



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **\*\*Maryland Food Bank Hunger Brief\*\***

### **MFB Prepares for Surge in Food Assistance Demand with Expiration of SNAP Emergency Allotments Scheduled this Month**

**BALTIMORE** – With Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Emergency Allotments scheduled to end this month, the Maryland Food Bank (MFB) is preparing for a surge in demand for food assistance, just as the organization’s latest analysis of Jan. 25 U.S. Census Household Pulse Survey data indicates that inflation and the rising costs of food, housing, and utilities continue to take its toll on household budgets across the state.

In January 2023, **2 in 5 Maryland families** (41%) said their children were sometimes or often not eating enough because food was not affordable, while the percentage of Marylanders finding it difficult to pay for usual household expenses rose from 30% in Dec. 2022 to **37% in January 2023**. These findings don’t account for the impact of upcoming changes to the SNAP program, when benefits return to the standard allotment amounts as a result of recent federal action.

“With so many of our neighbors struggling to afford basic necessities, our statewide network of community partners will likely see an influx in people seeking food assistance in the coming weeks, especially as SNAP Emergency Allotments expire this month,” said Carmen Del Guercio, MFB’s CEO and president.

Since March 2020, extra SNAP benefits known as Emergency Allotments have played a critical role in helping low-income Marylanders deal with the financial hardships of the COVID-19 pandemic, and the period of inflation and soaring costs that followed. But recipients will now lose an average of \$82 a month in benefits once Emergency Allotments end after February 2023 SNAP benefits are issued.

“As our community partners prepare for this increased demand, we know that we must simultaneously address the very systems, policies, and practices that have created generational cycles of poverty and food insecurity in the first place,” Del Guercio added. “That’s why we recently introduced our 2023 Legislative Agenda and are talking to lawmakers about real changes that address the root causes of hunger, including unstable housing, lack of transportation options, and inadequate health care.”

The food bank developed its [2023 Legislative Agenda](#) [PDF] based on data and analysis of MFB programmatic work and conversations with its network of community partners, neighbors in need, and colleagues in the anti-hunger and anti-poverty spaces.

“In addition to addressing root causes, [we are urging policymakers](#) to consider a holistic approach to food insecurity that includes tax credits, public benefits, and no-cost school meals. This also includes ongoing support for the food assistance safety net and a stronger local food system,” Del Guercio explained. “If we don’t tackle the deeper issues that cause food insecurity, we’ll never bring about the meaningful change that achieves our goal of ending hunger in this state.”

**About the Maryland Food Bank**

*The Maryland Food Bank is a nonprofit hunger-relief organization dedicated to feeding people, strengthening communities, and ending hunger for more Marylanders by partnering with local organizations from the western mountains to the Eastern Shore. The food bank's statewide network of food assistance brings enough resources together to provide more than 111,000 meals every day (over 40 million meals annually) to hungry children, seniors, veterans, and hard-working families, meeting the immediate needs of hungry Marylanders while simultaneously working to create pathways out of hunger. To learn more about the Maryland Food Bank, visit [www.mdfoodbank.org](http://www.mdfoodbank.org).*

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