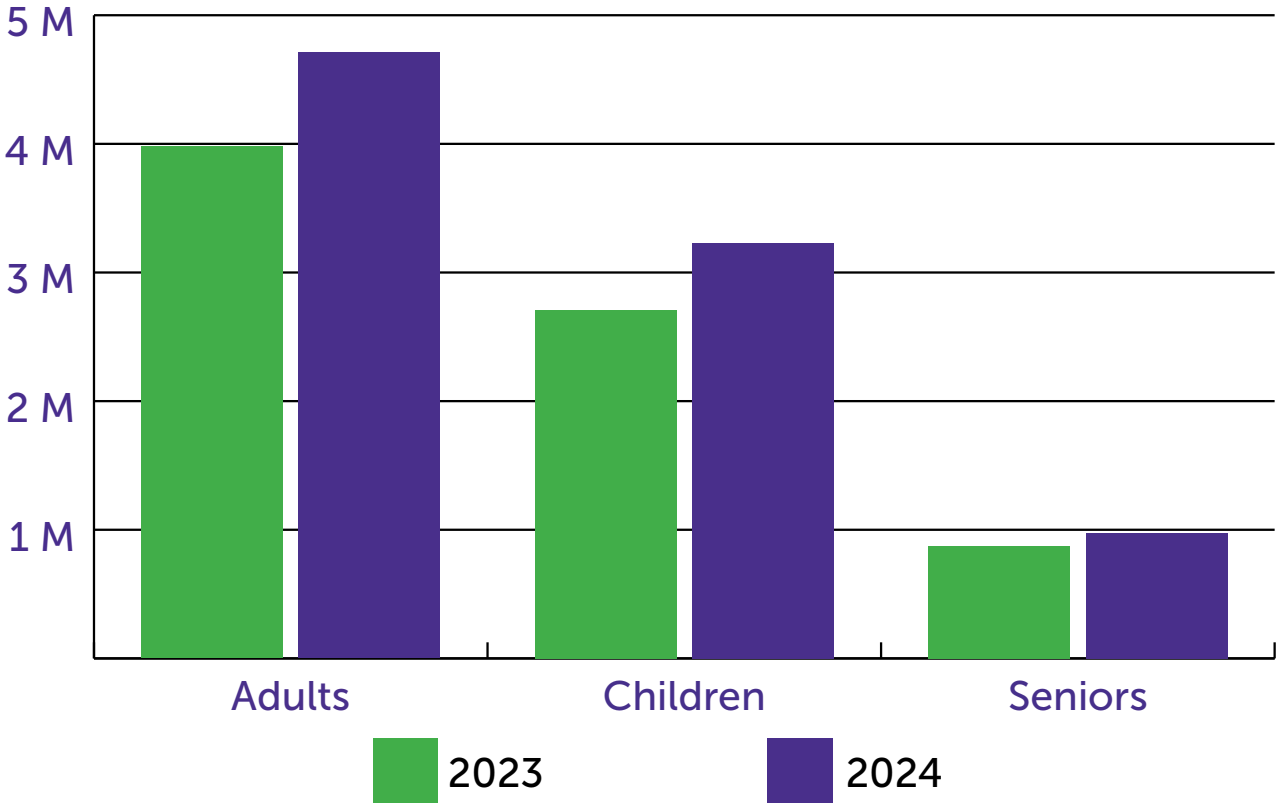
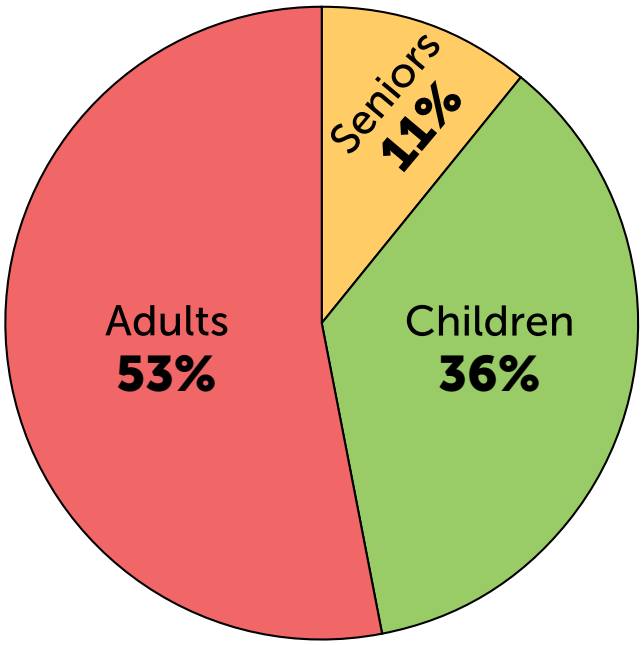
Who is Visiting Minnesota Food Shelves?





