

Massachusetts

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program

December 3rd, 2018



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

Whom Does SNAP Reach?

In Fiscal Year 2017, it reached:

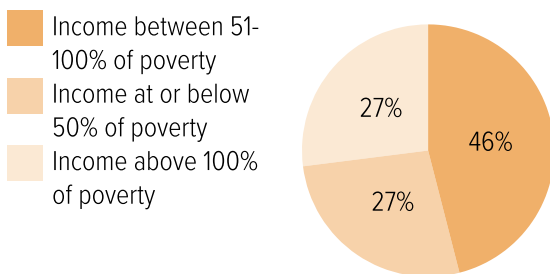
- **764,000** Massachusetts residents, or **11%** of the state population (**1 in 9**)
- **42,000,000** participants in the United States, or **13%** of the total population (**1 in 8**)

MASSACHUSETTS	more than 56% of SNAP participants are in families with children	almost 49% are in families with members who are elderly or have disabilities	more than 32% are in working families
NATIONALLY	more than 68% of SNAP participants are in families with children	almost 33% are in families with members who are elderly or have disabilities	more than 44% are in working families

Source: CBPP analysis of data from USDA Food and Nutrition Service, FY 2017

Most SNAP Participants in Massachusetts Are Poor

Share of participants by household income, FY 2017



Source: CBPP analysis of FY 2017 USDA SNAP Household Characteristics data

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

- **10.2%** of households were “food insecure,” or struggled to afford a nutritionally adequate diet.
- Median income was **4.7% above** the 2007 level, after adjusting for inflation.
- **10.5%** of the population lived below the poverty line.
- **13.5%** of children lived below the poverty line.
- **9%** of elderly lived below the poverty line.

SNAP reaches needy populations: **82%** of eligible individuals participated in SNAP in **Massachusetts** in 2015, and **62%** of eligible workers participated.

SNAP kept **141,000** people out of poverty in **Massachusetts**, including **57,000** children, per year between 2009 and 2012, 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 \$1.16 billion in benefits in 2017.



Fiscal Year 2017

Average monthly SNAP benefit for each household member:

\$126

Average SNAP benefit per person per meal:

\$1.38

Average Monthly SNAP Benefit By Demographic Group, FY 2017, Massachusetts

All Households

\$211

Households with children

\$342

Working households

\$261

Households with seniors

\$142

Households with non-elderly disabled individuals

\$186

Source: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Office of Research and Analysis, "Characteristics of Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Households: Fiscal Year 2017"

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 the [263,100](#) authorized retail locations around the country, including some [5,600](#) 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>