

Improving Food Security in Kinship/Grandfamilies

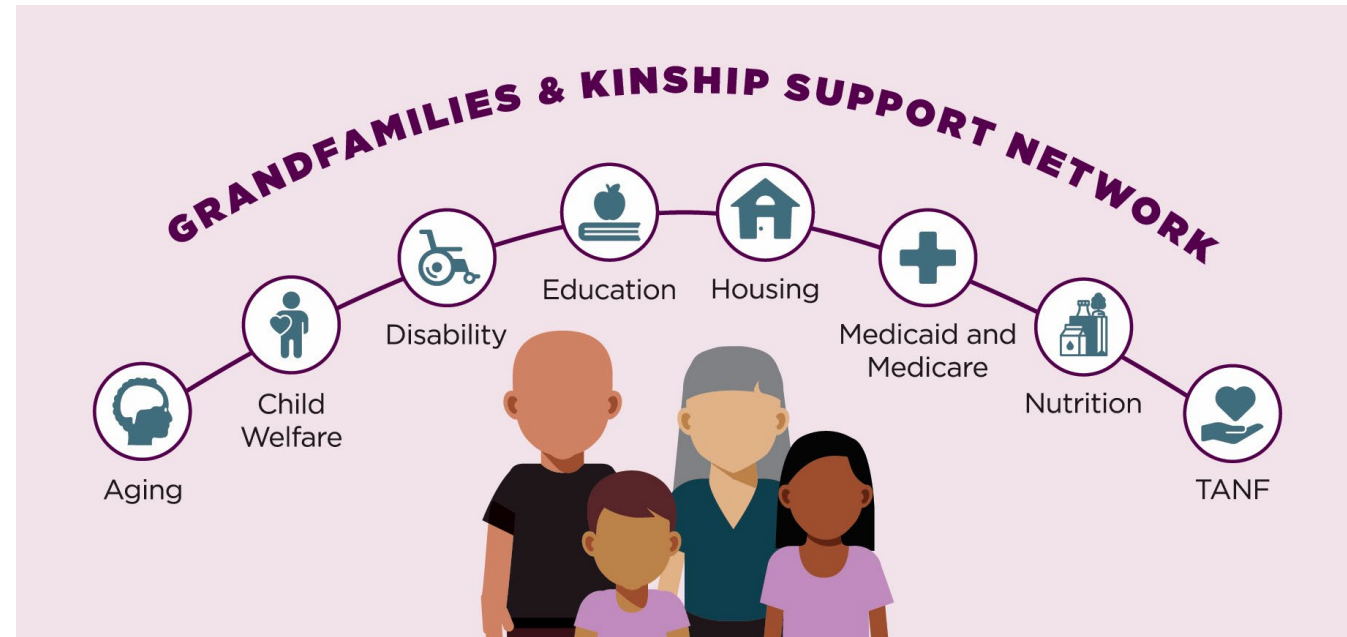
September 10, 2025

- Welcome, we will begin at the top of the hour
- Please type in the **chat** box - your name, state, tribe (if applicable), and role
- Type questions in the **chat** box at any point during our time together
- **We will provide a separate meeting link for a 30-minute Q&A with Susan Beaudoin, our presenter, starting in an hour, at 3 PM ET**
- By the end of the week, all participants will receive a link to the slides and the recording

GRANDFAMILIES & KINSHIP SUPPORT NETWORK

A National Technical Assistance Center

- Since 2021, Generations United, in cooperation with the U.S. Administration for Community Living, has operated the first-ever federally funded technical assistance center on kinship/grandfamilies
- Purpose is to provide technical assistance to the array of state, territorial, and tribal government agencies and organizations so they can better serve the families by working across systems and maximizing resources



How We Help



Learning Collaboratives and Information Dissemination

The Network hosts [webinars](#) and facilitates learning collaboratives.



Individual Assistance

We respond to [individual requests for help](#) from government agencies and nonprofit organizations.



Bridging Systems for Kinship Families

The Network is helping Idaho, San Diego County, and Oneida Nation of Wisconsin optimize their collaborative approaches and improve their services. Solutions will be replicable for others.



A Centralized Hub

The Network is elevating exemplary kinship/grandfamily practices and programs from around the country on its new accessible website, www.GKSNetwork.org.

Welcome Our Presenter

Susan Beaudoin

Senior Program Manager

Food Research & Action Center (FRAC)



Who We Are

The Food Research & Action Center (FRAC) works to improve the nutrition, health, and well-being of people struggling against poverty-related hunger in the United States through advocacy, partnerships, and by advancing bold and equitable policy solutions. For more information about FRAC, or to [sign up](#) for FRAC's newsletter, go to www.frac.org.



