

# Rhode Island Hunger Elimination Task Force

Quarter Four Meeting

**TUESDAY, OCTOBER 18th 2022 @ 2 - 3:30PM**



CENTER FOR  
Science IN THE  
Public Interest  
America's Food and Health Watchdog

CELEBRATING  
50 YEARS



RHODE ISLAND  
FOUNDATION

Henry P. Kendall  
FOUNDATION



ANGELL  
FOUNDATION





A photograph of a garden bed with a wooden border. The bed is filled with green plants and numerous small orange flowers. In the foreground, a green plastic frog figurine with large yellow eyes is visible. A yellow container is also partially visible in the garden bed.

HETF Goal:

**To reduce hunger and  
increase access to healthy,  
culturally-appropriate food  
for all Rhode Island  
residents**



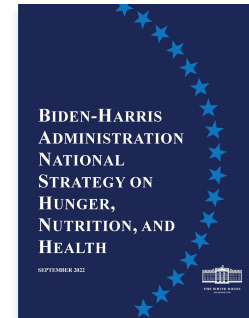
# TODAY'S AGENDA

- Welcome & announcements
- PANEL: *State of Food Security in Rhode Island*
- Breakout session & planning for 2023

*2022 Q4 Hunger Elimination Task Force Meeting*



# Strategic Alignment of RI Food Access Priorities



*2022 Q4 Hunger Elimination Task Force Meeting*



BIDEN-HARRIS  
ADMINISTRATION  
NATIONAL  
STRATEGY ON  
HUNGER,  
NUTRITION, AND  
HEALTH

SEPTEMBER 2022



RHODE ISLAND  
FOOD STRATEGY

PRELIMINARY DRAFT | JANUARY 2017

# STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT OF RI FOOD SECURITY PRIORITIES

- Advance a pathway to free healthy school meals for all
- Leverage housing and other community programs to cross-promote programs and better connect people to local and nutritious foods
- Expand Summer EBT benefits and SNAP eligibility to additional underserved populations
- Increase funding for the Older Americans Act (OAA) nutrition programs
- Make it easier for eligible individuals to access federal food, human services, and health assistance programs such as SNAP, WIC, and Medicaid

*2022 Q4 Hunger Elimination Task Force Meeting*



BIDEN-HARRIS  
ADMINISTRATION  
NATIONAL  
STRATEGY ON  
HUNGER,  
NUTRITION, AND  
HEALTH

SEPTEMBER 2022



RHODE ISLAND  
FOOD STRATEGY

PRELIMINARY DRAFT | JANUARY 2017

# STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT OF RI FOOD SECURITY PRIORITIES

- Modernize federal programs so enrolled individuals can more easily utilize benefits
- Improve access to emergency food, including during natural disasters
- Invest in community and economic development to increase access to food
- Reduce barriers to food recovery through “whole-of-government” strategy to reduce food loss and waste
- Improve transportation options to and from grocery stores, farmers’ markets, and commercial districts
- Increase access to local foods to help increase consumption of fruits, vegetables and other under consumed foods (e.g. farm-to-institutions programs, housing, local food promotion, etc)

*2022 Q4 Hunger Elimination Task Force Meeting*





# STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT OF RI FOOD ACCESS PRIORITIES

- Increase access to local food to better connect people to nutritious foods
- Expand Medicare and Medicaid beneficiaries' access to "food is medicine" interventions
- Expand Nutrition Security Screenings in healthcare settings

2022 Q4 Hunger Elimination Task Force Meeting





RHODE ISLAND  
FOUNDATION

# RI Foundation ARPA Support Grant

*Deadline: February 15, 2023\**

*\*funds will be awarded on a rolling basis, apply early!*

*2022 Q4 Hunger Elimination Task Force Meeting*



## **DATA DASHBOARD PREVIEW**

Food  
Security &  
Access

Agriculture  
& Land Use

Food &  
Climate  
Change

Food  
System  
Economy

Seafood &  
Commercial  
Fisheries





DATA DASHBOARD

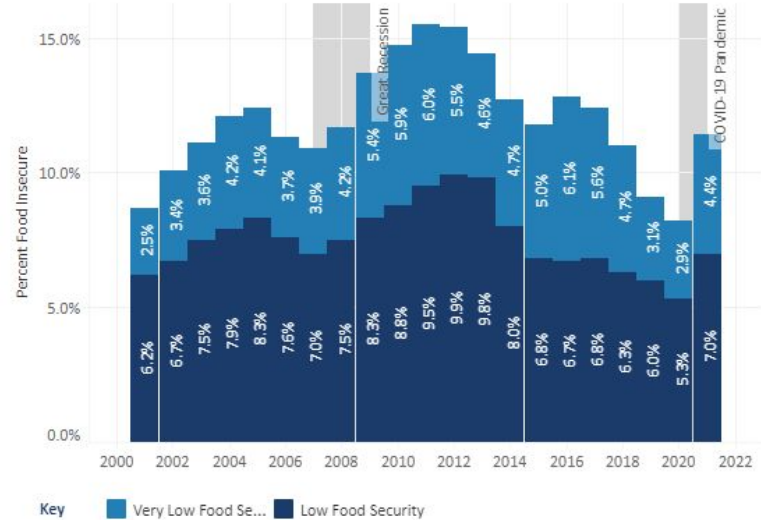
# Food Access and Security



## KEY FACTS

- Trusted sources, clear citations
- Interactive charts
- Regularly updated data
- Simple, easy to understand descriptions
- Equity metrics integrated throughout

