

UNITED WAY OF PALM BEACH COUNTY

- *Feeding America Map the Meal Gap* food insecurity projections for Palm Beach County show that Palm Beach County Food Insecurity numbers are back to pre-pandemic levels and slightly lower.

Palm Beach County Food Insecurity Projections*			
	2019	2020	2021
Number of Food Insecure Residents	184,000	199,800	181,340
Number of Food Insecure Children	53,000	59,740	52,580

*On 3/24/21, Feeding America released this file with new projections for 2021 and revised projections for 2020. This file replaces revised projections for 2020 that were released in October 2020. On 4/12/21 Feeding America updated this file to include the recommended citation. Gundersen, C., M. Hake, A. Dewey, E. Engelhard (2021). *The Impact of the Coronavirus on Food Insecurity in 2020 & 2021, Update March 2021 [Data file and FAQ]*. Available from Feeding America: research@feedingamerica.org.

- **Food Finder Map**

An interactive tool developed by United Way of Palm Beach County using Google Maps to help people easily locate free food and hot meals in Palm Beach County. This online tool was created to connect individuals seeking food resources to sites near them. Information is English, Spanish, and Creole. United Way updates the information listed on this map weekly. However, locations and hours of distribution may change. Please consider calling the site prior to visiting to verify information listed. Please note that sites may have specific requirements such as ID. Please visit <https://unitedwaypbc.org/hunger/> to view the map. As of the end of April 2021, there were 106,500 visits to the Food Finder Map.

- **Hunger Relief Department**

Hunger Relief staff are partnering with community partners within and outside our network to address short term, midterm, and long-term needs of the Palm Beach County communities. We are staying nimble so we can proactively identify needs, address needs as they arise, prepare for expected and unexpected needs and find and/or create solutions. We are also tracking information and data available through our networks and partnerships. Hunger Relief for United Way of Palm Beach County continues to track and coordinate food distribution with PBC Food Bank, Feeding South Florida, Area Agency on Aging and approximately 100 food pantries that are operating throughout the county.

United Way Hunger Relief recruited three Summer AmeriCorps VISTAs to be placed with nonprofit agencies in the community to help with hunger relief efforts for 10 weeks, beginning June 7, 2021. United Way of Palm Beach County Hunger Relief has hired a Childhood/Senior Hunger Relief AmeriCorps VISTA to start on July 6, 2021.

CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19)

- **COVID-19 PSAs**

United Way of Palm Beach County, in partnership with Palm Beach County, Florida Department of Health, and 2-1-1, developed a Public Service Announcement (PSA) tool to educate the community about key information regarding COVID-19 and connect them with resources offered in the County. The PSA is available in English, Spanish, and Creole and can be used widely by organizations such as businesses, food distribution sites, and social service agencies.

CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

- **Childhood Work Group**

Working with FLIPANY to continue implementation and expansion of the Mobile Summer BreakSpot Program in the Glades.

Partnered with FLIPANY to implement nutrition expansion and healthy meals out of school.

Connected Palm Beach County Youth Services with summer meal providers.

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Working to develop a virtual activities website to provide children with enrichment opportunities during the summer. Children receiving meals at Grab N' Go sites can log into the Summer BreakSpot FUN! website Monday – Friday and participate in the day's activity.

- **0-4 Subcommittee (Childhood Work Group)**

Women Infants and Children (WIC) Video

- Working with the 0-4 subcommittee to implement the WIC Outreach Plan. The plan focuses on increasing awareness about the various services offered to low-income pregnant, breastfeeding, and non-breastfeeding, postpartum women and infants and children up to age five through different outreach methods.
- Working with WIC representatives to complete a “What is WIC” video.
- Working with WIC representatives to create a WIC palm card in English, Spanish and Creole.

Child Care Food Program (CCFP) Outreach

- Identified high need census tract areas and childcare centers in zip codes 33407, 33404, 33444, and 33463. Family Central will reach out to the 15 identified centers. One center showed interest in CCFP.

- **Weekend Backpack Subcommittee (Childhood Work Group)**

Pan-Florida Challenge enrolled three Healthy Start programs in the Family Weekend Backpack Program.

The subcommittee's 2021-2022 targets are increasing the number of sites to 36 and 3,000 children.

The Palm Beach County Food Bank will operate 17 backpack programs during the 2021 summer (approximately 1,200 children).

Living Hungry directed food to Boys and Girls Club in addition to sending hygiene kits.