What We Do

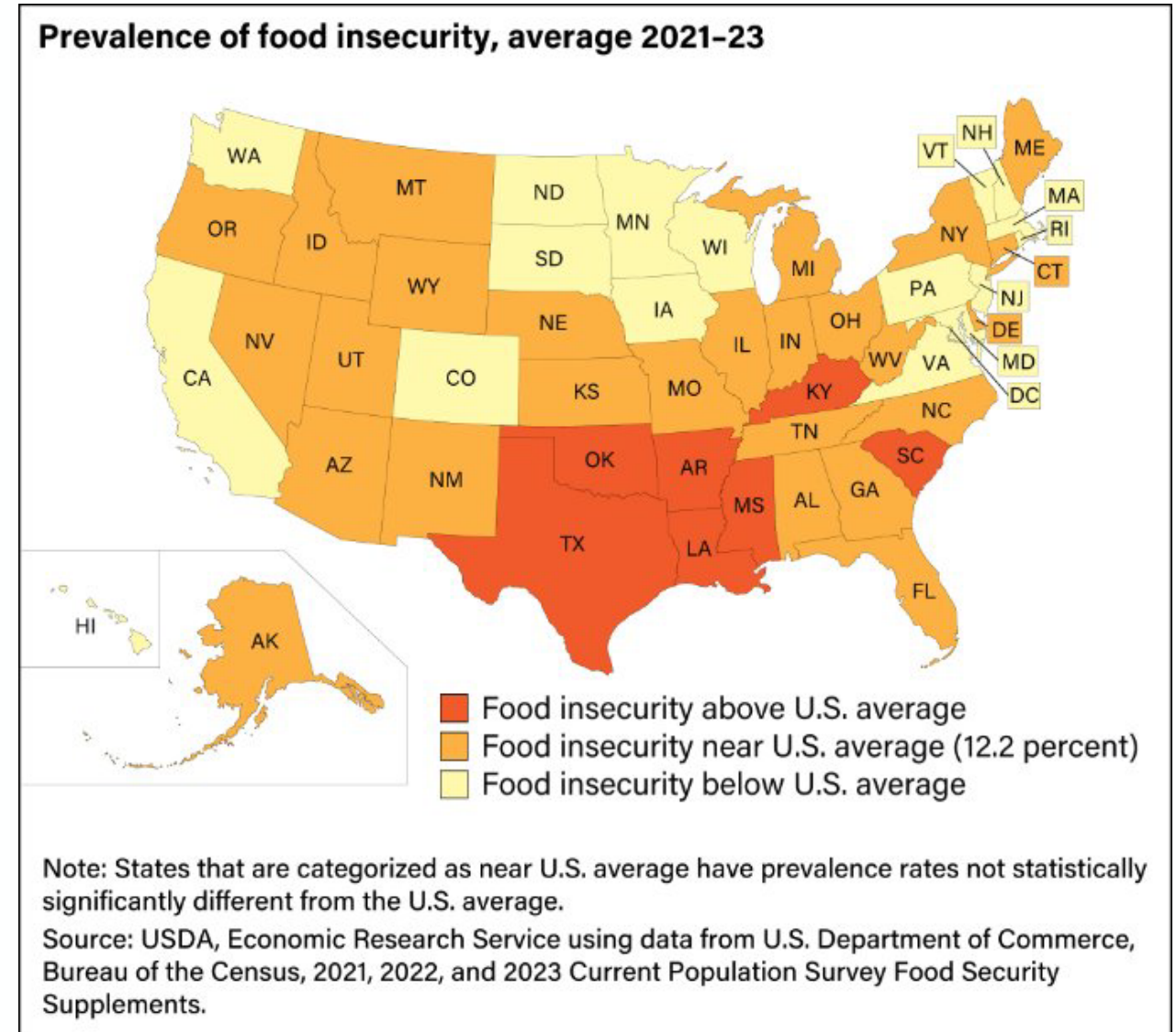
- Conduct research to document the extent of hunger and identify effective solutions
- Advocate for federal, state and local public policies that protect and strengthen the federal nutrition programs
- Provide coordination, training, technical assistance, and support on hunger-related issues

Food Insecurity

Household Composition	Food Insecurity 2023
All Households	13.5%
Without Children	11.9%
With Children	17.9%

Source: U.S. Department of Agriculture. *Household Food Security in the United States in 2023*

<https://www.ers.usda.gov/publications/pub-details?pubid=109895>



Impacts of Food Insecurity

CHILDHOOD FOOD INSECURITY IS ASSOCIATED WITH:

Poor Health Status



Developmental Risk



Mental Health Problems



Poor Educational Outcomes



FOOD INSECURITY MAY PRESENT IN A FAMILY AS:

Food Anxiety



Diet Monotony



Decreased Nutrition Quality



Inadequate Food Intake



Federal Nutrition Programs

U.S. Department of Agriculture programs

- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)
- School Meal Programs
- Summer Nutrition Programs
- Afterschool Nutrition Programs
- Child and Adult Care Food Program
- Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC)
- The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP)
- Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR)
- Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CFSP)

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services programs

- Home-Delivered Meals Program
- Congregate Meals Program



▶ reduced food insecurity;



▶ better health outcomes;



▶ improved academic achievement and early childhood development;



▶ healthier eating;



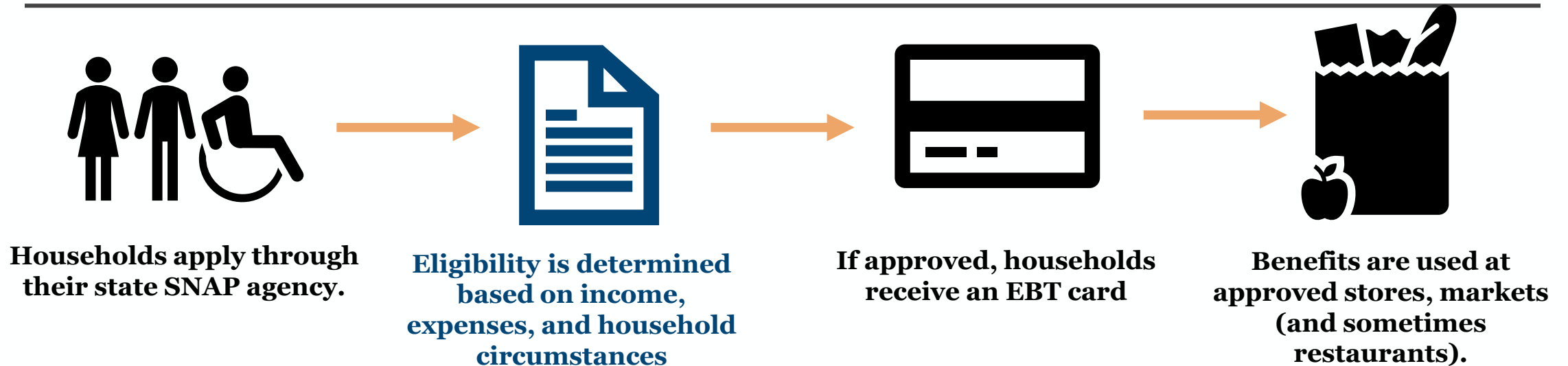
▶ increased family economic security; and



▶ a stimulated local economy.

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)

How SNAP Works:



Older adults 60+ and people with disabilities may qualify for SNAP under slightly **higher resource and income limits**, including up to \$3,750 in countable resources and the **ability to deduct medical expenses** over \$35/month.

The Benefits of SNAP

SNAP DELIVERS ASSISTANCE

quickly and effectively to people recovering from natural disasters or economic crises.



SNAP REACHES KEY VULNERABLE POPULATIONS

— the large majority are children, seniors, and people with disabilities.

SNAP REDUCES HUNGER

and food insecurity by providing low-income people necessary food money.



SNAP IMPROVES DIETARY INTAKE

and health, especially among children and with lasting effects.

SNAP IS EFFICIENT, using electronic benefits technology and regular channels of commerce.



SNAP SUPPORTS WORK, helping families struggling with low wages.

SNAP BOLSTERS LOCAL ECONOMIES by increasing money spent for food at local retailers.



SNAP LIFTS MILLIONS OF PEOPLE out of poverty.

How to Access SNAP

- Contact your state's SNAP agency or call the SNAP information line at 1-800-221-5689 for information on how to apply in your area.
- [Check this SNAP prescreening tool](#) to see if you might be eligible.
- Many SNAP agencies allow you to [apply for SNAP online](#).
- Organizations, such as anti-hunger groups or food banks, in your area may offer SNAP application assistance.



SNAP Resources for Kinship/Grandfamilies

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Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) for Kinship/Grandfamilies

Background Information

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), previously known as food stamps, is the nation's largest nutrition program. By providing monthly benefits to purchase food, SNAP plays a critical role in reducing hunger, malnutrition, and poverty, and improving family security, child and adult health, employment, and other outcomes. Each month, tens of millions of people benefit from SNAP.

SNAP can provide support in times of need, such as after the loss of a job or a reduction in work hours. It can be especially helpful when there is an unexpected arrival of a grandchild or other child to the household.