## FOOD SECURITY IN RHODE ISLAND



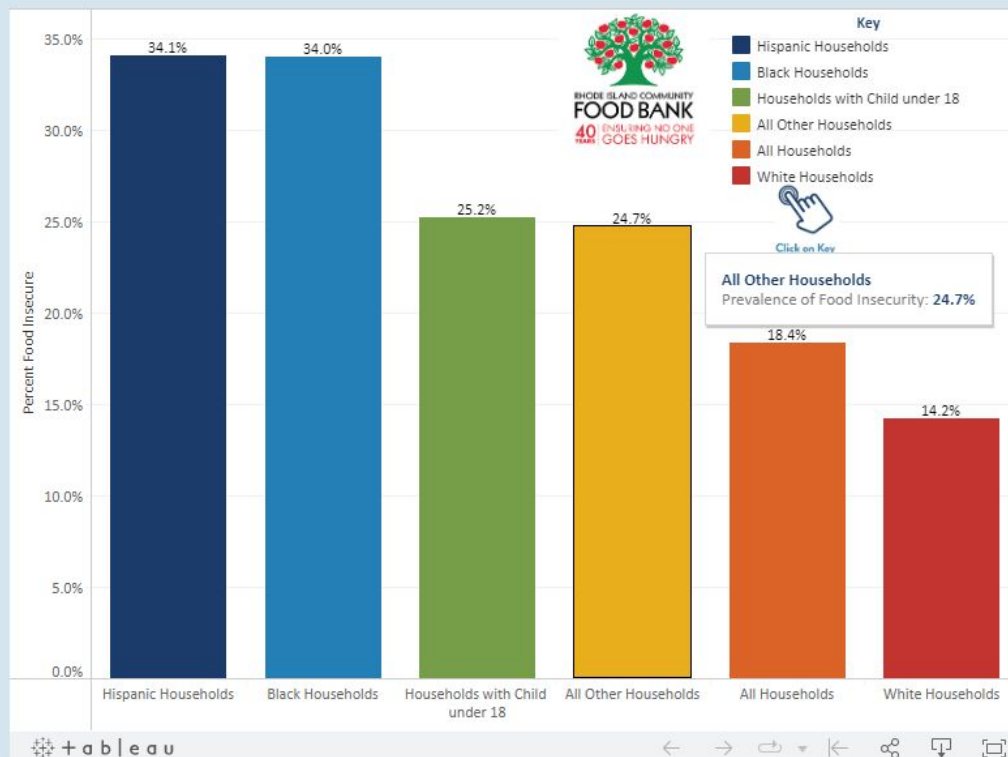
An average of 12% (over 35,000 households) of Rhode Island households were food insecure over the past 20 years. An average of 8% of food insecure households had “low food security,” which is defined as an experience of reduced quality, variety, or desirability of diet. An average of 4% had “very low food security,” which is defined as an experience of multiple indications of disrupted eating patterns and reduced food intake. Food insecurity increased in Rhode Island as a result of the Great Recession and slowly decreased over the course of several years.

**Data Sources:** 2000 through 2020: Alisha Coleman-Jensen, Matthew P. Rabbitt, Christian A. Gregory, and Anita Singh, 2021, [Household Food Security in the United States in 2020](#), ERR-298, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Economic Research Service. Data for 2021 was estimated by [Feeding America](#) and will be updated when new data is available.



Click on the light blue box in the key to see the rates of Very Low Food Security by year.

## FOOD INSECURITY IN RHODE ISLAND BY RACE/ETHNICITY, 2021



Using data from the RI Life Index, the [Rhode Island Community Food Bank](#) estimates higher rates of food insecurity than Feeding America did during the COVID-19 pandemic (18.4% for all households compared to 11.4%). Hispanic and Black households in Rhode Island had more than double the rate of food insecurity than White households.

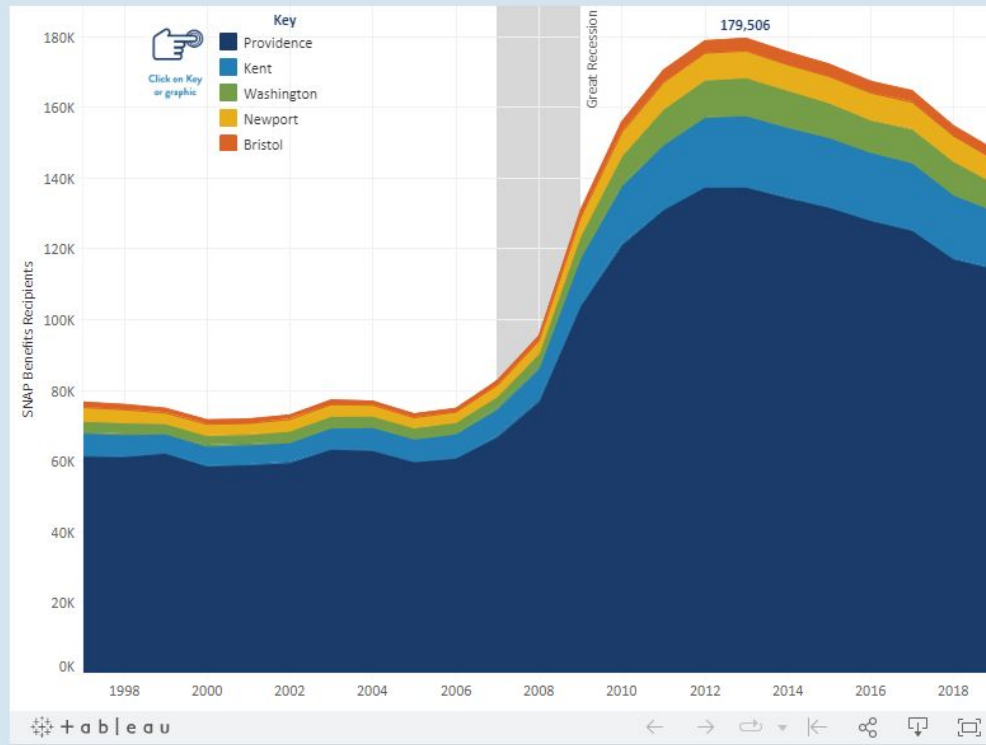
Note: All Other Households include Asian, Indigenous, Hawaiian/Pacific Islanders, and more than one race/ethnicity.

