INDY HUNGER NETWORK

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

For this installment, Indy Hunger Network partnered with Central Indiana Community Foundation, Indiana University Paul H. O'Neill School of Public and Environmental Affairs, and the Indianapolis Office of Public Health and Safety. For the first time the survey captured 1,307 Central Indiana households divided in half between Marion County and all eight surrounding counties.

The survey used USDA food security questions to measure the rate and severity of food insecurity in Central Indiana between April 2024 to March 2025.

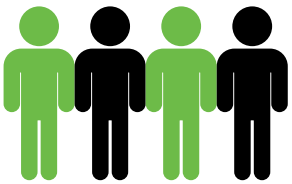
Note: Data were collected prior to USDA budget cuts in July's omnibus spending bill as well as freezes to SNAP funding during the government shutdown.

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

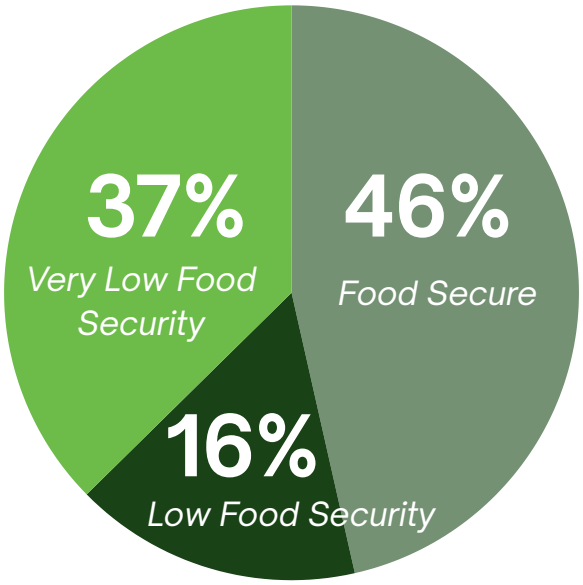
More than half of households are food insecure.

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 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 adult employed for wages. Hunger often hits people who are employed but still can't make ends meet.

Self-Employed Workers

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

Rural & Urban Households

Relative to urban households, rates of food insecurity were 6% higher in rural areas and 14% lower in suburban areas.

Many households rely on food assistance

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

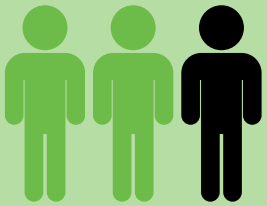
86% of respondents' meals for very low food security households come from some form of assistance.

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:

1. Food pantries and food banks
2. SNAP
3. Help from friends and family



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

Top barriers to food pantries

Even when people know about resources, they may lack access:

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



INDY HUNGER NETWORK

This Indy Hunger Network study was developed with support from:

THE CITY OF INDIANAPOLIS

Office of Public Health and Safety, City of Indianapolis

CICF

Central Indiana Community Foundation

For more information, visit www.indyhunger.org/hunger-studies.