SNAP (which may be called something else, depending on the jurisdiction) is administered by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and by the SNAP agency in the state or territory. SNAP operates in all fifty states, the District of Columbia, and two territories: Guam and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

Currently, tribal governments do not have the right to administer SNAP. State agencies are required to consult with Indian Tribal Organizations about the implementation and operation of SNAP on reservations. People who live on tribal lands should apply through the SNAP agency in the relevant state.


Nutrition Assistance Program Benefits in Puerto Rico, American Samoa, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands

Instead of SNAP, Puerto Rico, American Samoa, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands operate the Nutrition Assistance Program (NAP). Unlike SNAP, NAP operates based on fixed annual Congressional funding (a block grant), meaning that participation is capped. Puerto Rico, American Samoa, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands establish the eligibility and benefit levels for their NAP programs. To learn more about NAP, see this information from USDA.

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Promising Practices for Ensuring Kinship/Grandfamily Access to SNAP



The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) plays a vital role in reducing hunger, malnutrition, and poverty and improving family economic security, child and adult health, employment, and other social determinants of health. The program is an essential support for eligible kinship/grandfamilies, but too many eligible kinship/grandfamilies are missing out on this important nutrition support.

"Kinship/grandfamilies" is a term that refers to families in which grandparents, other relatives, or close family friends are raising children whose parents are unable to do so.

Only 42 percent of grandparent-headed households with grandchildren under age 18 and no parent present and with low incomes participated in SNAP in 2019.

Fortunately, there are key ways that stakeholders – including SNAP advocates, kinship advocates, SNAP agency staff, and lawmakers – can work to ensure that more eligible kinship/grandfamilies are connected to SNAP. This fact sheet highlights opportunities related to policy, outreach, and partnership that should be leveraged to expand SNAP access and maximize benefits for kinship/grandfamilies.

Get the resources:

- <https://www.gksnetwork.org/resources/snap-facts/>
- <https://www.gksnetwork.org/resources/promising-practices-for-ensuring-kinship-grandfamily-access-to-snap/>

Changes Coming to SNAP

- Budget Reconciliation Bill ([H.R. 1](#) aka the One Big Beautiful Bill Act)
- States Waivers to Restrict SNAP Food Purchases

Learn more with FRAC Chat:

<https://frac.org/blog>

School Breakfast Program and National School Lunch Program

School Breakfast Program

- **The School Breakfast Program (SBP)** provides free, reduced-price, or paid breakfasts in participating schools
- Any student attending a school that operates the School Breakfast Program can participate in the meal service. What the federal government covers, and what a student pays, depends on family income.
- All breakfasts served must meet **nutrition standards**
- A wide body of research **supports the health and educational benefits of participation in school breakfast.**



Just over **12.2 million children** received a free or reduced-price breakfast on a typical day in the 2023–2024 school year.

Only **58.1 children** received a FRP school breakfast for every **100 children** who received a FRP school lunch.

National School Lunch Program (NSLP)

- The **National School Lunch Program (NSLP)** provides free, reduced-price, or paid lunches in participating schools
- Any student attending a school that operates the National School Lunch Program can participate in the meal service. What the federal government covers, and what a student pays, depends on family income.
- All meals served must meet **nutrition standards**
- Studies show that participation in school lunch **reduces food insecurity, obesity rates, and poor health**



Just over **21.1 million children** received a **free or reduced-price lunch** on a typical day in the 2023–2024 school year.

How to Access Free or Reduced-Price School Meals

Contact your local school districts to see about availability of free breakfast and lunch and the application process, if any.

Automatic Eligibility (categorical eligibility)

Based on participation in: SNAP, TANF, Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations, or Medicaid (in most states).

Or because they are considered to be: homeless, “unaccompanied youth,” runaway, a migrant, participating in Head Start, or in foster care.

School Meal Applications

If the student in your care is not automatically eligible for free or reduced-price school meals, you will need to fill out a school meals application.

If you have questions about your school district’s specific policies, go to the Food and Nutrition Services webpage on your school district’s website, or call your school district and request to speak with Food and Nutrition Services.

Community Eligibility Provision

Federal option that allows high-poverty schools and districts to provide breakfast and lunch at no charge to all students.