Data Sources: Rhode Island Community Food Bank, [2021 Status Report on Hunger in Rhode Island](#).





## SNAP PARTICIPATION IN RHODE ISLAND BY COUNTY



Explore the data by race/ethnicity by clicking on a color in the Key

The primary Federal program designed to ensure food security is the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, or SNAP.

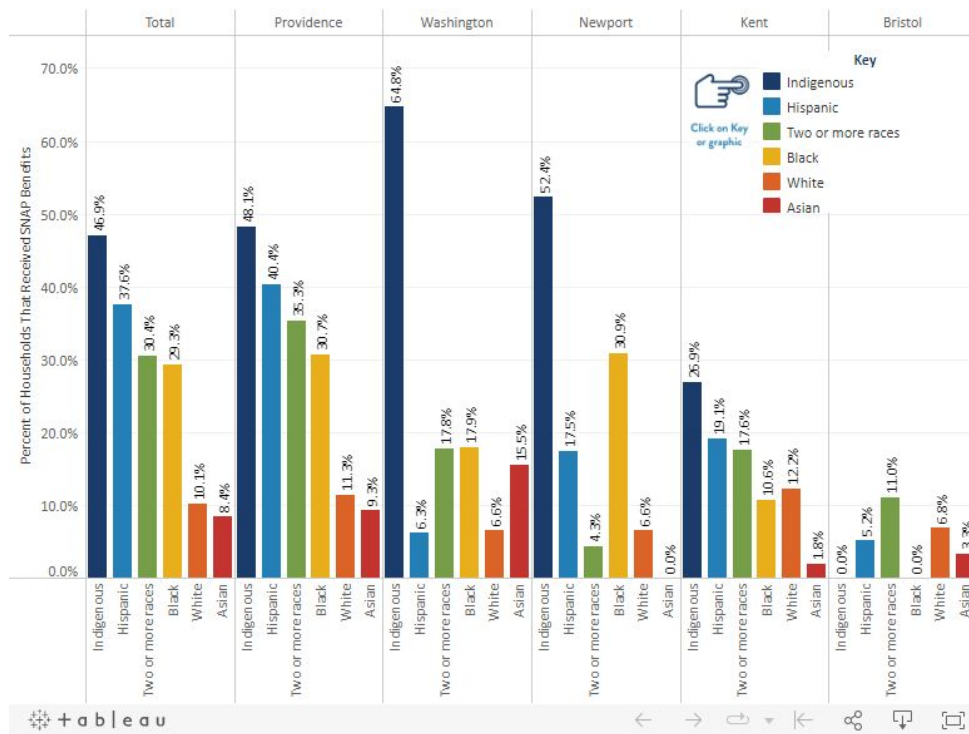
The number of Rhode Island residents receiving SNAP benefits more than doubled during the Great Recession, and has not come down to previous levels since.

Providence County, where most of the state's population lives, has the largest number of SNAP recipients. As of April 2022, about 139,000 Rhode Islanders were receiving SNAP benefits.

**Data Sources:** U.S. Census Bureau, [SNAP Benefits Recipients in Rhode Island](#) [BRRI44M647NCEN], retrieved from FRED, Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis, July 28, 2022.