- **Summer BreakSpot/Grab 'n Go Meals**

Children and families can access free meals for kids 18 and under at more than 100 Summer BreakSpot/Grab 'n Go sites around the County. Summer BreakSpot offers balanced breakfasts, lunches, snacks or dinner at no cost for children 18 and under. Meals are FREE to anyone under 18 years of age (under 22 for ESE students), regardless of financial need.

To find more information about Summer BreakSpot/Grab 'n Go sites: visit <https://www.summerbreakspot.org/>. You can also find a location by calling 2-1-1 or text “FOODFL” to 877-877.

All other individuals who need food should contact 211. 211 receives frequent updates of pantries that remain open and have food.

- **FLIPANY Grab 'n Go Sites – Free 7-Day Meal Boxes for All Youth**

FLIPANY is getting ready for their summer programming, working on registering sites for the Mobile Summer BreakSpot, coordinating Summer AmeriCorps VISTAS, and organizing enrichment activities.

Families can visit the following locations in Palm Beach County to receive a free meal box for their children. Meal boxes contain seven days of breakfast and lunch for a combination of fresh and shelf-stable items; milk included. All items are prepackaged and combined in one box for ease in distribution via a drive-thru or walk-up pick-up line at the associated site:

Hands Together for Haitians
25 H Street
Lake Worth, FL 33460
Thursdays, 4:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.

New Mt. Zion Missionary Baptist Church
2221 8th Avenue
Boynton Beach, FL 33435

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Thursdays, 2:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.

- **Boys and Girls Clubs of Palm Beach County Grab ‘n Go Sites**

The Grab ‘n Go program serves as a substitute for the snack and dinner program that is normally available to our Club children in the afterschool program. For Club families with transportation challenges delivery is available.

- **Farm to Family Program**

Developed by the Boys and Girls Clubs of Palm Beach County in partnership with a network of local farmers to enhance Grab ‘n Go meals. Partners include: Boys & Girls Clubs of Palm Beach County, Lox Farms, Fresh RX, Living Hungry, Farm to Share, Aioli, Gratitude Gardens, Kai Kai Farms, Holman’s Harvest, Florida Crystals, GL Homes, Old School Bakery, Farm Share, TKM, Tropical Shipping, Gekks, V and B Farms, All American Citrus, Lake Meadow, Brown Distributing, Sysco, GFA International, Dynatech International.

- **School Meals**

The following are school year 2020-2021 numbers:

Total meals served since July 1, 2020 – 24,362,883. Number of grab-and-go meals cannot be separated from the meals served in school at this time.

- **Pandemic EBT (P-EBT) Program**

Parents/Guardians of distance learners in Florida who have been approved to receive free and/or reduced-price meal benefits qualify for funds through the P-EBP Program. As of the week of June 1, 2021, The Department of Children and Families (DCF) has set up the portal for parents or guardians. Parents or guardians can call the P-EBT call center at 1-833-311-0321 or visit this [website](#) and click the Blue button at the bottom of the page labeled “P-EBT Request for Review if they believe they qualify and have not received their funds.

Please keep in mind the cycle of benefits below:

Late April 2021 (August – December)

June 1-5, 2021 (January -March)

August 1-5, 2021 (April – June)

- **School District of Palm Beach County feeding sites are open as follows:**

Starting Tuesday, June 22, 2021, all sites with summer school or summer programs will be open for children (or parents/guardians of the children) 18 years old and younger to receive breakfast and/or lunch for free each day. Meals will be offered at some sites at the breakfast and lunch serving times and at other sites both breakfast and lunch can be picked up together each day. [Click here for a list of locations and times of meal service.](#)

Note: any of the times listed where the breakfast and lunchtimes are the same, both breakfast and lunch for the day will be provided as a to-go meal.

SENIORS

- **Area Agency on Aging**

The Area Agency on Aging (AAA) and their providers at The Volen Center and Palm Beach County Division of Senior Services routinely provide a full complement of services such as senior centers, adult day care, congregate food sites, social support, transportation, telephone reassurance, counseling and in-home services. During COVID-19, the Aging Network Providers throughout Palm Beach and Treasure Coast are solving many challenges being experienced by seniors including food.

AAA adapted to changes to service delivery requirements including assessments, nutrition requirements, meal packaging and recordkeeping.

New nutrition services were offered by AAA and their partners including shopping assistance, telephone reassurance, and Ruth and Norman Rales Jewish Family Services expanding their kosher home-delivered meals.

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- **Drop and Go Meals**

The partnership between Area Agency on Aging, The Volen Center, and Palm Beach County Division of Senior Services delivered 60,924 meals during the month of May 2021 in Palm Beach County.

