

# Massachusetts

## Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program

January 15th, 2021



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

### Whom Does SNAP Reach?

In fiscal year 2019,<sup>a</sup> it reached:

- **760,000** Massachusetts residents, or **11%** of the state population (**1 in 9**)
- **38,000,000** participants in the United States, or **12%** of the total population (**1 in 9**)

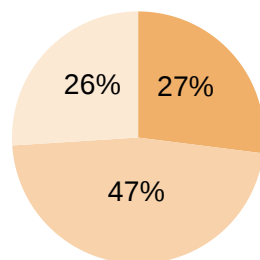
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|----------------------|---|---|--|
| <b>MASSACHUSETTS</b> | more than <b>53%</b> of SNAP participants are in families with children | almost <b>51%</b> are in families with members who are elderly or have disabilities | more than <b>32%</b> are in working families |
| <b>NATIONALLY</b>    | more than <b>66%</b> of SNAP participants are in families with children | almost <b>36%</b> are in families with members who are elderly or have disabilities | almost <b>42%</b> are in working families    |

Source: CBPP analysis of data from USDA Food and Nutrition Service, FY 2019

#### Most SNAP Participants in Massachusetts Are Poor

Share of participants by household income, FY 2019

- Income at or below 50% of poverty
- Income between 51-100% of poverty
- Income above 100% of poverty



Source: CBPP analysis of data from USDA Food and Nutrition Service, FY 2019

#### Many Massachusetts households struggle to put food on the table. The most recent data show:

- **8.4%** of households were “food insecure,” or struggled to afford a nutritionally adequate diet.
- Median income was **11.4% above** the 2007 level, after adjusting for inflation.
- **9.4%** of the population lived below the poverty line.
- **11.6%** of children lived below the poverty line.
- **9.1%** of elderly lived below the poverty line.

**SNAP reaches needy populations: 92%** of eligible individuals participated in SNAP in **Massachusetts** in 2017, and **64%** of eligible workers participated.

SNAP kept **133,000** people out of poverty in **Massachusetts**, including **46,000** children, per year between 2013 and 2017, on average. (These figures adjust for households' underreporting of benefits.)

## What Benefits Do SNAP Recipients Receive?

SNAP targets benefits according to need. Very poor households receive more SNAP benefits than households closer to the poverty line since they need more help affording an adequate diet. SNAP recipients in [Massachusetts](#) received **\$1.13 billion** in benefits in 2019.<sup>a</sup>



Fiscal Year 2019

Average monthly SNAP benefit for each household member:

**\$134**

Average SNAP benefit per person per meal:

**\$1.36**

## Average Monthly SNAP Benefit By Demographic Group, FY 2019, Massachusetts

All Households

\$205

Households with children

\$343

Working households

\$240

Households with seniors

\$142

Households with non-elderly disabled individuals

\$182

Source: CBPP analysis of data from USDA Food and Nutrition Service, FY 2019

## How Does SNAP Benefit the Economy?

Moody's Analytics estimates that in a weak economy, \$1 in SNAP benefits generates \$1.70 in economic activity. Households receive SNAP benefits on electronic benefit transfer (EBT) cards, which can be used only to purchase food at one of about **247,600** authorized retail locations around the country, including some **5,300** in [Massachusetts](#).



**For more information on SNAP, including Massachusetts-specific information, please see:**

Center on Budget and Policy Priorities Chart Book: <https://www.cbpp.org/research/food-assistance/chart-book-snap-helps-struggling-families-put-food-on-the-table>

USDA SNAP data: <http://www.fns.usda.gov/pd/supplemental-nutrition-assistance-program-snap>

Massachusetts SNAP program: <http://www.mass.gov/snap>

Advocates: Massachusetts Law Reform Institute, [www.mlri.org](http://www.mlri.org), Children's HealthWatch,

[www.childrenshealthwatch.org](http://www.childrenshealthwatch.org)

<sup>a</sup> Published SNAP participation data from USDA are adjusted for January and February 2019 to account for early issuance of February 2019 benefits in January 2019. Published benefit data from USDA have not been adjusted.