## SNAP PARTICIPATION IN RHODE ISLAND BY RACE/ETHNICITY



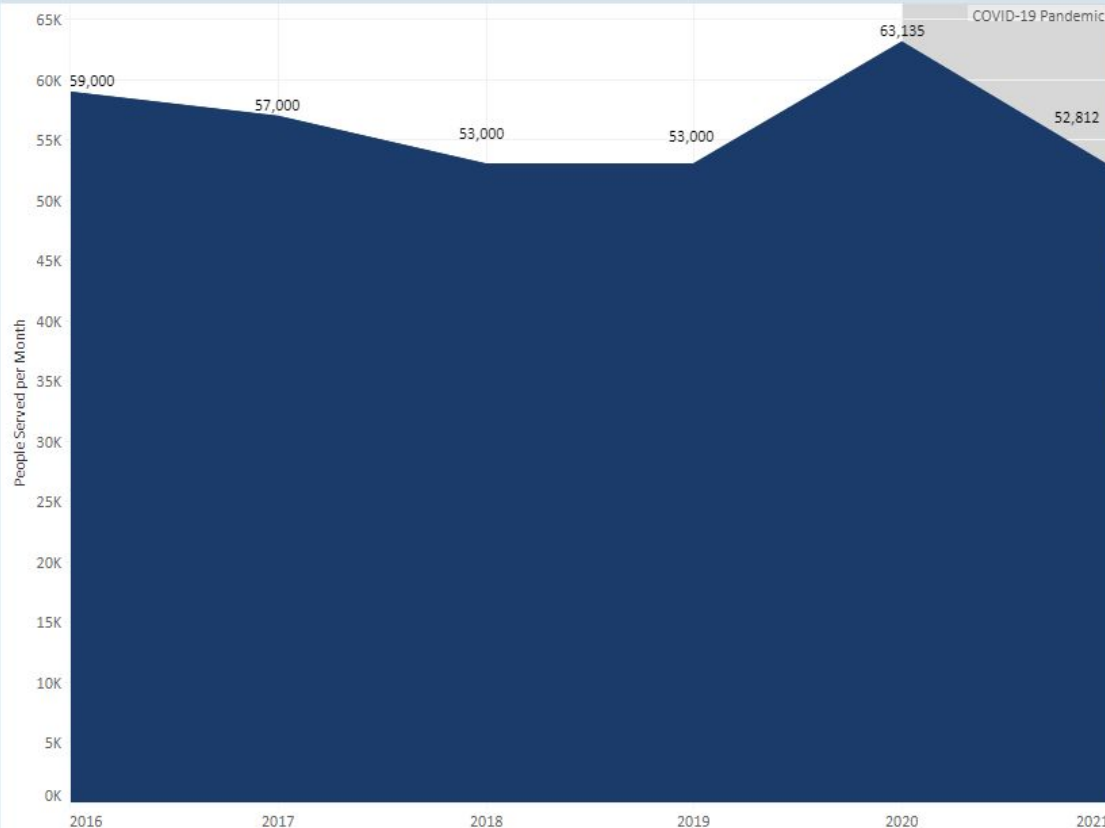
An average of 18% of Rhode Island households received SNAP benefits from 2015 to 2020. This varied widely by race, ethnicity, and location.

Hispanic and Black Rhode Islanders were much more likely to receive SNAP benefits than White Rhode Islanders:

- 37.6% of Hispanic households (19,035 households)
- 29.3% of Black households (7,061 households)
- 10.1% of White households (32,443 households)

23.9% (47,788) of households in Providence County received SNAP benefits, significantly higher than Kent (14.1%, 8,724), Newport (9.1%, 2,907), Washington (7.9%, 3,658) and Bristol (7.2%, 17,729) counties.

**Data Sources:** U.S. Census Bureau (2016-2020), Receipt of Food Stamps/SNAP in the Past 12 Months by Race of Householder, American Community Survey 5-year estimates, Retrieved from <https://censusreporter.org>.



The Rhode Island Community Food Bank is the largest emergency food distributor in the state. They estimate that an average of 56,000 RI residents were served every month by the charitable food system over the past 5 years, including a spike in need at the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. Many other individuals are served by programs outside of the RI Community Food Bank network organizations.

**Data Sources:** Rhode Island Community Food Bank, [2021 Status Report on Hunger in Rhode Island](#).





DATA DASHBOARD

## Food Access and Security



## How YOU can use this data to reach YOUR goals

- Set strategic goals for your organization
- Establish measurable objectives for your projects and programs
- Add to grant proposals
- Make a point during public speaking opportunities
- Support your views in testimony at the state house





# KEY UPDATES

An overview of the current  
landscape of food security in  
Rhode Island

*2022 Q4 Hunger Elimination Task Force Meeting*

# KEY UPDATES

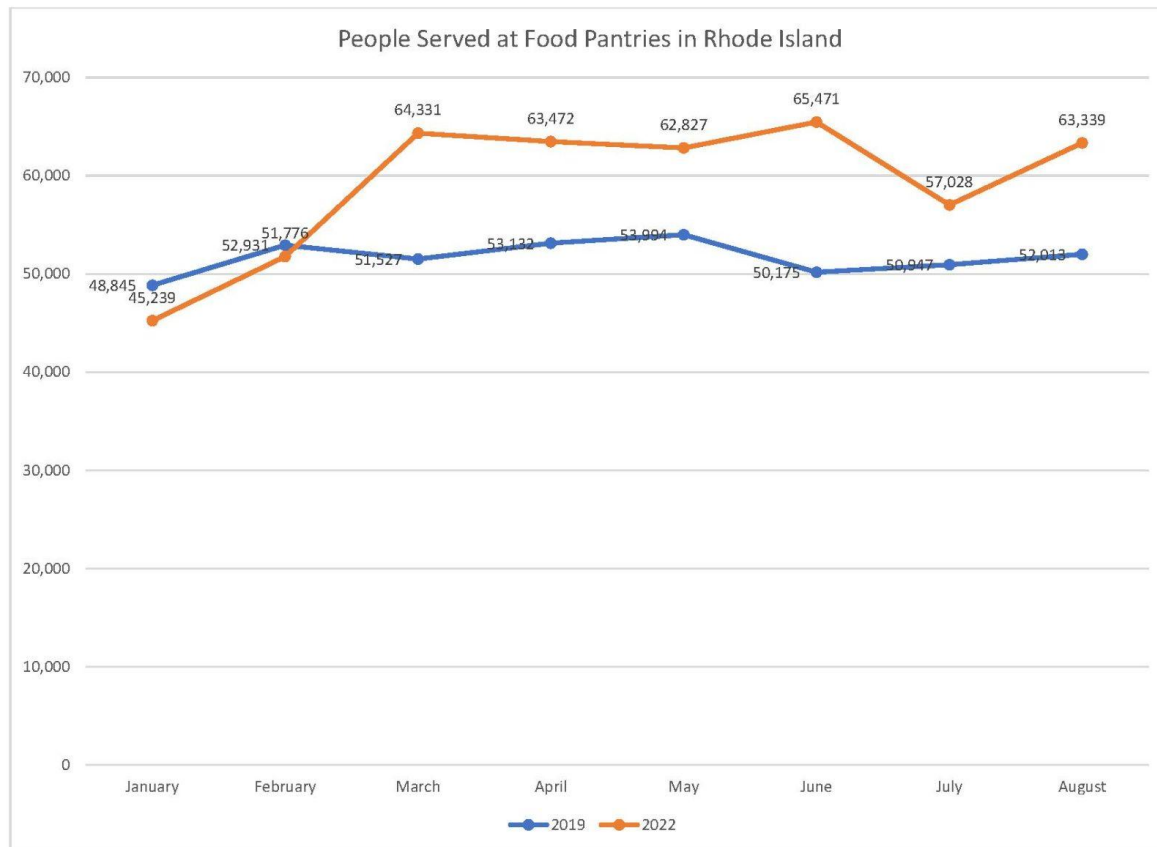
**Andrew Schiff**  
Chief Executive Officer