Learn more: <https://frac.org/community-eligibility>

Healthy School Meals for All

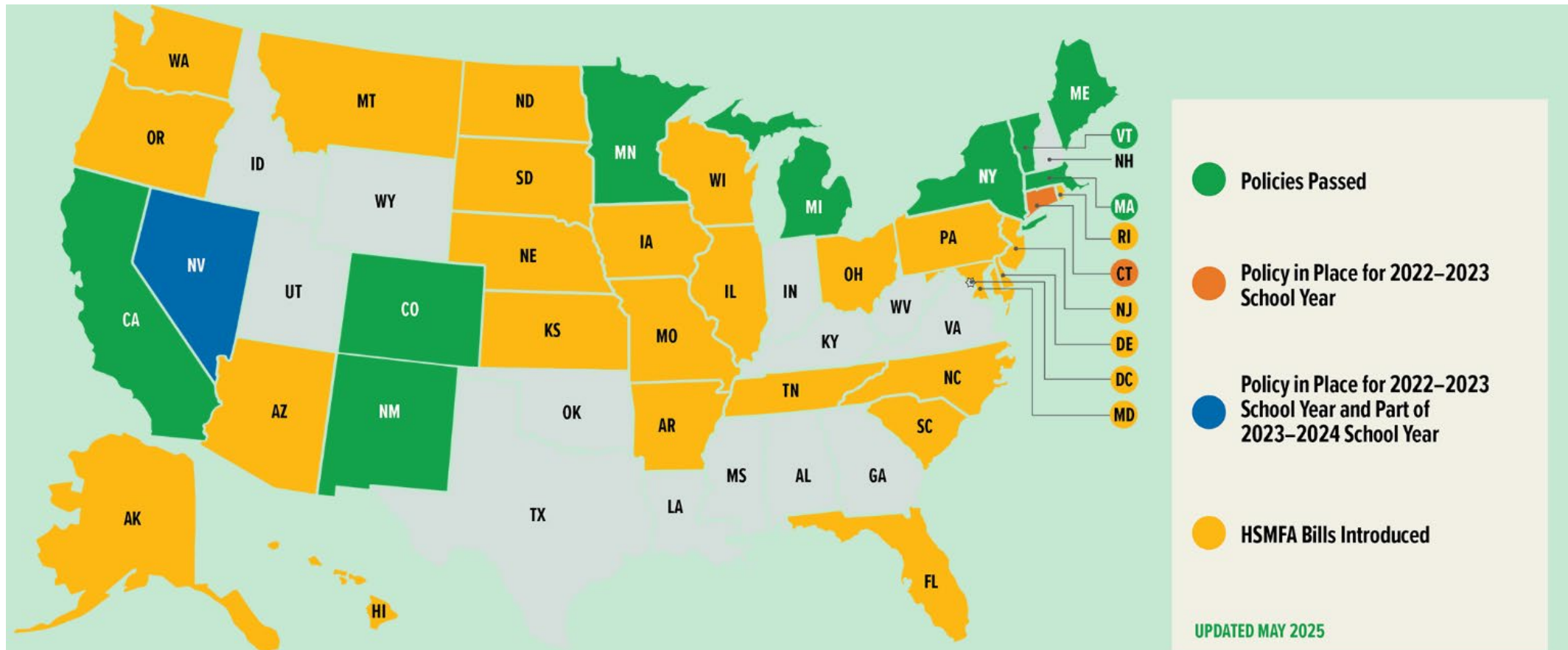
State policies that offer free school meals to all students regardless of household income

Even if your student’s school offers free school meals to all students, the district may still require that you submit a school meal or household income application for your student. Contact your school district’s Food and Nutrition Services Department for more information.

Healthy School Meals for All

Healthy School Meals for All — offering school breakfast and lunch to all students at no charge to families — helps ensure that all children have the nutrition they need to grow and thrive.

See whether Healthy School Meals for All are available in your state: <https://frac.org/healthy-school-meals-for-all>



School Meal Resource for Kinship/Grandfamilies



School Breakfast and Lunch Programs for Grandfamilies and Kinship Families

Millions of children across the country are raised by grandparents, other extended family, or close family friends when their parents are unable to raise them. These families, interchangeably known as grandfamilies and kinship families, provide a safe, stable, and loving environment for the children in their care. With the sudden increase in household and caregiving expenses, some grandfamilies and kinship families may face struggles with getting the food they need. The School Nutrition Programs – the [School Breakfast Program \(SBP\)](#) and the [National School Lunch Program \(NSLP\)](#) – provide the nutritious breakfasts and lunches children need during the school day, which can help lower household food costs for caregivers.

What Are School Meals?