Visitors in 2024

Adults 4,705,574
Children 3,230,534
Seniors 977,602

8,913,710 Total Visitors

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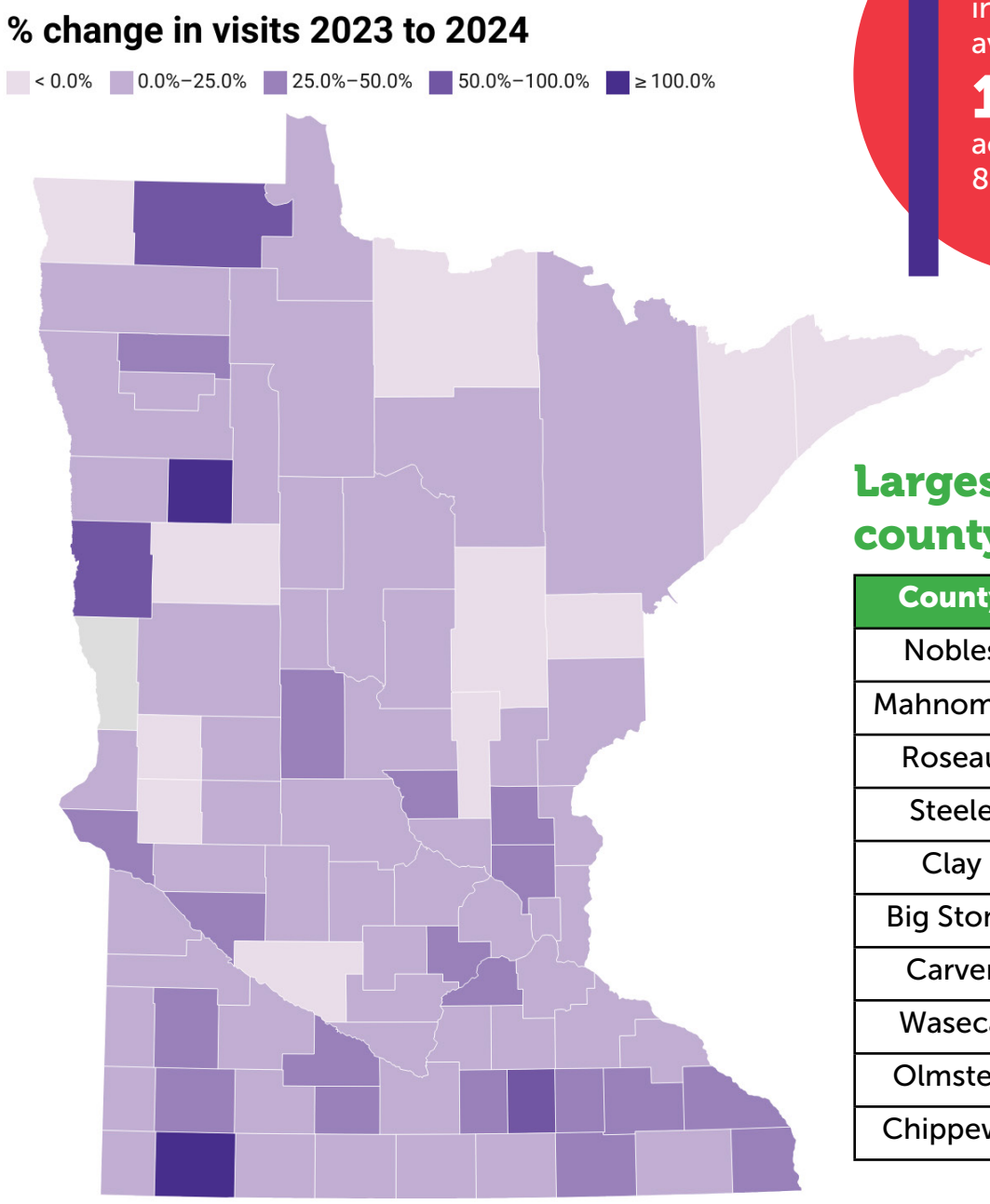
Hunger is a Statewide Issue Touching All Parts of The State From Rural to Urban

