

Tennessee

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,^a it reached:

- **903,000** Tennessee residents, or **13%** of the state population (**1 in 8**)
- **38,000,000** participants in the United States, or **12%** of the total population (**1 in 9**)

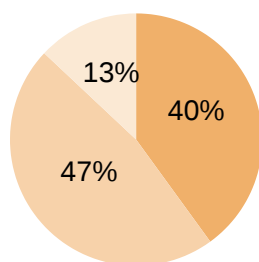
TENNESSEE	almost 71% of SNAP participants are in families with children	almost 35% are in families with members who are elderly or have disabilities	more than 33% are in working families
NATIONALLY	more than 66% of SNAP participants are in families with children	almost 36% are in families with members who are elderly or have disabilities	almost 42% are in working families

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

Most SNAP Participants in Tennessee 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 Tennessee households struggle to put food on the table. The most recent data show:

- **12.5%** of households were “food insecure,” or struggled to afford a nutritionally adequate diet.
- Median income was **7.1% above** the 2007 level, after adjusting for inflation.
- **13.9%** of the population lived below the poverty line.
- **19.7%** of children lived below the poverty line.
- **9.7%** of elderly lived below the poverty line.

SNAP reaches needy populations: 92% of eligible individuals participated in SNAP in **Tennessee** in 2017, and **81%** of eligible workers participated.

SNAP kept **151,000** people out of poverty in **Tennessee**, including **65,000** 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 Tennessee received **\$1.31 billion** in benefits in 2019.^a



Fiscal Year 2019

Average monthly SNAP benefit for each household member:

\$131

Average SNAP benefit per person per meal:

\$1.32

Average Monthly SNAP Benefit By Demographic Group, FY 2019, Tennessee

All Households

\$246

Households with children

\$414

Working households

\$318

Households with seniors

\$87

Households with non-elderly disabled individuals

\$167

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 6,300 in Tennessee.



For more information on SNAP, including Tennessee-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>

Tennessee SNAP program: <https://www.tn.gov/humanservices/for-families/supplemental-nutrition-assistance-program-snap.html>

^a 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.