

UNITED WAY OF PALM BEACH COUNTY

- *Feeding America Map the Meal Gap* food insecurity projections for Palm Beach County show that Palm Beach County Food Insecurity numbers are back to pre-pandemic levels and slightly lower.

Palm Beach County Food Insecurity Projections*			
	2019	2020	2021
Number of Food Insecure Residents	184,000	199,800	181,340
Number of Food Insecure Children	53,000	59,740	52,580

*On 3/24/21, Feeding America released this file with new projections for 2021 and revised projections for 2020. This file replaces revised projections for 2020 that were released in October 2020. On 4/12/21 Feeding America updated this file to include the recommended citation. Gundersen, C., M. Hake, A. Dewey, E. Engelhard (2021). *The Impact of the Coronavirus on Food Insecurity in 2020 & 2021, Update March 2021 [Data file and FAQ]*. Available from Feeding America: research@feedingamerica.org.

- **Food Finder Map**

An interactive tool developed by United Way of Palm Beach County Hunger Relief using Google Maps to help people easily locate free food and hot meals in Palm Beach County. This online tool was created to connect individuals seeking food resources to sites near them. Information is English, Spanish, and Creole. United Way updates the information listed on this map weekly. However, locations and hours of distribution may change. Please consider calling the site prior to visiting to verify information listed. Please note that sites may have specific requirements such as ID. Please visit <https://unitedwaypbc.org/hunger/> to view the map. As of the end of September 2021, there were nearly 125,000 visits to the Food Finder Map.

- **Hunger Relief Department**

Hunger Relief staff are partnering with community partners within and outside our network to address short term, midterm, and long-term needs of the Palm Beach County communities. We are staying nimble so we can proactively identify needs, address needs as they arise, prepare for expected and unexpected needs, and find and/or create solutions. We are also tracking information and data available through our networks and partnerships. Hunger Relief for United Way of Palm Beach County continues to track and coordinate food distribution with Farm Share, PBC Food Bank, Feeding South Florida, Area Agency on Aging and approximately 100 food pantries that are operating throughout the county. Hunger Relief is expanding its staff and has hired a Senior Director for Hunger Relief, who will start on October 25, 2021.

CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19)

- **COVID-19 PSAs**

United Way of Palm Beach County, in partnership with Palm Beach County, Florida Department of Health, and 2-1-1, developed a Public Service Announcement (PSA) tool to educate the community about key information regarding COVID-19 and connect them with resources offered in the County. The PSA is available in English, Spanish, and Creole and can be used widely by organizations such as businesses, food distribution sites, and social service agencies.

CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

- **Childhood Work Group**

- *The Alliance for Eating Disorders Awareness* presented at the September 23, 2021, Palm Beach County Hunger Relief Childhood Work Group Meeting. It was brought to the group’s attention that eating disorders have increased greatly during the COVID-19 pandemic, especially among children. A Duke University article about eating disorders and food insecurity, *Food Insecurity + Eating Disorders – How Poverty Impacts the Expression of Eating Disorders* was shared with the group.

Hunger Relief staff shared this article was shared with policymakers at the State level and it will be addressed in the upcoming Child Nutrition Reauthorization Act.

- Summer 2021 final Summer Meals numbers will be available in November 2021.

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- **0-4 Subcommittee (Childhood Work Group)**

WIC Outreach Plan.

- Working with the 0-4 subcommittee to continue to implement the WIC Outreach Plan. The plan focuses on increasing awareness about the various services offered to low-income pregnant, breastfeeding, and non-breastfeeding, postpartum women and infants and children up to age five through different outreach methods.
 - Completed Women Infants and Children (WIC) Overview Video, “What is WIC”. To learn about WIC and find a local WIC office near you, please visit <https://unitedwaypbc.org/hunger/>
 - Created WIC palm card in English, Spanish, and Creole. Printing and distribution will be in November 2021.
- Child Care Food Program (CCFP) Outreach
- Identified and mapped high need census tract areas and childcare centers in zip codes 33407, 33404, 33444, and 33463. Family Central reached out to the 15 identified centers. Due to multiple challenges with issues related to the pandemic the sites are not able to participate at this time. However, we continue to work with them.

