

OREGON HUNGER OVERVIEW

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OREGON
FOOD BANK
NETWORK

Hunger in Our Communities

Across the country, more than 53 million people turned to food banks and community-based programs for help putting food on the table last year — alongside 47.7 million families participating in government food assistance programs like **SNAP** and **WIC**. That's 1 in 6 Americans overall, and the numbers are rising as more of us struggle with the rising costs of food and housing.

Here in Oregon, 1 in 8 Oregonians experienced food insecurity in 2021 — not knowing where our next meal might come from. So many of us experienced income and job loss in the pandemic's wake — and the impact fell hardest on the communities that have faced disproportionate hunger and poverty for generations: Black, Indigenous and People of Color, immigrants and refugees, single moms and caregivers, and trans and gender non-diverse communities. Discriminatory policies and practices have resulted in these communities to be more likely to live in poverty, more likely to face unemployment, and have fewer financial resources like savings or property. All of these factors increase someone's likelihood to experience hunger.

There's no doubt that the rising cost of food and housing is worsening food insecurity in our communities. The cost of groceries in our communities is up at least 10% overall — closer to 15% when we look at the cost of meat, fish, dairy and other pantry staples. Many Oregonians are still recovering from the economic impacts of COVID-19, and any additional pressure on income or the cost of living makes it even more difficult for families to make ends meet. As a result, we've seen an incredible need for emergency food assistance throughout Oregon in recent months, at a level we haven't experienced since the peak of the pandemic.

Our Support is Vital

This is an incredibly challenging time for families throughout the region — and the need for continued support is real. **As many as 1.5 million people will seek emergency food assistance through the Oregon Food Bank Network this year** — and our 21 Regional Food Banks and 1,400+ food assistance sites are doing everything possible to meet these challenges head-on.

It took an incredible, unprecedented government and community response here in Oregon to prevent hunger from becoming another symptom of COVID-19. And the latest wave of COVID and inflation pressures remind us that we can't afford to slow down in our response to these layered crises.

Now is the time to get involved in the fight to end hunger for good
[\[https://www.oregon.gov/fooddrive\]](https://www.oregon.gov/fooddrive).

Our support is vital to ensuring that food continues to flow to hard-hit communities throughout the state — and that we can all emerge stronger together.