

SNAP Gap

June 13, 2023

KEY TAKEAWAYS

1. In 2018, Texas ranked 46th in the nation for SNAP participation, with only 75% of eligible individuals enrolled and receiving benefits.
2. With a large SNAP Gap, the potential economic and health benefits seen with SNAP participation will not be fully realized.

What is SNAP?

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) is a federal nutrition and health program administered by each state. SNAP provides benefits that supplement the food budget and provide additional nutritional quality for eligible adults and children. (1)

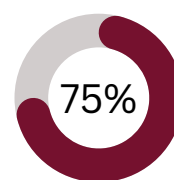
- Even though SNAP is 100% federally funded, the state of Texas is responsible for general program administration and program integrity. (2)
 - The state is also responsible for determining the eligibility of individuals and households applying for SNAP benefits and is responsible for assisting with issuing monthly allotments of benefits. (2).
- SNAP has been shown to positively influence people experiencing food insecurity, as well as positively impact economic development and quality of life. (3)
- Around 41 million U.S. residents (12% of the U.S. population) and 3.4 million Texans (11% of the state's population) received SNAP benefits in 2022. (4)
- More than 79% of SNAP participants in Texas were families with children, and around 27% of recipients were families with older adults or people living with a disability. (1)



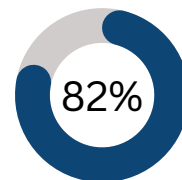
What is the "SNAP Gap"?

The "SNAP Gap" is the difference between the number of individuals and families who are eligible for SNAP and the total number enrolled. (3)

- Nationally, 82% of eligible individuals and families participate in SNAP, leaving 18% of eligible individuals unenrolled. In Texas, only 75% of eligible individuals enrolled receive SNAP benefits. (5)
- Eligible households not enrolled in SNAP tend to be in more densely populated areas, suggesting that rural areas participate in SNAP at higher rates than urban areas. (6)



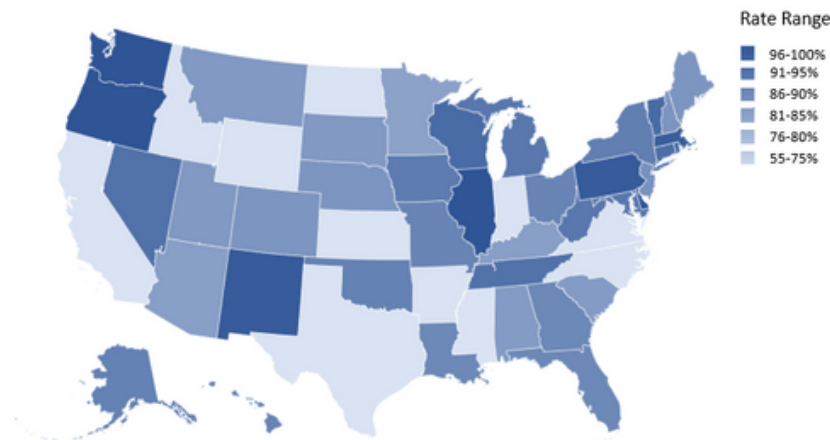
TEXAS



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In 2018, **Texas ranked 46th nationally** for SNAP participation rates by eligible individuals and families. Other states like Florida (84%) and Oklahoma (82%) have higher SNAP utilization rates. (5)

SNAP Participation Rates Among Eligible People by State



SNAP Participation to Reduce Food Insecurity

- SNAP benefits are linked with improved health outcomes for children, older individuals, and people with disabilities. (1)
- The U.S. Department of Agriculture reports that SNAP participation for 6 months was associated with a 5 to 10% decrease in the number of people reporting experiencing food insecurity. (7)
- **Food Insecurity is associated with unhealthy dietary behaviors and poor nutritional intake, which increases an individual's risk of developing diet-related diseases like diabetes, cardiovascular disease, and obesity. (1,8,9)**

SNAP Participation to Reduce Food Insecurity

Several factors are associated with non-enrollment in SNAP, even if eligible: (10)

- Age, with older individuals being less likely to be enrolled than younger individuals
- Perceived stigma of SNAP participation
- Working irregular full-time hours
- Working more than one job
- Race/ethnicity, with Hispanic individuals being less likely to be enrolled
- Lack of knowledge or confidence in applying for SNAP benefits
- Non-citizen status

Moving Forward

1. Utilize community health workers (CHWs) to bridge the gap between communities, healthcare systems, and state health departments to increase enrollment and re-enrollment rates among SNAP-eligible recipients. (11) CHWs can support SNAP education programs to increase participation in SNAP among eligible households. (11)
2. Implement a simplified application process for all SNAP recipients, including increasing the amount of time between re-enrollment periods. Currently, households enrolled in SNAP receive benefits for a 6-month period of time before reviewing benefits. (12)
3. Increase or eliminate the Vehicle Asset Test limit for eligible SNAP recipients. Vehicle limits were first set in 1973 and updated in 2001 but continues to disproportionately affect two-parent households from accessing SNAP. (13, 14).
4. Incentivize individuals to engage in and government entities to provide food and health literacy programs, which have shown to help individuals improve food budgets and change food consumption. (15)

Additional Resources

[TX RPC Lunch & Learn Event: Food Insecurity in Texas](#)

[SNAP Work Requirements - TX RPC Report](#)

[SNAP Vehicle Value Limits - TX RPC Report](#)

[Food Access in Texas and Texas Legislative Districts - TX RPC Data Brief](#)

[Double Up Food Bucks: A SNAP Produce Incentive Program](#)

[Produce Prescription \(Rx\) Programs](#)

[Data Brief: Food Access in Texas and Texas Legislative Districts](#)

[Community Eligibility Provisions](#)

[College Students and SNAP Utilization](#)

Overview of SNAP brief (upon request)

Food Insecurity in Texas brief (upon request)

School Meal Program brief (upon request)

Health Benefits of SNAP brief (upon request)

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