*2022 Q4 Hunger Elimination Task Force Meeting*



RHODE ISLAND COMMUNITY  
**FOOD BANK**





# KEY UPDATES

**Jessica Patroliia**  
Child Nutrition  
Program Coordinator

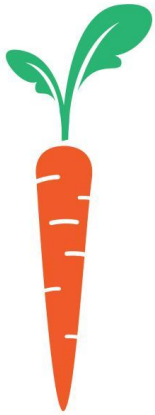


*2022 Q4 Hunger Elimination Task Force Meeting*

# RI Department of Education

## Child Nutrition Programs

Healthy Kids. Healthy Communities. Healthy Rhode Island.



**HEALTHY  
SCHOOL  
MEALS** *fuel for  
success!*

 Healthy Kids. Healthy Communities. Healthy Rhode Island.  
Niños Saludables. Comunidades Saludables. Un Rhode Island Saludable.



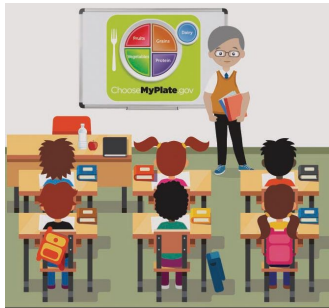
USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer. USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.



# School Meals Program Benefits

## School meals programs improve food security

- Availability of the SBP reduces low and very low food security among elementary school children
- NSLP participation is associated with a 14% reduction in the risk of food insufficiency for households qualifying for F&R meal benefits



*FRAC policy brief – School Meals are Essential for Student Health and Learning – May 2021*

## School meals support good nutrition

- Participants are less likely to have nutrient inadequacies and more likely to consume fruits and veggies at breakfast and lunch
- Researchers have concluded that “school lunches provide superior nutrient quality than lunches obtained from other sources, particularly for low-income children”
- School meal participants have been shown to have better overall dietary quality than non-participants, not just at school but for the entire day







# Program Trends



## **MARCH 2020**

At the start of the pandemic, meals become free for all children and youth age 18 and under. Meals can be served in a grab n' go setting

## **SCHOOL YEAR 2020-2021**

Students continue learn primarily in a virtual setting, meals are free and continue to be offered grab n' go

## **SCHOOL YEAR 2021-2022**

Most students have returned to in-person learning but meals continue to be free for all. Grab n' go meal service is very limited but many schools are using alternate meal service models, like breakfast in the classroom

## **SCHOOL YEAR 2022-2023**

This will be the first year in which meal operations "return to normal." Families must return a meal benefit application and qualify for free meals or have money on account in order to receive a meal

### **Average Daily Participation\***

	Sept 2021	Sept 2022	Variance
<b>Breakfast</b>	15,109	12,370	(2,739)
<b>Lunch</b>	27,770	26,103	(1,667)

**14 Public School Districts & State Schools Reporting\***

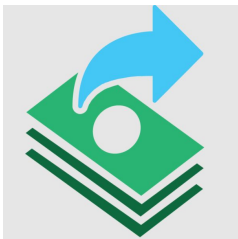




# Trends, Continued



- Return to “traditional” service models
- Confusion among families regarding the return to pricing programs
- Increased administrative burden related to collection and processing of meal benefit applications
- Continued supply chain challenges
- Increased unpaid meal debt
- Decreased number of students eligible for free meals via the electronic direct certification (eDC) process
- Staffing challenges
- Increased interest in the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) or Special Provision 2



# Program Limitations



## Complex regulations and nutrition standards

- Federal – 7 CFR 210, 2 CFR 200
- Local – RIGL & RICR

## Staffing

- Number of staff
- Skill level of staff

## Inadequate facilities

- Physical plant
- Equipment

## Food safety

## Funding

- Reimbursement
- Grant Opportunities

## Local support





# Federal Support



Federal Initiative	Impact
Supply Chain Assistance Funding	\$6.1 million in direct funding to LEAs
Supply Chain Assistance – Local Food Purchasing	\$685,000 in funding used to purchase local foods, provided to LEAs
Local Food for Schools Funding	\$560,000 in funding used to purchase local foods, provided to LEAs
NSLP Equipment Grants	\$177,867 in competitive grant funding for LEAs to support equipment purchases
Farm to School Formula Grant Funding	\$681,901 in State Agency funding to support state-level Farm to school efforts
Keep Kids Fed Act	\$0.40 per meal (breakfast and lunch) additional reimbursement

