

2026 STATE OF HUNGER IN ALASKA

HUNGER REMAINS A PERSISTENT AND COSTLY CHALLENGE

Food banks and community partners play an essential role in helping families through moments of crisis, but they cannot replace federal nutrition programs. Emergency food fills gaps. SNAP prevents those gaps from forming in the first place.

Federal nutrition programs like SNAP and school meals are essential—stabilizing families, supporting children, and reducing long-term public costs across Alaska.

A healthy Alaska starts at home. **Food on the table is foundational infrastructure.**

THE REALITY TODAY - MORE THAN 106,000 NEIGHBORS FACING HUNGER EACH YEAR

- **1 in 7** Alaskans experience food insecurity
- **1 in 5** Alaskan children experience hunger

Hunger is rarely about food alone. It is a symptom of economic pressure. Families are increasingly forced to choose between groceries and rent, utilities, child care, or medical care. These tradeoffs are becoming more common and more severe.

“We have had an increase of new patrons and continue to see people cycling on and off SNAP. The need is growing, and it’s not seasonal anymore.”

PARTNER AGENCY,
2025 Pulse Report

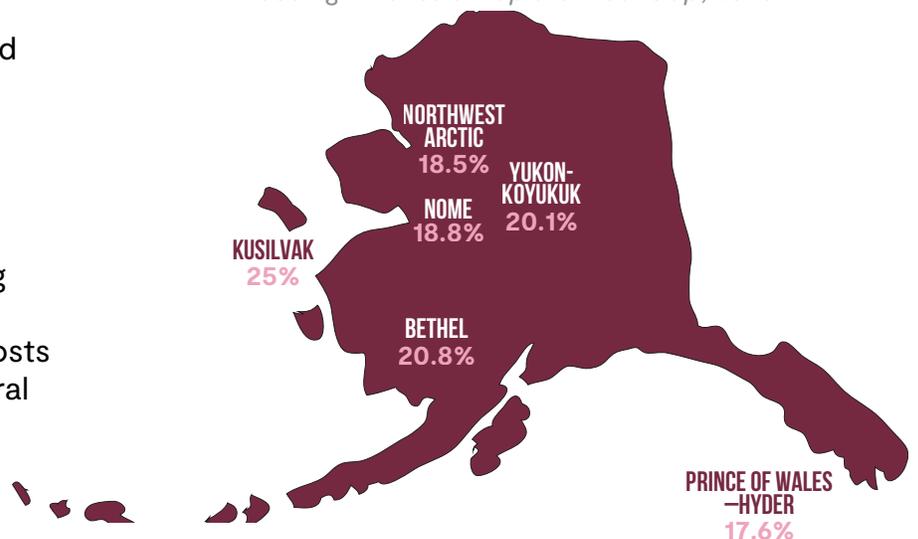
GROWING INSTABILITY IS DRIVING NEED

In the past year, Alaska experienced compounding disruptions that pushed more households to the edge:

- Catastrophic flooding in Western Alaska
- The longest federal government shutdown in U.S. history, delaying SNAP benefits and paychecks
- Persistently high food and fuel costs
- Limited access to groceries in rural and remote communities

BOROUGHES WITH THE HIGHEST FOOD INSECURITY RATES

- Feeding America’s Map the Meal Gap, 2023



While more food insecure households live in urban Alaska, food insecurity is most severe (for as many as 1 in 4) in rural areas where food costs are highest and access is most limited.

1 PROTECT SNAP

Alaska's most efficient anti-hunger program.

SNAP helps Alaskans afford the food they need to stay healthy and active. Benefits are timely, targeted, and temporary, making SNAP the most effective anti-hunger tool available.

SNAP MULTIPLIES IMPACT

For every one meal provided by the Feeding America network, **SNAP provides nine.**

SNAP strengthens health and economic stability by reducing food insecurity, lowering health care costs, and helping households manage Alaska's uniquely high and seasonal cost of living.

SNAP SUPPORTS ALASKA BUSINESSES

In FY24, **\$250.8M** went to **547** authorized food retailers across the state.

Alaska's anti-hunger network works every day to help neighbors meet basic needs, but emergency food alone cannot replace SNAP.

WHAT SNAP DELIVERS FOR ALASKANS EVERY DAY

**68,000 ALASKANS
SUPPORTED BY SNAP**

About \$11 per person, per day

- Reduces poverty
- Improves health and economic outcomes
- Helps families manage the seasonal cost of living

UPCOMING FEDERAL SNAP CHANGES

New federal rules shift major SNAP costs to states.

Starting as early as October 1, 2026, states must cover up to 25% more of administrative costs.

Alaska faces outsized financial risk due to high error rates.

Because Alaska's SNAP payment error rate is among the highest nationally, the state could be assessed the maximum penalty share of food benefit costs, unless error rates continue to improve.

Fewer Alaskans will meet requirements under new eligibility rules.

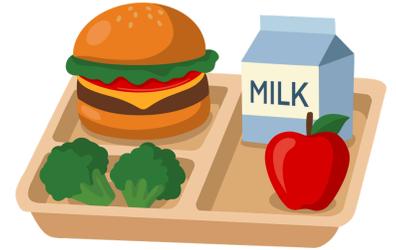
Expanded work reporting requirements and changes to existing exemptions will increase barriers to access.

STABLE FUNDING IS CRITICAL

Without predictable, sustainable investment in SNAP administration and support services, Alaska risks growing backlogs, slower eligibility determinations, and reduced access for eligible households.

2 FUND SCHOOL NUTRITION

Investing in our kids.



FEEDING KIDS TODAY MAKES GOOD 'CENTS' FOR TOMORROW



Legislation that increases access to food at school can:

- increase attendance
- improve academic outcomes
- positively affect child development and likelihood of success
- decrease caregiver burden
- decrease “lunch shaming”

3 SUPPORT DIRECT FOOD PURCHASING

For Alaska’s anti-hunger network.



In 2025, Food Bank of Alaska’s partner network distributed more than **10.1 MILLION POUNDS** of food from bulk food purchasing, retail reclamation, food drives, and donations.

Much of Alaska’s need arises from crisis, which compounds the impact of chronic need.

Proactively staging funds and food allows for better planning and faster reaction times when the need spikes.

RECENT STATE SPENDING ON EMERGENCY FOOD

- **\$1.7M** - State Allocation for Emergency Distribution (SAFE-D, 2023)
- **\$1.5M** - Food Security Grant Program (Dept. of Commerce, 2024)
- **\$1.5M** - Food Bank and Pantry Relief Fund (Dept. of Health, 2024)
- **\$4M** - Emergency Food Funding (Governor Dunleavy Administration, 2025)

HELP ALASKA’S ANTI-HUNGER NETWORK PREPARE FOR THE FUTURE

Establish annual financial support for direct food purchasing, shipping, and labor.