All children who attend a school that participates in the School Nutrition Programs can eat school breakfast and lunch. In the 2021–2022 school year, approximately [30 million children participated](#) in school lunch, and 15 million children participated in school breakfast, each day. As of July 2023, seven states have passed permanent [Healthy School Meals for All](#) policies offering all children access to school meals at no charge: California, Colorado, Maine, Michigan, Minnesota, New Mexico, and Vermont. Nevada has a similar policy in place for the 2023–2024 school year. Schools in the remaining 42 states, and the District of Columbia, must qualify children for free or reduced-price school meals based on household income or participation in eligible assistance programs. Children who are determined eligible for reduced-price meals can be charged a maximum of 30 cents for breakfast and 40 cents for lunch. Children who are not certified for free or reduced-price school meals are charged for their meals. The cost of school breakfast and lunch for a child who does not qualify for free or reduced-price school meals may vary from school to school.

Caregivers do not have to have legal custody or guardianship, or be related to the child they are raising, to obtain free or reduced-price meals for their student.

What Are the Benefits of School Meals?

[School meals](#) provide the nutritional foundation children need to learn, grow, and thrive. Children who participate in school meals have reduced rates of hunger, improved health



or the school may offer translation services. If you have questions about your school district's specific policies, go to the Food and Nutrition Services webpage on your school district's website, or call your school district and request to speak with Food and Nutrition Services.

What Information Is Required to Complete a School Meals Application?

The school meals application requires the following information:

- the names and grades of each child;
- the names of all household members;
- the amount and source of income for each household member;
- the signature of an adult household member;

the last four digits of the Social Security number of the adult household member who signs the application. (If the adult does not have a Social Security number, they must write "none" in that space or check the box, "I do not have a Social Security number," if provided. Children are still eligible for free or reduced-price school meals even if no one in the household has a Social Security number, but the Social Security section cannot be left blank.)

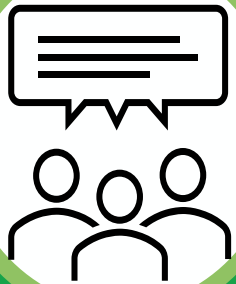
Information for any other information are strictly optional.

Family receives SNAP, TANF, FDPIR, or Medicaid (in most states), or if the child is in foster care or is considered homeless ("unaccompanied"), runaway, or the child(ren) should automatically qualify for free school meals without an application. However, some eligible children may be missed, requiring the caregiver to submit a school meals application. In these cases, you do not need to complete the entire application. Instead, you will only need to provide:

- the child's name;
- the household, or check a box stating that the child is homeless, migrant, or in foster care; and
- the signature of an adult household member.

Get the resource:

- <https://www.gksnetwork.org/resources/school-breakfast-and-lunch-programs-for-grandfamilies-and-kinship-families/>



Answer in the chat:

What's one or more strategy that has worked in your area to connect grandfamilies and kinship families to nutrition programs?

Afterschool Nutrition Programs

Afterschool Nutrition Programs

- Provides up to **one meal and snack per day** to children 18 and under
 - Afterschool, on weekends, and during school holidays excluding summer vacation
- Sites in attendance area of a school where 50% of children are eligible for free or reduced-price school meals
- Enrichment/educational component required
- Meal pattern components
 - Grain
 - Protein
 - Milk
 - Fruit
 - Vegetable



Why Are Afterschool Meals Important?



Combats hunger and food insecurity by providing free meals to children 18 and under at sites in low-income communities



Supports overall operations for schools, meal sponsors, and afterschool programs by providing **reimbursement** for meals and snacks



Program is **flexible** - including timing, meal options, locations, partners



Ensures children have the nutrition they need to stay engaged in afterschool programming

How to Access Afterschool Nutrition Programs

- For children and youth 18 and under who are enrolled in programs at participating community sites, including schools, parks and recreation centers, libraries, faith-based organizations, or community centers.
- Contact your [state agency](#) for participating sites.



Summer Nutrition Programs

Summer Nutrition Programs

- The **Summer Nutrition Programs** provide free meals and snacks to children 18 and under at sites in low-income communities or that serve primarily low-income children.
- **Two Congregate Program Options:** Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) and Seamless Summer Option (SSO)
- Meals must be served **onsite**, unless participating in the **rural non-congregate option**.
- **Sponsors** receive a **reimbursement** for each meal and snack served at eligible meal sites. There is no cost to participants.



