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FRAC's COVID-19 Updates

Check out [FRAC's COVID-19](#) page for updates, statements, and resources on actions to address the food security, public health, and economic impacts of COVID-19.

COVID-19: Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)

[Congress Passes \\$900 Billion in New Stimulus Relief](#), AARP, December 28, 2020

Long lines outside of food banks have become common this year, as sudden job losses have made it hard for many families to keep food on the table. The new COVID-19 relief package provides \$26 billion to help combat food insecurity. The law also will temporarily increase individual monthly SNAP benefits by 15 percent for six months.

[New stimulus package makes it easier to qualify for food stamps. Here's what you need to know](#), CNBC, December 30, 2020

“Food hardship has increased significantly during COVID-19, especially for households headed by Black and Latinx adults,” said [Luis Guardia](#), president of the Food Research & Action Center (FRAC). “SNAP benefits can help provide the nutrition those households need.”

[Emergency SNAP benefits extended for January 2021](#), KLTV, December 28, 2020

Texas Governor Greg Abbott announced on Thursday, December 24, that the Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) will provide approximately \$204 million in emergency SNAP benefits for the month of January as the state continues its response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Recipients will also see an additional 15 percent increase in their total benefits in January due to recently passed federal legislation, which will continue monthly until June 2021. The additional 15 percent increase and the emergency allotment amount should appear in recipients' accounts by January 23.

[As stimulus package expands food stamp benefits, Aldi adds online shopping for Iowa EBT users](#), Des Moines

Register, December 31, 2020

As Iowans on SNAP are set to receive increased benefits under a new stimulus package signed into law on December 27, those seeking to use their electronic benefit transfer (EBT) cards to order groceries online are seeing their options grow. On December 17, Aldi, in partnership with the delivery service Instacart, became the latest grocery chain to offer the service to SNAP participants in Iowa. The chain joined two large retailers: Amazon and Walmart.

COVID-19: Food Insecurity

[Food Insecurity in America](#), BBC World News, December 21, 2020

“The people who are the hardest hit are communities of color, households with children, and people on the lower-income scale. We are not all sharing this burden equally,” said FRAC President Luis Guardia.

[Vilsack Nominated for Secretary of Agriculture](#), Farm World, December 21, 2020

Luis Guardia, president of FRAC, said, “with the arrival of [USDA Secretary-elect Tom] Vilsack, the country can quickly implement a more comprehensive response to the hunger crisis

COVID-19: Pandemic Electronic Benefit Transfer (P-EBT)

[What Will the New Stimulus Package Mean for the Nearly 50 Million Food-Insecure Americans?](#), The Washington Post, December 22, 2020

According to FRAC President Luis Guardia, the COVID-19 relief bill “gives states some additional flexibilities to support the distribution of P-EBT benefits to school-age children, and expands the program for children younger than 6 years old, a lifeline for young children when child care is closed.”

[Low-Income Children Wait Months for USDA Food Aid to Replace School Meals](#), POLITICO, December 20, 2020

Anti-hunger advocates have been urging the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) to move aid more quickly, though they acknowledge that the task is complex this year with schools operating under so many different models. The logistics are even more complicated because most states have different agencies running their school meals programs as those that are distributing EBT benefits, like SNAP. “We know families are in crisis. We know they need access to these benefits urgently. We also know that it’s a more complicated approach this year,” said Crystal FitzSimons, director of school and out-of-school time programs at FRAC.

[Pandemic-EBT benefit cards coming](#), Wadena Pioneer Journal, December 24, 2020

Students who qualify for free or reduced-price meals may be eligible for P-EBT program benefits to purchase food for days that they are not in the school building. Families who received P-EBT benefits last summer are not automatically eligible; eligibility is based on the current school year. Benefits may be retroactive to September 2020, depending on when eligibility for free or reduced-price meals is determined, as the district Facebook post by Wadena-Deer Creek Public Schools stated. To ensure you qualify for the most benefits, please submit your

application as soon as possible. The applications help the school districts receive additional school funding. The deadline is January 4, 2021.

COVID-19: Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR)

[Udall Applauds Passage of Tribal Funding for COVID-19 Response, Tribal Coronavirus Relief Fund Extension, and Indian Country Priorities in End-of-Year Spending Bill](#), Committee on Indian Affairs, December 22, 2020

The latest COVID-19 relief package requires a report detailing USDA's plans to increase the amount and variety of traditional foods, including wild salmon, caribou, reindeer, and elk that will be provided through FDPIR. Senator Tom Udall (D-N.M.), vice chairman of the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs, praised this development.

About Us

FRAC is the leading national nonprofit organization working to eradicate poverty-related hunger and undernutrition in the United States. Visit our [website](#) to learn more.

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