# Local Priorities

Continued leverage of the statewide foodservice program to:

- Improve the nutritional quality of meals
- Employ a statewide marketing campaign promoting the benefits of school meals
- Reduce food waste and increase focus on sustainability
- Increase local purchasing and reporting

Funding formula reform to allow for increased utilization of CEP\*

Food waste reduction & sustainability initiatives\*

Healthy School Meals for All

Culturally appropriate and relevant school meals

Local food procurement tracking

Sustainable support for farm to school and farm to ECE efforts

State agency coordination on the benefits of federally funded programs

Increased utilization of CACFP at-risk and SFSP to address food insecurity



# Resources



<http://ride.ri.gov/cnp>

## School Breakfast Expansion Toolkit



**RIDE** Rhode Island  
Department of Education

September, 2020



KIDS WIN • FARMERS WIN • COMMUNITIES WIN

<https://rifarmtoschool.org/>



Local Food Ambassador

<https://www.rihsc.org/>



Contact Us:

[www.ride.ri.gov/cnp](http://www.ride.ri.gov/cnp)

[Jessica.Patrolia@ride.ri.gov](mailto:Jessica.Patrolia@ride.ri.gov)





# KEY UPDATES

**Meghan Grady**  
Executive Director  
& RIFPC Council Member

**Shana DeFelice**  
Programs and Mission Impact  
Director



2022 Q4 Hunger Elimination Task Force Meeting

# Food Security & Older Rhode Islanders

**Total population** of older adults (age 60 + ) in RI: **260,106**<sup>1</sup>

Older adults who are **threatened by or experiencing hunger: 32,241** (12.4% of all older Rhode Islanders)<sup>1</sup>

**357, 650 meals were served to 3,029 seniors in 2021**<sup>2</sup>



Photo credit: Meals on Wheels Rhode Island

1. Meals on Wheels America, RI State Fact Sheet, 2021

2. Meals on Wheels RI 2021 Impact Report

# Medically Tailored Meals Program

Medically Tailored Meals are delivered to individuals (seniors, chronically ill) living with recurring and persistent diseases and conditions impacted by nutrition (diabetes, renal disease, cardiac conditions, and others) through a referral from a medical professional or healthcare plan to help them improve their health outcomes.

The meals are prepared by a third-party caterer, Trio Community Meals, and the menu is approved by a registered dietitian nutritionist to reflect appropriate dietary therapy based on evidence-based practice guidelines.

Nutrition education is offered in conjunction with the meals to promote healthy eating and other nutrition-related behaviors conducive to health and well-being.