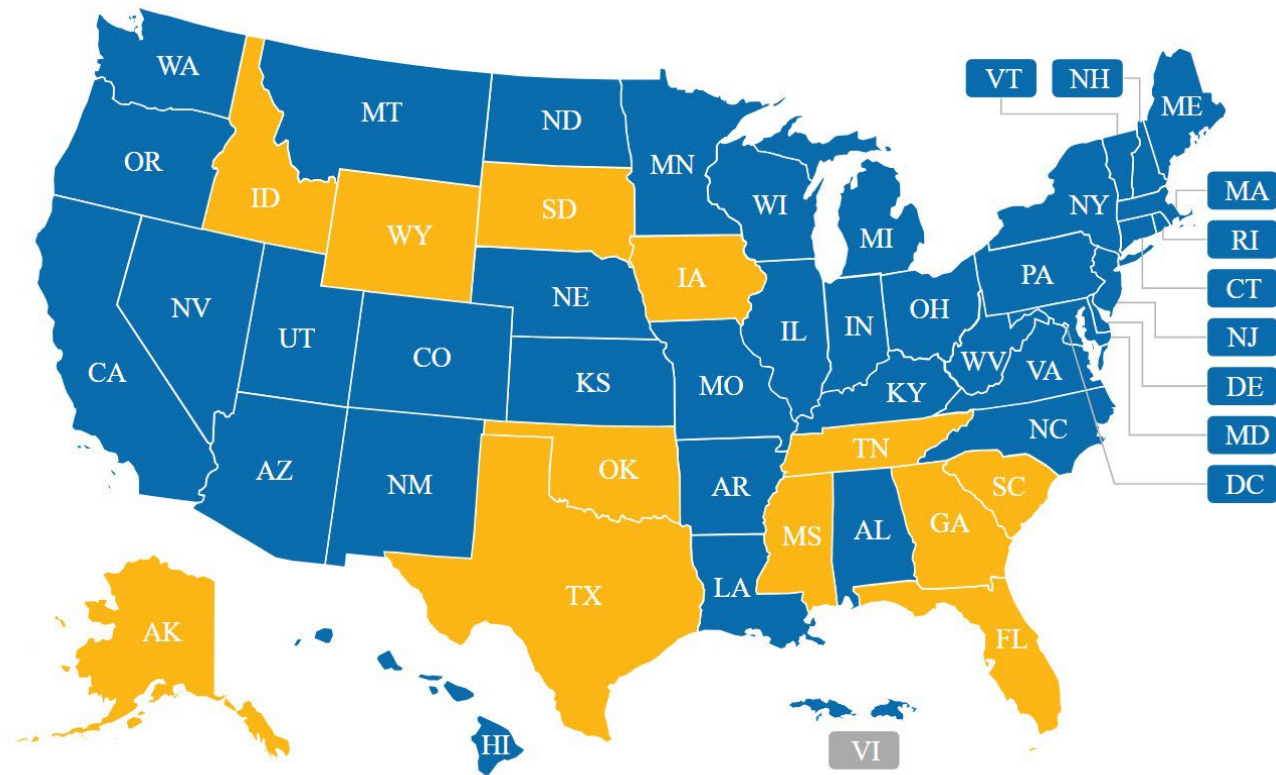
In July 2023, just over 2.8 **million children** across the country received a summer lunch. This was a 5.7 decrease when compared to the previous summer.

Summer Electronic Benefits Transfer

- **Summer EBT** provides families with eligible children grocery benefits to use during the summer months
- **Summer EBT** is a permanent program option as of Summer 2024
 - Summer Demonstration Projects (2011-2021)
 - Pandemic EBT (2020-2023)
- Families receive **\$40 a month** per eligible child (adjusted with inflation)
- **Eligibility:** Any child who is directly certified for free or reduced-price school meals, or who has been applied for free or reduced-price school meals and has been deemed eligible, will qualify. Students that attend a CEP or Provision 2 school and are not directly certified through another benefits program will need to apply through their state.



Summer EBT - 2025



2025 (planning to participate):
38 states, 5 ITOs, all territories

How to Access Summer Nutrition Programs

Summer Meals

- Children 18 and under can access meals at participating community sites, including schools, parks and recreation centers, libraries, faith-based organizations, or community centers.
- There is no need to show identification.
- Contact your local school district/state Department of Education to ask about participation in summer meals and find out about local sites and organizations that are participating. Check out USDA's summer meals finder <https://www.fns.usda.gov/summer/sitefinder>

Summer EBT

Most eligible children do not need to apply for Summer EBT benefits. You do not need to apply if:

- Your child(ren) is approved to receive free or reduced-price school meals through a school meal application,
- Your household participates in SNAP, TANF, the Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations, or Medicaid*,
- Your child(ren) is homeless, in foster care, migrant, or in Head Start.

You must submit an application if:

- Your child(ren) attends a school that offers free meals to all students (through community eligibility or Provision 2 or 3) and does not fall into one of the categories above.
- Your child(ren) attends a school that participates in the National School Lunch or Breakfast Programs but was not qualified for free or reduced-price school meals during the school year. This could be because you did not submit a school meal application during the school year, or your child became eligible during the summer.
- Visit your state website for more information on the process.

