

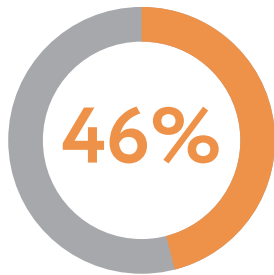
FOOD4ALL SNAPSHOT:

NO EXCEPTIONS. NO EXCLUSIONS. NO DELAYS.

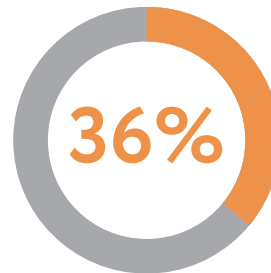
California has the world's fourth largest economy -- and is home to millions of people affected by food insecurity, including more than 1.6 million immigrants.¹

Undocumented Californians face xenophobic policies, structural racism, and unjust exclusion from safety net programs, all of which limit access to the food they need.²

FOOD INSECURITY & UNDOCUMENTED IMMIGRANTS IN CALIFORNIA³



of undocumented immigrants **AGES 0-54** are affected by food insecurity



of undocumented immigrants **AGES 55 AND OLDER** are affected by food insecurity



NEARLY ONE IN FIVE undocumented immigrants identify as Asian



THREE IN FOUR undocumented immigrants identify as Latinx



ONE IN THREE undocumented immigrants live in households with income below the federal poverty line

“In 2018 I was unfairly fired from my job of six years because of health complications that forced me to stay home for a couple of days. Because of this, I struggled financially and had to use all of my credit cards to pay for rent, bills, and food.”
- Graciela, age 60, undocumented immigrant affected by food insecurity
Los Angeles, CA

(3) Throughout this snapshot, the term “undocumented immigrants” refers to non-citizens without legal permanent resident status, which includes all undocumented immigrants but is not exclusive to undocumented immigrants. For instance, this definition includes individuals such as refugees and asylees.

See **Technical Notes** for citation, methodological details, and data sources.

EFFECTS OF FOOD INSECURITY AND SAFETY NET PROGRAMS



FOOD INSECURITY

- More likely to affect households with low income, given limited financial resources to afford food and other basic needs.⁴
- Associated with negative physical and mental health outcomes for individuals **of all ages**.⁵
- Can impair cognitive development and affect academic achievement for children.⁶

CALFRESH

- Associated with:
 - improved food security
 - positive health outcomes
 - increased economic security⁷
- Prevented poverty among one million Californians in 2021.⁸



IMMIGRANTS AND RACIAL EQUITY

California immigrants contribute to the rich diversity of the state with respect to race, ethnicity, country of birth, and other identities.⁹ The vast majority of California immigrants were born in Latin America or Asia.¹⁰ Existing research demonstrates that immigration status, in addition to race and ethnicity, is associated with higher rates of food insecurity among immigrants in California.¹¹ Those higher rates are tied to factors such as income and

education,¹² which are rooted in public policies that perpetuate systemic barriers for immigrants and people of color.

Ending exclusionary policies that keep immigrant Californians from meeting their basic needs is one critical avenue to addressing racial inequities in food insecurity and related outcomes.

“The most difficult thing is having to eliminate things so you can make ends meet. When shopping for meat is really expensive, you have to cut out certain things you like to eat and buy what you can afford.”

- Immigrant community member, Central Valley, CA

LEARN MORE AT
[HTTPS://BIT.LY/CAFOOD4ALL](https://bit.ly/cafood4all)



TECHNICAL NOTES: ABOUT THE SNAPSHOT DATA

Source

The 2017-2020 California Health Interview Survey (CHIS), a statewide representative survey conducted by the UCLA Center for Health Policy Research.

Food insecurity

CHIS assesses food insecurity among households with income below 200% of the official federal poverty threshold. Food insecurity can also affect households with higher incomes.¹³ Therefore, these estimates may not capture the full prevalence of food insecurity.

Poverty

The snapshot's poverty estimate is based on the official federal poverty threshold as defined by the US Census Bureau, which does not take into account a localized cost of living and has been shown to underestimate levels of need in California.¹⁴ Consequently, this estimate of undocumented immigrants with household income below the federal poverty threshold likely does not describe the full extent of poverty among undocumented immigrants in our state.

Race & ethnicity

This analysis used several racial/ethnic categories: Latino, White (non-Latino), Black or African American (non-Latino), American-Indian/Alaska Native (non-Latino), Asian (non-Latino), Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander (non-Latino), and Two or More Races (non-Latino). The categories are based on standards set by the US Office of Management Budget (OMB).¹⁵ For this analysis "Hispanic or Latino" was treated as a racial identity rather than an ethnic identity that could be paired with any of the racial categories. This snapshot reports data deemed stable according to the CHIS guideline of having a coefficient of variation below 30%. For the analysis by race/ethnicity, only estimates for the Latino and Asian groups met this guideline.

