



2025 Survey of Food Assistance Need in Central Indiana

A regional look at how households across all nine Central Indiana counties access and experience the food system.

About this study

Indy Hunger Network, in partnership with Central Indiana Community Foundation, Paul H. O'Neill School of Public and Environmental Affairs, and Office of Public Health and Safety, City of Indianapolis, surveyed 1,307 households across all nine Central Indiana counties between February and April 2025.

The survey used USDA food security questions to measure how often households had enough to eat, who is most affected, and how people use and experience food assistance.

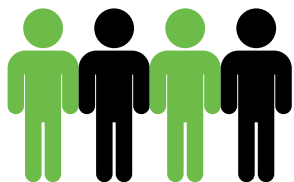
Note that these data were collected prior to the July 2025 budget cuts at the USDA, and prior to the federal government shutdown.

Read the full report at www.indyhunger.org/hunger-studies.

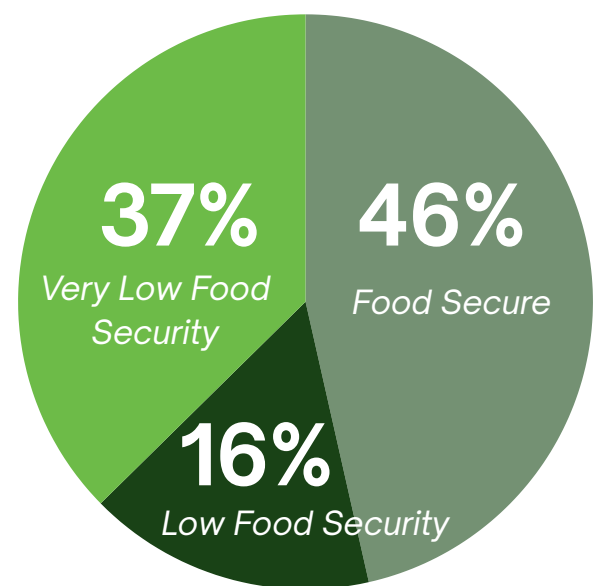
More than half of households are food insecure.

54% of Central Indiana respondents experienced some level of food insecurity in the past year.

38% of very low food security respondents didn't have enough food in the last week.



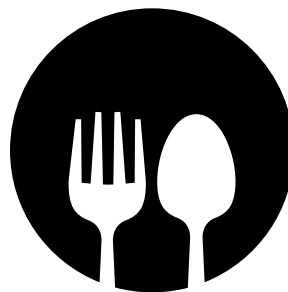
Food insecurity isn't rare. It is the day-to-day reality for more than **1 in 2 respondents** in this study.



In this study, more than 86% of respondents lived in a household with at least one wage earner, and only 6% reported being unemployed, yet up to 54% of central Indiana respondents experienced food insecurity.

Hunger is a regional issue.

Food insecurity affects urban, suburban, and rural communities across all nine Central Indiana counties.



53%

of respondents in Marion County are food insecure.



54%

of respondents in surrounding counties are food insecure.

Who is at higher risk of food insecurity?



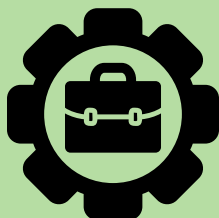
Households with Children

Households with kids are much more likely to be food insecure than those without children.



Working Families

Many food-insecure households include at least one working adult. Hunger often hits people who are employed but still can't make ends meet.



Self-Employed Workers

Self-employed workers
Households with self-employed adults are more likely to be food insecure than those employed for wages.



Rural & Urban Households

Rural and urban households showed the highest rates of food insecurity, with suburban households experiencing slightly higher food security.

Many households rely on food assistance

35% of all respondents' food comes from assistance systems.

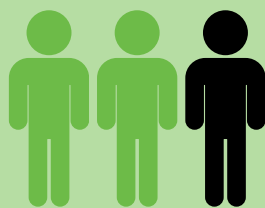
86% of respondents' meals for very low food security households come from some form of assistance.

48% of all respondents used SNAP at some point in the last year.

53% of respondents visited a charitable food organization at least once in the last month.

Top sources of support for food-insecure households:




- Food pantries and food banks
- Help from family and friends
- SNAP



Of those, about 1 in 3 went two or more times.

Barriers to food pantries

Even when people need help, they may avoid pantries because:

-  They feel “other people need it more.”
-  The pantry isn't open when they can go.
-  They don't have transportation.



This Indy Hunger Network study was developed with support from:



Office of Public Health and Safety, City of Indianapolis