Food shelf visits increased by an average of **18.4%** across Minnesota's 87 counties.



Source: The Food Group • Created with Datawrapper

Largest changes by county increases.

County	Difference
Nobles	194.1%
Mahnomen	102.6%
Roseau	63.1%
Steele	53.2%
Clay	51.2%
Big Stone	49.2%
Carver	49.1%
Waseca	43.7%
Olmsted	39.4%
Chippewa	37.9%

Source: https://www.datawrapper.de/_/23KnK/?v=2

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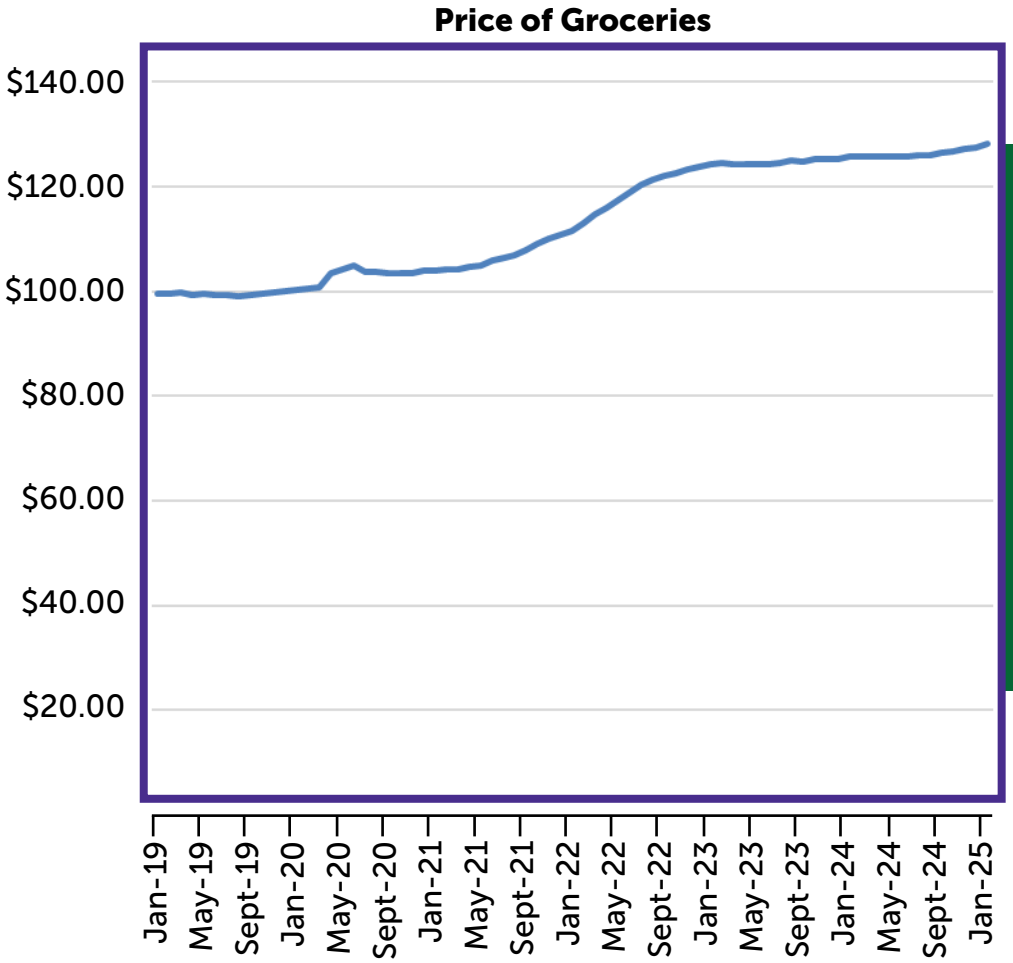
Behind the Numbers

Food prices remain high, driving increased need.