Photo credit: Trio Community Meals

# KEY UPDATES

**Bethany Caputo**  
**SNAP Administrator**



*2022 Q4 Hunger Elimination Task Force Meeting*

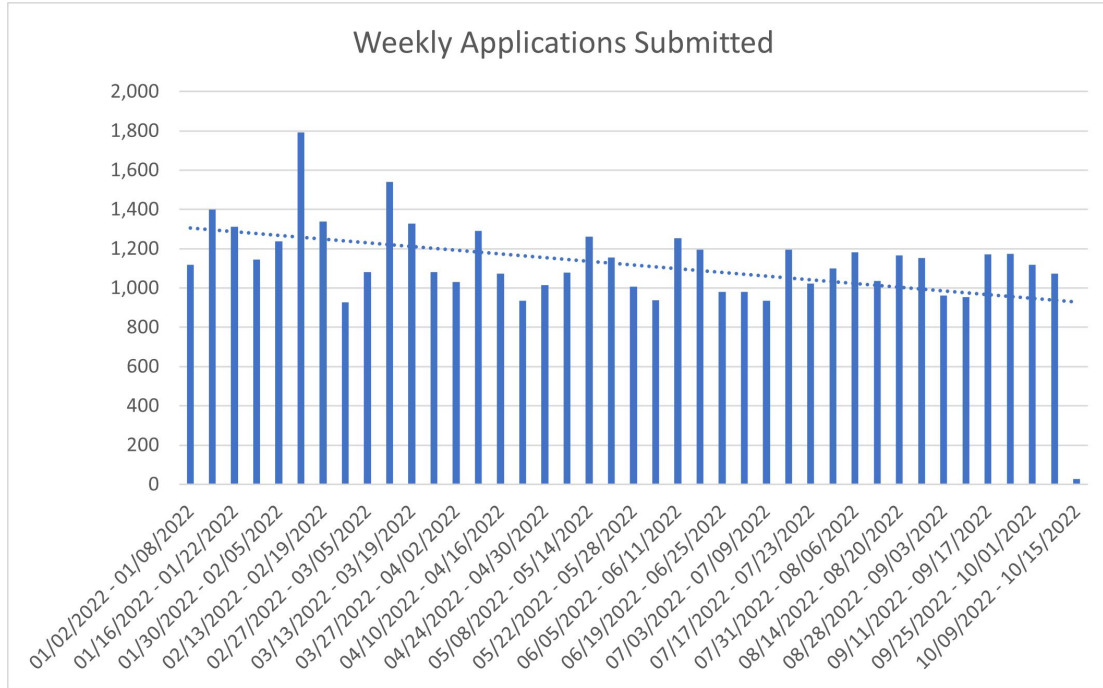




**Hunger Elimination Task Force**  
**Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program**  
**(SNAP)**

**October 2022**

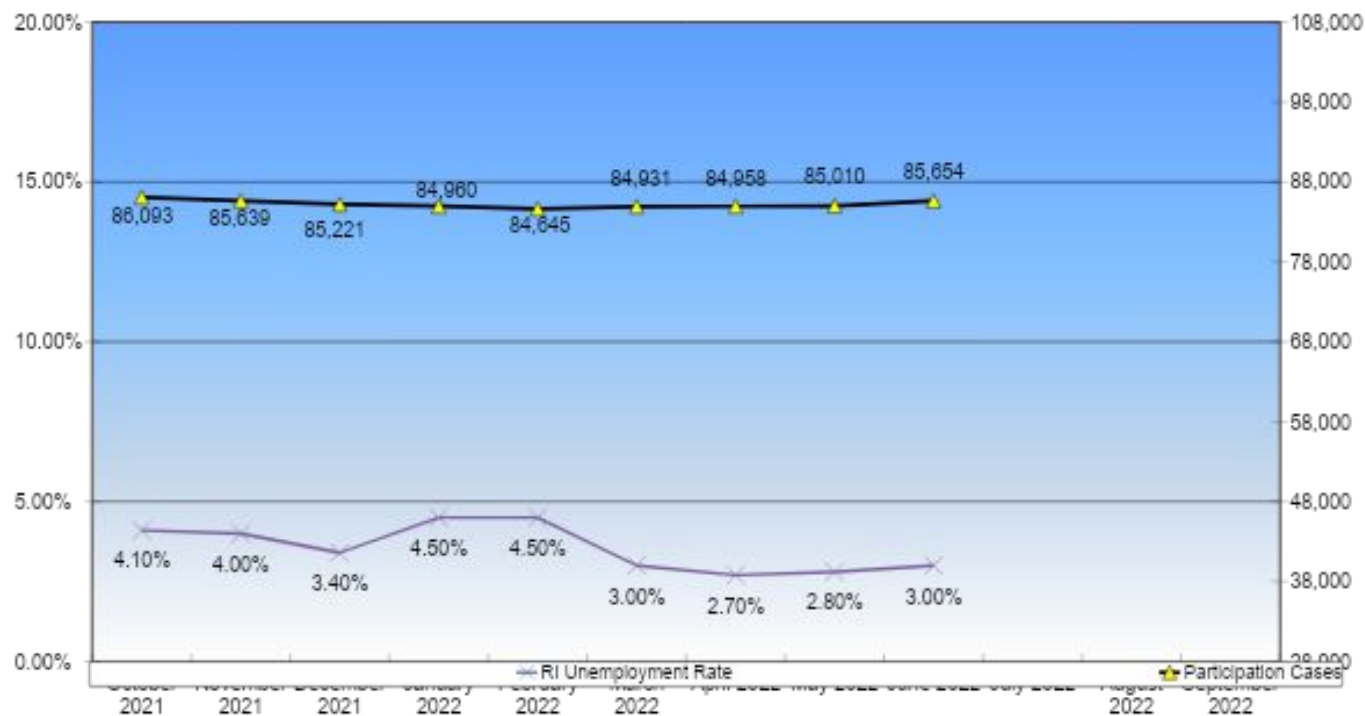
# SNAP Applications Jan 2022 – October 2022



All data is preliminary and subject to change



## SNAP Participation October 2021 - June 2022



# SNAP Demographic Breakdown



## SNAP Quarterly Data Pull

Office of Performance Analytics & Continuous Improvement (OPACI)

### SELECT CITY

All

Dashboard Updated 10/1/2022 11:51:49 AM

Data For Previous Month Relative to Update Dt

Total # of SNAP Recipients 138,259

Total # of SNAP Households 84,891

# of 60+ Individuals Receiving SNAP 32,662

# of 60+ Individuals w/ Medical Deduction Receiving SNAP 14,533

# of Households w/ 60+ Individual Receiving SNAP 30,479

# of 60+ Individuals Living Alone 26,989

# of SNAP Recipients w/ Disability 50,635

# of SNAP Recipients w/ Disability & Medical Deduction 17,971

# of SNAP Recipients Age 0-17 43,309

# of SNAP HOH's w/ At Least One Person Working 13,129

# of Households w/ Senior (60+) & Minor (0-17) In Same Case 429

Average SNAP Benefit per Household \$280

Average SNAP Benefit per 60+ Households \$188

Average SNAP Benefit per 0-17 HHs \$491

# Households w/ \$50+ in SNAP Benefits 78,099

# 60+ Households w/ \$50+ in SNAP Benefits 26,169

# Individuals Attending College 2,423

# SNAP Recipients Age 0-5 11,564

All data is preliminary and subject to change





# SNAP Incentives Program- Eat Well, Be Well Rewards

- SNAP households will receive fifty cents (\$0.50) credit on their electronic benefit transfer (EBT) card for each one dollar (\$1.00) spent on fresh fruits and vegetables at participating retailers, up to \$25 per month (amount may change).
- The incentive earned can be used to purchase any SNAP-eligible food item.
- Design work for the project with the EBT processor and DHS eligibility system has completed and development will begin soon.
- Retailer engagement and recruitment is ongoing, and retailers will likely not be able to participate until March due to technology needs.
- Discussions are ongoing regarding the timeframe of the program based on guidance from the Governor's office.