According to the Area Agency on Aging of Palm Beach/Treasure Coast, Inc., there are 1,544 seniors on the Home Delivered Meals Waitlist in Palm Beach County, as of May 31, 2021.

Seniors who need food should contact the Elder Helpline at 866-684-5885. The PBC Senior Centers are still being used as distribution sites and Palm Tran continues to deliver food to the homes of seniors. For seniors who are confused or don't remember that number, they can call 2-1-1 who will direct them.

Hunger Relief community partners are working with AAA to identify any needs and gaps related to COVID-19, developed programs to address the needs and gaps, as well as strategies to secure funding to continue these programs post COVID-19.

- **Meals on Wheels of the Palm Beaches, Inc. (MOWPB)**

During COVID-19, MOWPB has temporarily adjusted their meal operations to provide seven frozen dinner meals along with three breakfast meals each week with deliveries once a week. In addition, seniors who are normally mobile but are unable to shop due to COVID-19 are being served on a short-term basis with the 10 meals delivered weekly at no cost. To setup service please call (561) 802-6979 extension 6.

MOWPB serves those individuals aged 65 and over who are home bound due to age, infirmity or debilitating illness and are unable or struggling to food shop and prepare nutritious meals. Their clients are either living alone, or with their spouse/partner who may also be home bound or who may be the fulltime caregiver.

MOWPB has been serving 2,500 meals a week to 300 people.

- **Palm Beach Sheriff's Office (PBSO)**

PBSO has a program to assist our Palm Beach County elderly residents who are unable to leave their homes to go to the grocery store or the pharmacy. Palm Beach County Sheriff's Office Volunteers are ready to deliver orders directly to their doors.

This program is AVAILABLE ONLY IN AREAS WHERE PBSO HAS JURISDICTION. If PBSO does not have a presence in your area they WILL NOT DELIVER.

INFRASTRUCTURE

- **Cold Storage Capacity Building Grant**

This opportunity was made possible by a three-year grant from the Farris Foundation.

2020 -2021 Cold Storage Grant: Awarded 27 cold storage units to 14 food pantries.

Increased cold storage capacity in Palm Beach County by 4,422 cu ft. (A cumulative total of 9,820.5 cu ft. for all three years of the grant)

190,967 pounds of perishable food stored and distributed to food insecure families; a cumulative total of 215,357 lbs. (year 2: 2019 -2020).

Increased the number of people served by 51 percent; 27,959 individuals served monthly (year 2: 2019 -2020).
Decreased food waste by 11 percent (year 2: 2019 -2020).

Awarded agencies are receiving delivery of units for year three of the grant.

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United Way of Palm Beach County Hunger Relief is monitoring the needs of the pantries and connecting them with food, PPE, and other needed resources.

- **Pantry Project**

United Way of Palm Beach County Hunger Relief staff is holding follow-up meetings, organized by Palm Beach County's designated Emergency Operations Areas (EOAs), to continue to convene the pantries and develop communication and coordination strategies and identify ways to improve efficiency, effectiveness, and increase capacity.

United Way of Palm Beach County Hunger Relief, Palm Beach County, and 211 are currently meeting and working on coordination necessary for a shared data source to store food distribution site data and other social service resources for most accurate and up-to-date information.

- **Healthy Corner Stores Initiative**

The initiative continues to work with two corner stores in The Glades to increase their capacity. One corner store, Sam's Food Store, Canal Point, is offering fresh produce and ready to eat fresh options like salads to go and healthy wraps to its customers. A local marketing campaign is currently in development. The implementation at the second store, South Bay Food Store, is moving forward with equipment, shelving and refrigeration units ordered.

- **Farmers Helping Families**

Hunger Relief is working with United Farmers Alliance (UFA) Farmers Helping Families, a group of Palm Beach County farmers, working on solutions to get product from the farms to the at-risk communities in Palm Beach County. UFA is working with Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services and helping farmers register on myflorida.com so their products can be sold to FDACS and other entities. UFA is also partnering with Feed the Hungry, Boca Helping Hands, Feeding Palm Beach County (Feeding South Florida) and Palm Beach Harvest, and others to help get food into our community. In 2020, UFA distributed 131,000 pounds of healthy local produce with a value of \$361,000 to the Palm Beach County community. UFA/Farmers Helping Families is approved to accept SNAP/EBT and is working on approval to accept Fresh Access Bucks.

There is much information on what the farmers in the Glades have been contributing to the County, School District of Palm Beach County, and food banks (Feeding South Florida, Palm Beach County Food Bank, etc.) for distribution. Their information is available on their social media and EAA Farmers information.