For the analysis reported in this snapshot, data limitations did not allow for the disaggregation of race/ethnicity into subgroups. Nourish California and the California Immigrant Policy Center recognize the fundamental importance of disaggregating racial/ethnic data in order to accurately assess outcomes and identify inequities. Existing research shows significant disparities exist for multiple outcomes across racial/ethnic subgroups within the broader OMB race categories.¹⁶ For instance, in 2019 Asian Americans as a whole experienced poverty at a rate three percentage points lower than the national average, but "Mongolian and Burmese had the highest poverty rates among all Asian origin groups, at 25% -- more than twice the national average and about four times the poverty rates among Indians (6%).¹⁷

CITATION: FOOD4ALL SNAPSHOT

- (1) UCLA Center for Health Policy Research. AskCHIS 2021. Food security (ability to afford enough food) by citizenship and immigration status. <https://ask.chis.ucla.edu/>. Accessed April 26, 2023.
California Budget and Policy Center. <https://calbudgetcenter.org/news/california-set-to-become-worlds-4th-largest-economy-who-is-left-out>
- (2) Nourish California. Food Insecurity Among Undocumented Immigrants in California & Exclusion from Nutrition Assistance Programs. <https://nourishca.org/food4all-briefs/>
- (4) Coleman-Jensen, Alisha, Matthew P. Rabbitt, Christian A. Gregory, Anita Singh, September 2022. Household Food Security in the United States in 2021, ERR-309, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Economic Research Service.
Alein Y. Haro-Ramos and Adrian M. Bacong, Prevalence and risk factors of food insecurity among Californians during the COVID-19 pandemic: Disparities by immigration status and ethnicity, Preventive Medicine, Volume 164, 2022. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ypmed.2022.107268>
- (5) Steven Carlson and Joseph Llobrera. Center on Budget and Policy Priorities. SNAP Is Linked with Improved Nutritional Outcomes and Lower Health Care Costs, December 2022. <https://www.cbpp.org/research/food-assistance/snap-is-linked-with-improved-health-outcomes-and-lower-health-care-costs>. Accessed April 2023.
Craig Gundersen and James P. Ziliak. Food Insecurity And Health Outcomes, Health Affairs 2015 34:11, 1830-1839. <https://www.healthaffairs.org/doi/10.1377/hlthaff.2015.0645>. Accessed March 2022.
Lacko, A. M., & Henchy, G. (2021). Hunger, Poverty, and Health Disparities During COVID-19 and the Federal Nutrition Programs' Role in an Equitable Recovery. Washington, DC: Food Research & Action Center.
- (6) Ibid
- (7) Steven Carlson and Joseph Llobrera. December 2022.
Lacko, A. M., & Henchy, G. 2021.
- (8) Caroline Danielson, Patricia Malagon, and Sarah Bohn. Public Policy Institute of California. Poverty in California. <https://www.ppic.org/publication/poverty-in-california/>
- (9) Migration Policy Institute. <https://www.migrationpolicy.org/data/state-profiles/state/demographics/CA>
- (10) Ibid
- (11) Alein Y. Haro-Ramos, Adrian M. Bacong, 2022.
- (12) Ibid
- (13) Analyses of food insecurity among households with higher income are uncommon. However, an analysis of the Los Angeles County Health Survey found that among households with income below 300% of the federal poverty level, more than 13 percent are food insecure. (Los Angeles County Department of Public Health, Office of Health Assessment and Epidemiology, Food Insecurity in Los Angeles County, September 2017. http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/docs/LaHealth_FoodInsecurity_final_yr2017.pdf). Similarly, a nationwide analysis by the United States Department of Agriculture found that food insecurity "did not decline to negligible levels until income rose to about five times the poverty threshold" or 500% FPL. (Food Insecurity in Higher Income Households, Nord, M., and C. Brent. Food Insecurity in Higher Income Households, E-FAN-02-016, USDA, ERS, September 2002)
- (14) John Creamer, Emily A. Shriver, Kalee Burns, and Frances Chen, U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Reports, P60-277, Poverty in the United States: 2021, U.S. Government Publishing Office, Washington, DC, September 2022.
- (15) U.S. Census Bureau. About the Topic of Race. <https://www.census.gov/topics/population/race/about.html>. Accessed April 26, 2023.
- (16) José J. Escarce et al., The Health Status and Health Behaviors of Hispanics, in Hispanics and the Future of America, ch. 9 (Marta Tienda & Faith Mitchell eds. 2006), <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK19899/>.
Abby Budiman & Neil G. Ruiz, Key Facts about Asian Origin Groups in the U.S., Pew Research Ctr. (Apr. 29, 2021), <https://www.pewresearch.org/short-reads/2021/04/29/key-facts-about-asian-origin-groups-in-the-u-s/>.
- (17) Abby Budiman & Neil G. Ruiz. April 2021.