High food prices have **multi-year economic impact** on households, undermining financial stability and increasing risk for food insecurity.

Source: Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers: Food at Home in U.S. City Average, Index Dec 2019=100, Monthly, Seasonally Adjusted
https://fred.stlouisfed.org/series/CUSR0000SAF11#

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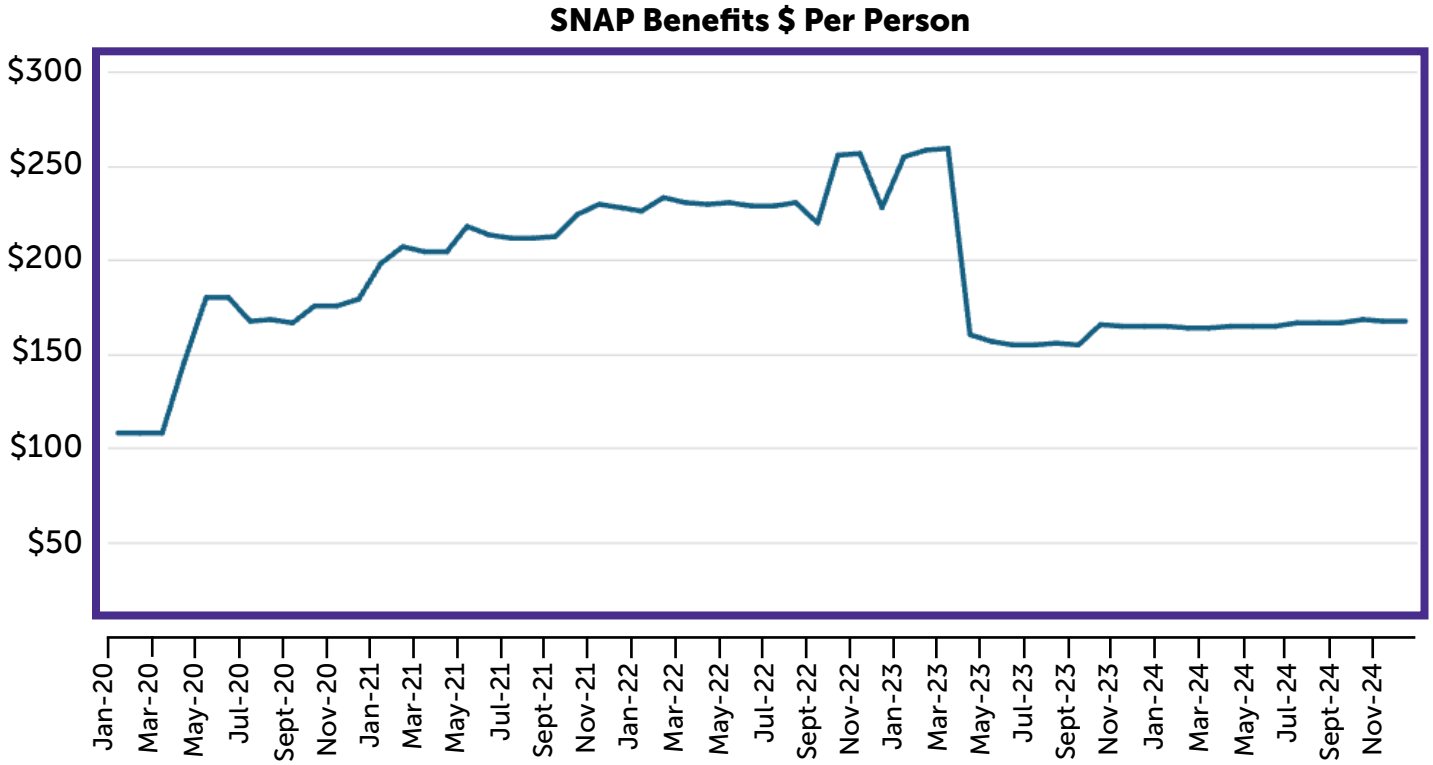
Behind the Numbers

Pandemic Emergency SNAP Ends

Minnesotans saw a sharp decrease in SNAP benefits in March 2023 when pandemic-related emergency allotments ended.