Palm Beach Harvest and Boys and Girls Clubs have been doing weekly produce distributions in The Glades.

Florida Crystals continues to donate rice and sugar to local organizations.

- **Farm to Families Food Box Program Sunsets in May 2021**

The Farmers to Families Food Box program ended on May 31, 2021. It was designed and implemented as a temporary, emergency relief effort to respond to severe market disruption caused by the global pandemic. The environment today is much different than when this program was created at the beginning of the pandemic and the condition of our economy has continued to improve since the start of the year.

- **The Emergency Food Assistance Program Fresh Produce Package**

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) will be purchasing a fresh produce package for distribution through The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP). The fresh produce package will contain a variety of fresh fruits and vegetables. The fresh produce for this program must be grown and processed exclusively in the United States.

A Dairy Donation Program will reimburse processors for contributions of dairy products to nonprofit organizations that distribute to the needy.

The Food Marketing Institute, which represents major grocery retailers including Walmart, Kroger and Amazon, welcomed the USDA's decision to end the Food Box program.

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Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services expecting more detail about the program from USDA in mid to late June.

SNAP OUTREACH AND HUNGER RELIEF ADVOCACY

- **SNAP Advocacy**

Hunger Relief is monitoring the roll out of the new, increased SNAP benefits and monitoring the progress of the next stimulus package.

- **SNAP Outreach Education Campaign**

United Way of Palm Beach County is working with community partners to develop a comprehensive SNAP Outreach Education Campaign for seniors and families. Partners include No Kid Hungry, Children’s Services Council of Palm Beach County, Area Agency on Aging, American Heart Association, Healthier Jupiter/Jupiter Medical Center, and Department of Children and Families. Materials are being developed and strategies identified.

- **Maximum Monthly Allotment**

Governor Ron DeSantis directed DCF to coordinate with our federal partners to temporarily increase all Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program (SNAP) recipients’ benefit amounts to the maximum monthly allotment based on household size for March 2020 through June 2021.

Maximum benefits for June will be issued on June 8, 2021, as a supplement to ongoing households who normally receive their benefits between June 1-7. Households who receive their benefits after June 7, will receive their supplement on their regularly staggered issuance schedule.

A recent federal change allows a \$95 increase for households whose increase to the maximum allotment was less than \$95 in additional benefits. Some households have been receiving increases with maximum allotments, but households that already received the maximum did not receive an increase. The new requirements increase benefits ONLY for those households that did not receive an increase of at least \$95. For example, if a household was qualified for \$200 dollars, then began receiving an increase to \$234 due to the maximum benefit, the household would receive an additional \$61 to make their Maximum Allotment at least \$95. Households that already received an increase more than \$95 will not receive additional benefits. For example, a household that qualified for \$34 and received an additional \$200 to a total of \$234 due to maximum benefits policy has already received an increase over \$95 and would receive no additional benefits.

The maximum allotments can be viewed in the table below.

People in Household	Maximum Benefit Amount – effective 10/1/2020	Maximum Benefit Amount Effective 1/1/2021 includes 15% increase per the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021
1	\$204	\$234
2	\$374	\$430
3	\$535	\$616
4	\$680	\$782
5	\$807	\$929
6	\$969	\$1,114
7	\$1,071	\$1,232
8	\$1,224	\$1,408
For Each Additional Person	+\$153	+\$176

Please contact DCF’s Customer Call Center at 850-300-4323 or visit www.myflfamilies.com/covid19/access.shtml for more information.

- **Recertifications**

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DCF stands ready to assist Florida’s benefit clients if needed through the recertification process, which can be done virtually and through the self-service portal.

Medicaid recipients will remain eligible for the duration of the public health emergency as declared by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

- **Pandemic EBT (P-EBT)**

DCF is automatically issuing families Pandemic EBT benefits for the 2020-2021 school year. This benefit is for families with students who are participating in the National School Lunch Program and who are distance learning. Please visit our P-EBT website for more information here: myflfamilies.com/pebt

For more information visit <https://www.fns.usda.gov/disaster/pandemic/covid-19/florida#snap>

- **SNAP Online Purchasing**

In coordination with federal, state, and local partners, the online purchasing pilot ensures Floridians can access nutritious food while also practicing social distancing and self-quarantining practices to reduce the spread of COVID-19.

SNAP recipients may purchase groceries online with the use of an EBT card. They are automatically eligible to participate in this program and do not need to apply. As of March 2021, participating retailers include Walmart, Amazon, ALDI, BJ’s Wholesale Club and Publix.