- **Weekend Backpack Subcommittee (Childhood Work Group)**

Grant received by UWPBC Hunger Relief from The Jim Moran Foundation (third year of multi-year grant) to continue support of the Family Weekend Backpack Program in 2021–2022:

- Supports 787 children in The Glades every week for 39 weeks of the 2021-2022 school year in The Glades.

Grant received by UWPBC Hunger Relief from The Batchelor Foundation (third year securing grant):

- Serves 96 children in Lake Worth for 39 weeks during the 2021-2022 school year.

More than 59 locations received Weekend Backpacks for school year 2020-2021, serving 6,359 children for an average of 25 weeks. (Number includes children funded by The Jim Moran Foundation and The Batchelor Foundation.)

- **Year-Round Meal Program**

Grant received by UWPBC Hunger Relief from The Frederick A. DeLuca Foundation:

- FLIPANY engaged 48 year-round Grab ‘n Go sites and onboarded three sites in the Afterschool Meals program.
- The City of Greenacres Community Center began programming on the first calendar school day, Tuesday, August 10th, 2021, marking FLIPANY’s first location in Palm Beach County to operate under AMP. Pahokee Deliverance and The Duo Center are scheduled to start on Monday, October 4th, 2021. Anticipate serving 120 children afterschool meals.
- Served 3,738 children year-round Grab ‘n Go meals during the 2020-2021 past fiscal year, including the school year through for a total of 308,220 meals served.
- Weekend backpacks were provided to 850 children.
- Provided 20 nutrition education workshops to 472 children in summer 2021.

- **Mobile Summer Meal Program**

Grant received by UWPBC Hunger Relief from Children’s Services Council of Palm Beach County (year one of three year grant; second time receiving a multi-year grant):

- FLIPANY served 19,833 meals to 315 children in The Glades during summer 2021 through their Mobile Summer Meal Program.
- Provided nutrition education workshops to 120 children.

- **School Meals**

Served 7,093,885 through October 8, 2021.

- **School District of Palm Beach County**

Breakfast and Lunch meals are **Free** to ALL District students every school day in 2021-2022!

SENIORS

- **Area Agency on Aging**

The Area Agency on Aging (AAA) and their providers at The Volen Center and Palm Beach County Division of Senior Services routinely provide a full complement of services such as senior centers, adult day care, congregate food sites, social support, transportation, telephone reassurance, counseling, and in-home services. During COVID-19, the Aging Network Providers throughout Palm Beach and Treasure Coast continue to solve many challenges experienced by seniors, including food.

AAA adapted to changes to service delivery requirements including assessments, nutrition requirements, meal packaging and recordkeeping.

New nutrition services were offered by AAA and their partners including shopping assistance, telephone reassurance, and Ruth and Norman Rales Jewish Family Services expanding their kosher home-delivered meals.

- **Drop and Go Meals**

The partnership between Area Agency on Aging, The Volen Center, and Palm Beach County Division of Senior Services delivered 66,264 meals between August 29, 2021, and October 2, 2021.

Seniors who need food should contact the Elder Helpline at 866-684-5885 or they can call 2-1-1 who will direct them.

Hunger Relief community partners are working with AAA to identify any needs and gaps related to COVID-19, developed programs to address the needs and gaps, as well as strategies to secure funding to continue these programs post COVID-19.

- **Meals on Wheels of the Palm Beaches, Inc. (MOWPB)**

MOWPB serves hot meals three days/week and fresh frozen meals on the remaining days. To setup service please call (561) 802-6979 extension 6.

MOWPB serves those individuals aged 65 and over who are home bound due to age, infirmity or debilitating illness and are unable or struggling to food shop and prepare nutritious meals. Their clients are either living alone, or with their spouse/partner who may also be home bound or who may be the fulltime caregiver.

MOWPB has been serving 2,500 meals a week to 300 people.

- **Palm Beach Sheriff's Office (PBSO)**

PBSO has a program to assist our Palm Beach County elderly residents who are unable to leave their homes to go to the grocery store or the pharmacy. Palm Beach County Sheriff's Office Volunteers are ready to deliver orders directly to their doors.