With the end of pandemic emergency allotments to SNAP, Minnesotans went from about $260 in monthly SNAP benefits per person to $160 in monthly SNAP benefits per person.

This leaves Minnesotans using SNAP with an average of $100 less each month to spend on the food they need.

Source: DCYF Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and state-funded food - statewide and county level statistics, by month
https://mn.gov/dhs/general-public/publications-forms-resources/reports/financial-reports-and-forecasts.jsp

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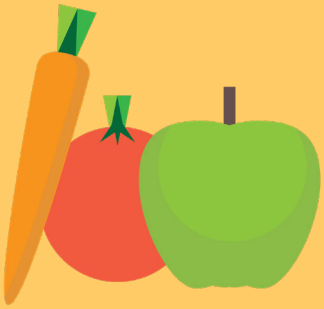
What Contributes to Food Insecurity?

Housing and Economic Insecurity
Many Minnesotans are experiencing housing and financial insecurity. Rental rates and housing prices have soared in recent years, leaving Minnesotans with less income available to spend on other necessities like food.

High Food Costs
Food prices increased significantly through the COVID-19 pandemic and remain high. High prices make it more difficult for Minnesotans to afford nutritious food and other necessities. This increases the risk for food insecurity, particularly among vulnerable populations. While inflation slowed this past year, Minnesotans may feel the economic impact for years.

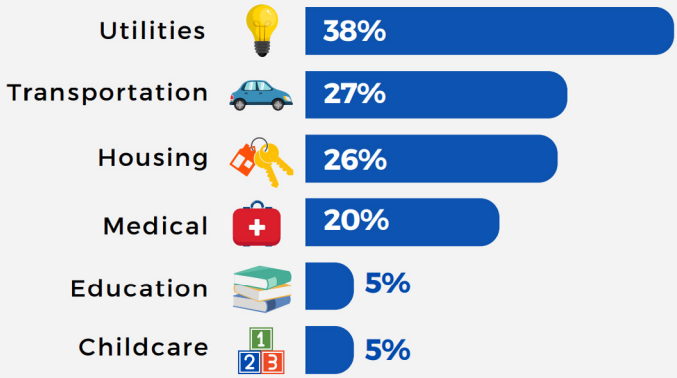


Barriers to Food Access
Many communities are cut off from nutritious, high-quality food. They may not have access to a local grocery store or transportation to get there. In other cases, food access was disrupted by development projects cutting through historically Black and Brown neighborhoods.

Multiyear COVID-19 Impact
There was an increase in federal and state assistance during the pandemic, such as emergency allotments to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). In 2022, that changed as the cost of necessities increased and pandemic assistance decreased. This shift left many Minnesotans feeling the double impact of rising costs and falling food assistance compared to two years ago.

Competing Budget Priorities
Food is often the most flexible line item in a budget when households have competing budget priorities. The 2022 Minnesota Food Shelf Survey looked at responses from 7,014 food shelf visitors statewide. Many participants said they had to choose between spending limited funds on food or other necessities like healthcare, utilities, transportation, and housing.

IN 2022, PEOPLE SAID THEY HAD TO CHOOSE BETWEEN FOOD AND...



Source: https://www.supershelfmn.org/minnesota-statewide-survey

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LOOKING FORWARD

The anti-hunger sector is currently facing significant challenges. The landscape of federal funding for food equity work remains uncertain. Additionally, a budget reconciliation proposal threatens significant cuts to federal funding for the Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program (SNAP).

More than ever, food shelves and programs like SNAP and CEP serve as irreplaceable safeguards against hunger. Alongside our partners, The Food Group is committed to protecting and expanding critical services for food-insecure Minnesotans.

Contact

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