For more information on the online purchasing pilot, please refer to the [Online Purchasing Pilot FAQs](#).

- **How to Apply for SNAP Benefits**

The Department of Children and Families has worked diligently to ensure their clients have easy access to apply for benefits during this public health emergency. DCF’s Statewide Customer Call Center is available for customer questions and application assistance with agents available for extended hours, Monday through Friday, 7 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Saturday, 8 a.m. to noon; and Sunday, 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. The fastest way to get information and apply for benefits is online at <https://www.myflorida.com/accessflorida>. Customers can report changes, upload documents, and check the status of their application and benefits through their [MyACCESS Self-Service Portal](#). DCF continues to work quickly to process the growing number of applications as a result of COVID-19.

- **Expanded Library Locations to Sign-up for SNAP Benefits**

Location	Days/Times
Greenacres Branch Library	Mondays, 10:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. Wednesdays, 10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.
Jupiter Branch Library	Mondays, 10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.
Hagen Ranch Road Branch Library	Wednesdays, 10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.
Glades Road Branch Library	1 st & 3 rd Wednesdays, 10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.
Hagen Ranch Branch Library	Wednesdays, 10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.
Okeechobee Boulevard Branch Library	1 st & 3 rd Thursdays, 10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.
Royal Palm Beach Branch Library	2 nd & 4 th Thursdays, 10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.
Main Branch Library	Fridays, 10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

For more information, visit *Palm Beach County Food Bank Benefits Outreach Calendar*:

<https://documentcloud.adobe.com/link/review?uri=urn:aaid:scds:US:2c9efa48-0f6c-4b62-9f54-66137460421f#pageNum=1>

- **Work Requirements Waiver**

- Since March 2020, Governor DeSantis has exercised a state option to apply good cause statewide effectively waiving work requirements to assist Florida families as they recover from the public health emergency.

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- Florida has taken a smart, safe, step-by-step approach to re-opening our businesses and opportunities to generate economic activity. Florida's industries are open and seeking a workforce to ensure our state leads the country in economic recovery.
- The Department of Children and Families (DCF) and the Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO) will begin the process of reengaging benefit recipients who are required to complete work requirements in order to receive their food and/or cash benefits.
- As of June 1, 2021, work requirements will be reinstated for newly qualified or recertified Able-Bodied Adults without Dependents (ABAWDs) and recipients of Temporary Cash Assistance (TCA). This will require all individuals who must meet work requirements to participate in work activities to receive Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and TCA benefits.
- DCF and DEO have been working collaboratively to develop a re-engagement plan that will support the state's workforce development system to effectively engage and provide services to newly qualified or recertified SNAP and TCA recipients that are required to comply with work requirements.
- New recipients as of June 1, must comply with the same process as existed prior to the public health emergency, including completing an on-line orientation and assessment, meeting with a case worker and engaging in work activities, including job search, training, and community work experience.
- DEO and the CareerSource Florida network stand ready to assist Florida's benefit clients in preparing for, securing and sustaining employment opportunities.
- Its critical as our state rebounds after the public health emergency that Florida's workforce is ready to support private sector businesses in need of talent. The reinstatement of work requirements will ensure Florida's talent pipeline begins to flow, as benefit recipients receive support and assistance to obtain meaningful employment.

- **Medicaid Eligibility and Applications**

Applicants have 120 days for the date of submission to provide all required documentation to complete their application. If the Medicaid application is approved, the individual's Medicaid eligibility effective date will still be the first day of the month that the initial application was received.

Medicaid coverage for most individuals will not be reduced or eliminated during the COVID-19 public health emergency.

- **SNAP Online Purchasing**

In coordination with federal, state, and local partners, the online purchasing pilot ensures Floridians can access nutritious food while also practicing social distancing and self-quarantining practices to reduce the spread of COVID-19.

SNAP recipients may purchase groceries online with the use of an EBT card. They are automatically eligible to participate in this program and do not need to apply. As of March 2021, participating retailers include Walmart, Amazon, ALDI and BJ's Wholesale Club.

For more information on the online purchasing pilot, please refer to the [Online Purchasing Pilot FAQs](#).

- **Pandemic-EBT or P-EBT**

DCF worked with the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services to issue Pandemic Electronic Benefits Transfer (P-EBT) to households with children who had temporarily lost access to free or reduced-price school meals due to pandemic-related school closures from March through June 2020.

Florida issued P-EBT benefits to more than 2.2 million children in the amount of \$687,738,431.

For more information on the P-EBT program, please refer to the [P-EBT FAQs](#).