This program is AVAILABLE ONLY IN AREAS WHERE PBSO HAS JURISDICTION. If PBSO does not have a presence in your area they WILL NOT DELIVER.

INFRASTRUCTURE

- **Cold Storage Capacity Building Grant**

This opportunity was made possible by a three-year grant from the Farris Foundation from 2018 - 2021.

Increased the number of people served in 48 percent and decreased food waste by 68% in year one of the grant, 2018 - 2019.

190,967 pounds of perishable food stored and distributed to food insecure families; a cumulative total of 215,357 lbs. (year 2: 2019 - 2020).

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Increased the number of people served by 51 percent; 27,959 individuals served monthly (year 2: 2019 -2020).
Decreased food waste by 11 percent (year 2: 2019 - 2020).

2020 -2021 Cold Storage Grant: Awarded 25 cold storage units to 13 food pantries. Food waste decreased by 48%.

38 unduplicated agencies received a total of 74 cold storage units during the past three fiscal years. Cold Storage capacity increased by 9,753.5 cubic feet.

UWPBC Hunger Relief secured additional funds from the Lost Tree Foundation to support the Cold Storage Grant in 2020 – 2021. RFA will be released in late October 2021/early November 2021.

United Way of Palm Beach County Hunger Relief is monitoring the needs of the pantries and connecting them with food, PPE, and other needed resources.

○ **Pantry Project**

United Way of Palm Beach County Hunger Relief staff continues to hold follow-up meetings, organized by Palm Beach County's designated Emergency Operations Areas (EOAs), to regularly convene the pantries and develop communication and coordination strategies and identify ways to improve efficiency, effectiveness, and increase capacity. The pantries are addressing specific needs/costs for storage, IT, and capital improvement. Transportation recommendation has been finalized.

United Way of Palm Beach County Hunger Relief, Palm Beach County, and 211 are currently meeting and working on coordination necessary for a shared data source to store food distribution site data and other social service resources for most accurate and up-to-date information.

● **Healthy Corner Stores Initiative**

The initiative continues to work with Sam's Food Store, Canal Point. Sam's offers fresh produce and ready to eat fresh options like salads to go and healthy wraps to its customers. A local marketing campaign is underway.

○ **Farmers Helping Families**

Hunger Relief is working with United Farmers Alliance (UFA) Farmers Helping Families, a group of Palm Beach County farmers, working on solutions to get product from the farms to the at-risk communities in Palm Beach County. UFA is working with Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services and helping farmers register on myflorida.com so their products can be sold to FDACS and other entities. UFA is also partnering with Feed the Hungry, Boca Helping Hands, Feeding Palm Beach County (Feeding South Florida) and Palm Beach Harvest, and others to help get food into our community. UFA/Farmers Helping Families is approved to accept SNAP/EBT and Fresh Access Bucks.

There is much information on what the farmers in the Glades have been contributing to the County, School District of Palm Beach County, and food banks (Feeding South Florida, Palm Beach County Food Bank, etc.) for distribution. Their information is available on their social media and EAA Farmers information.

Florida Crystals continues to donate rice and sugar to local organizations.

○ **The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP)**

Beginning October 1, 2021, Farm Share became the administrator of the TEFAP contract, under Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services and USDA. Palm Beach County will be categorized as its own district, Region 17.

TEFAP is a USDA food distribution program that:

1. Provides nutritious, high-quality foods to low income households
2. Distributes food to participating food banks, food pantries, soup kitchens, and other feeding sites
3. Supplies food to be served to individual households or as prepared meals in a community setting for eligible recipients.

SNAP OUTREACH AND HUNGER RELIEF ADVOCACY

- **SNAP Advocacy**

Hunger Relief is monitoring the roll out of the monitoring the progress of the next stimulus package.

- **P-EBT Advocacy**

Hunger Relief worked with Florida Policy Institute to engage community partners to sign on to a letter to Governor DeSantis, urging him to apply for more than \$820 million in Summer P-EBT benefits that would benefit more than 2 million of Florida's children and families.

The State of Florida requested more than \$1 billion in benefits for 2.6 million kids. The request was approved by USDA on September 27, 2021.

