

The Texas Safety Net

Food Programs Build Healthy Families

During the COVID-19 pandemic, more Texas families may find they do not have enough food for every member of the household to have an active, healthy life. Federal nutrition programs provide important nutrition resources, and these families can use one or more of the programs to get assistance. The following information offers an overview of the nutrition programs that are available to connect Texans with the food they need to thrive.



Direct Food Benefits



SNAP - Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program

- SNAP helps income eligible households buy the food they need for good health. Adults age 18 and older can apply for SNAP; additional funding is provided to households with children.
- SNAP benefits can be used like a debit card to purchase food at stores that accept SNAP.



WIC - Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children

- WIC serves income eligible women who are pregnant or breastfeeding and families with children younger than age five.
- WIC provides healthy food, nutrition classes, one-on-one counseling with nutritionists, recipes and cooking demonstrations, and breastfeeding support.

To Apply: Visit www.YourTexasBenefits.com to learn more about SNAP and WIC and apply for food benefits. To apply for WIC, you can also call (800) 942-3678 to see if you qualify and get connected with a WIC office near you.



Food and Nutrition Division
Nutrition Assistance Programs



TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
COMMISSIONER SID MILLER

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Food Distribution for Families

Food Banks

- Food banks provide food to help supplement the grocery budgets of income eligible families in Texas.

The Emergency Food Assistance Program

- Food pantries, soup kitchens and housing authorities distribute USDA-donated food.

The Commodity Supplemental Food Program

- 12 Texas food banks distribute packages of USDA Food to eligible participants for home consumption.

Find Your Local Foodbank:

Visit www.feedingamerica.org/find-your-local-foodbank to locate a network of food banks and local food pantries near you.



Meals for Young Children



Child and Adult Care Food Program

- Participating child care centers and day care homes serve meals and snacks.
- Child and Adult Care Food Program At-Risk serves children participating in afterschool care programs that provide enrichment activities.

Next Step: Call the child care licensing office in your area to find child care options near you.



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Meals for Students

Schools and community organizations coordinate efforts to provide nutritious meals for children in and out of school.



National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs

- 5 million Texas children have access to school meals each day through these programs. Household income determines eligibility of children to receive a free or a reduced-priced meal.
- The program is operated statewide by public, private and charter schools as well as residential child care institutions.



Summer Meal Programs – Summer Food Service Program and Seamless Summer Option

- No-cost meals are available to children 18 years old and younger and enrolled students up to 21 years old with disabilities.
- The Summer Food Service Program is operated statewide by private nonprofits and governmental entities, as well as public, private and charter schools.
- The Seamless Summer Option is administered statewide by public, private and charter schools.



Next Step: During School Year 2020-2021, schools may offer either the National School Lunch Program or one of the Summer Meal Programs. Contact your local school to determine which programs they administer. School districts and charter organizations offering the National School Lunch Program accept applications on an annual basis unless they are participating in the Community Eligibility Provision or Provision 2.

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Additional Information

- 2-1-1 is a statewide resource that helps connect Texans to food, health and housing services.
- Visit 211texas.org or call 2-1-1 to speak to a live operator about food resources in your area.
- To determine income eligibility for food programs, visit: squaremeals.org/programeligibility



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