# Elderly & Disabled Simplified Application Project (ESAP)

- The new Elderly & Disabled Simplified Application Project (ESAP) is tentatively scheduled to begin on December 1, 2022.
- This program simplifies the application process and allows for a longer eligibility period for SNAP applicants and households that meet the following criteria:
  - All members of the household are age 60 or older, receive disability payments regardless of age, or are a combination of both
  - No household members have income from working
- If a household meets the above criteria, ESAP allows for a 36-month certification (previously 24 months for such households) and no interview is required at recertification unless the household is going to be closed, the household requests an interview, or there is questionable information that DHS must resolve with the household.
- The Department will also make every attempt to verify the household's information via data matches rather than requesting verification
- Current households that meet the ESAP criteria will convert to ESAP and receive a notice/stuffer explaining what that means
  - Note: households that have already been mailed a recertification or interim report form will not convert until after those forms are received and processed
- A shortened paper application will also be available. A shortened online application will be developed sometime in 2023.



A large, round pumpkin pie with a golden-brown, fluted crust sits in the center of a rustic wooden table. The pie's filling is a smooth, vibrant orange. Surrounding the pie are several small pumpkins: one orange and one white on the left, and another orange one at the bottom right. Scattered around the pie and pumpkins are several autumn leaves in shades of brown, orange, and red. The text "Thank you! Questions?" is overlaid in white on the pie.

# Thank you! Questions?

For additional questions, contact:

Bethany Caputo: [Bethany.Caputo@dhs.ri.gov](mailto:Bethany.Caputo@dhs.ri.gov)

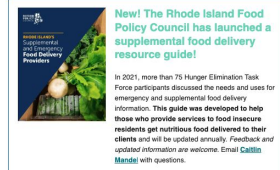




# Reviewing HETF 2022 & Planning for 2023



August 2022  
State Updates · Community Program and Project Highlights · RI Hunger Elimination Task Force Meeting Information · Events & Opportunities



RI Food Access Bulletin Launched in July 2022



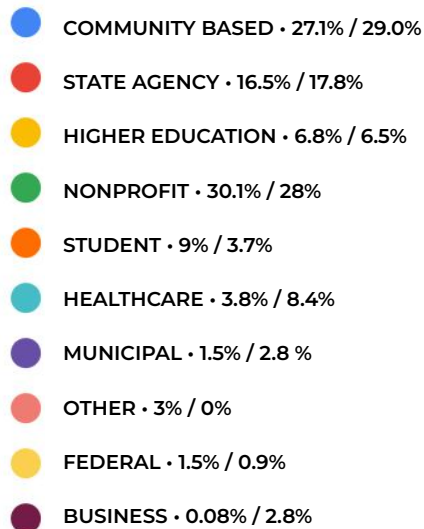
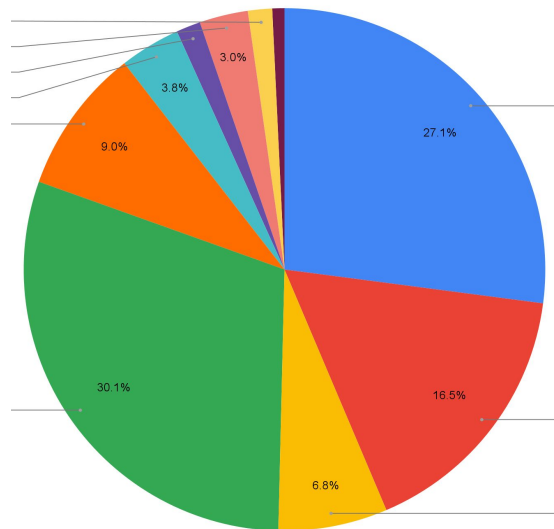
RI Supplemental and Emergency Food Delivery Providers List published in August 2022

2022 Q4 Hunger Elimination Task Force Meeting

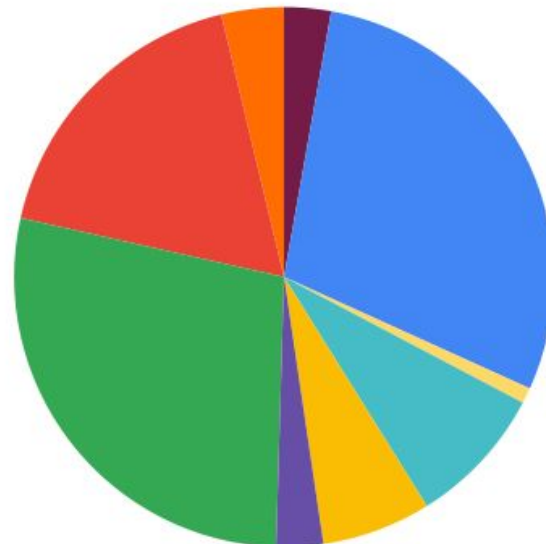


# HETF ATTENDANCE 2021 v 2022, BY CATEGORY

2021: **134**  
INDIVIDUALS TOTAL



2022: **152**  
INDIVIDUALS TOTAL



*2022 Q4 Hunger Elimination Task Force Meeting*





**Nessa Richman**, RIFPC Network Director,  
[nessa@rifoodcouncil.org](mailto:nessa@rifoodcouncil.org)

**Caitlin Mandel**, Food Access & Equity  
Program Manager  
[caitlin@rifoodcouncil.org](mailto:caitlin@rifoodcouncil.org)

**Randi Belhumeur**, RIDOH  
[randi.belhumeur@health.ri.gov](mailto:randi.belhumeur@health.ri.gov)

**Juli Stelmaszyk**, Commerce RI  
[julianne.stelmaszyk@commerceri.com](mailto:julianne.stelmaszyk@commerceri.com)

---

[www.rifoodcouncil.org](http://www.rifoodcouncil.org)  
Interact & advocate with us @rifoodcouncil