For more information visit <https://www.fns.usda.gov/disaster/pandemic/covid-19/florida#snap>

- **SNAP Outreach Education Campaign**

United Way of Palm Beach County is working with community partners to develop a comprehensive SNAP Outreach Education Campaign for seniors and families. Partners include No Kid Hungry, Children's Services Council of Palm Beach County, Area Agency on Aging, American Heart Association, Healthier Jupiter/Jupiter Medical Center, and Department of Children and Families. Materials are being developed and strategies identified.

- Created a SNAP flyer to target families.
- Developed a SNAP flyer to target seniors.

Maximum Monthly Allotment/Changes to SNAP Household Monthly Benefit Allotments

Starting October 1, 2021, SNAP benefits were automatically increased by 6% as a result of a change to the 'Thrifty Food Plan'. Visit <https://www.myflorida.com/accessflorida/> for more specific information on this increase.

In January, SNAP benefits were temporarily increased by 15%. This temporary increase ended on September 30, 2021. Additionally, the U.S. Department of Agriculture recently updated the guidelines, which are used to calculate food assistance or SNAP benefits. This update increased benefits by 21% starting October 1. Because the temporary 15% increase ended on September 30 and the new permanent 21% increase started on October 1, most households will see 6% more SNAP benefits depending on individual household circumstances. The increase in SNAP benefit amounts will happen automatically. Recipients do not need to do anything to receive this increase.

The fastest way to make changes or check on the status of your benefits is by using the Self-Service Portal at <https://www.myflorida.com/accessflorida/>. You can apply or reapply for benefits, report changes including your mailing address, upload documents to your account, check the status of your application and benefits all by using the Self-Service Portal.

For a complete list of eligibility requirements for SNAP, visit <https://www.myflfamilies.com/service-programs/access/food-assistance-and-suncap.shtml>

Please contact DCF's Customer Call Center at 850-300-4323 or visit www.myflfamilies.com/covid19/access.shtml for more information.

- **Recertifications**

DCF stands ready to assist Florida's benefit clients if needed through the recertification process, which can be done virtually and through the self-service portal.

- **SNAP Online Purchasing**

In coordination with federal, state, and local partners, the online purchasing pilot ensures Floridians can access

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nutritious food while also practicing social distancing and self-quarantining practices to reduce the spread of COVID-19.

SNAP recipients may purchase groceries online with the use of an EBT card. They are automatically eligible to participate in this program and do not need to apply. As of March 2021, participating retailers include Walmart, Amazon, ALDI, BJ's Wholesale Club and Publix.

For more information on the online purchasing pilot, please refer to the [Online Purchasing Pilot FAQs](#).

○ **How to Apply for SNAP Benefits**

The Department of Children and Families has worked diligently to ensure their clients have easy access to apply for benefits during this public health emergency. DCF's Statewide Customer Call Center is available for customer questions and application assistance with agents available for extended hours, Monday through Friday, 7 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Saturday, 8 a.m. to noon; and Sunday, 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. The fastest way to get information and apply for benefits is online at <https://www.myflorida.com/accessflorida>. Customers can report changes, upload documents, and check the status of their application and benefits through their [MyACCESS Self-Service Portal](#). DCF continues to work quickly to process the growing number of applications as a result of COVID-19.

○ **Locations to Sign-up for SNAP Benefits through Palm Beach County Food Bank**

For more information, visit Palm Beach County Food Bank Benefits Outreach Calendar: <https://documentcloud.adobe.com/link/review?uri=urn:aaid:scds:US:2c9efa48-0f6c-4b62-9f54-66137460421f#pageNum=1>

● **Work Requirements**

Visit <https://www.myflfamilies.com/covid19/access.shtml> for information.

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COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- Attend monthly community meetings relating to hunger relief in Palm Beach County.
- Vice President for Hunger Relief attends the following meetings:
 - Covid-19 Funding Coalition meetings
 - Birth to 22 Steering Committee
 - CAC/HHS 2021 Regular Committee
 - CHIP
 - COVID-19 Funding Coalition
 - FDACS Food Security Advisory Council (FSAC)
 - Florida Policy Institute Safety Net Advisory Committee (SNAC)
 - Palm Beach County PIDC