For more information on eligibility, please see FRAC's [Eligibility Guide](#).

Summer Nutrition Resource for Kinship/Grandfamilies

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Summer Nutrition Programs for Kinship/ Grandfamilies



When the school year ends, millions of children lose access to the school breakfasts and lunches they rely on during the school year. This can exacerbate summertime food insecurity for those children in kinship/grandfamilies. ("Kinship/grandfamilies" is a term that refers to families in which grandparents, other relatives, or close family friends are raising children whose parents are unable to do so.)

Fortunately, the Summer Nutrition Programs are designed to replace school breakfast and lunch and can help lower food costs for families. These programs ensure that children have consistent access to healthy meals during the summer months, which is critical for their health and well-being. In addition to providing nutritious meals, many Summer Nutrition Programs sites offer educational, enrichment, physical, and recreational activities; keep children safe and out of trouble; and provide crucial childcare for grandparents and other caregivers.

In 2023, a new permanent program was created to further reduce summertime food insecurity. Summer Electronic Benefit Transfer (Summer EBT) provides families approximately \$40 a month per eligible child to help with food costs during the summer months. Children are automatically eligible for Summer EBT benefits if they qualify for free or reduced-price meals during the school year. The Summer Nutrition Programs combined with Summer EBT is an effective recipe to meet children's nutritional needs during the summer.

What Are the Summer Nutrition Programs?

The federal [Summer Nutrition Programs](#) provide funding to organizations to serve meals and snacks to children 18 and under at sites during summer vacation. There is no cost to children or their families.

Local governments, school districts, and private nonprofits can operate summer meal sites, which may be located at schools, parks, recreation centers, housing complexes, tribal lands, YMCAs, Boys and Girls Clubs, houses of worship, camps, summer school, and other places where children congregate. Summer meal sites are classified as either

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operation and contact information. The map also designates whether they are traditional sites (where children eat at the program) or non-congregate (meaning children can take the meals home).
Schools are also required to share information about summer meals site locations. Caregivers should check with their school district to learn more.

What is Summer EBT and How Do I Know if a Student is Eligible?

Summer EBT provides families approximately \$40 a month per eligible child to help with food costs during the summer months. Not every state has chosen to participate.

Those who qualify for free or reduced-price meals while attending a school participating in the National School Lunch Program or School Breakfast Program are automatically eligible for Summer EBT benefits.

Schools determine eligibility for free or reduced-price meals by asking families to fill out a school meal application, or by directly certifying if the child participates in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), or Medicaid (if applicable in the state), or if they are experiencing homelessness, a foster child, or a migrant student. Families need to apply for Summer EBT if their student attends a Community Eligibility or Provision 2 school and is not directly certified through the program options listed above.

For more information on eligibility, please see the Food Research & Action Center's [Eligibility Guide](#).

Where Can I Learn More Information About the Summer Nutrition Programs?

For more information about summer meals and Summer EBT, contact your school district's Food and Nutrition Services Department or parent liaison or your school's case counselor.

For information on food assistance for kinship/grandfamilies, visit the Food Research & Action Center's [Hunger Among Grandfamilies and Kinship Families](#)

How?

The Summer Food Service Program was created in 1968, which means the Summer Nutrition Programs have been combatting summer food insecurity for over 50 years.

Get the resource:

- <https://www.gksnetwork.org/resources/summer-nutrition-programs-for-kinship-grandfamilies/>

Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP)

Child and Adult Care Food Program

CACFP is a federal nutrition program that provides reimbursements for nutritious meals and snacks served in eligible:

- family child care programs
- child care centers
- Early Head Start and Head Start programs
- afterschool programs
- emergency shelters
- adult care centers



Benefits of CACFP



HEALTH BENEFITS

- ▶ ENSURES children receive nutritious meals and snacks while in child care
- ▶ REDUCES food insecurity
- ▶ PROMOTES healthy growth
- ▶ BOOSTS learning and development



ECONOMIC VALUE

- ▶ SUPPORTS families' ability to work
- ▶ SUPPORTS jobs in child care
- ▶ SUPPORTS local economies through purchase of healthy foods at grocery stores and farmers markets
- ▶ MAKES child care more affordable for families with low incomes



QUALITY CHILD CARE SUPPORT

- ▶ BOOSTS and helps stabilize child care providers' income
- ▶ STRENGTHENS the quality of early care services
- ▶ RECOGNIZED as a quality indicator, with many states currently awarding Quality Rating and Improvement System points for participating in CACFP and/or following CACFP meal patterns

How to Access CACFP

- Typically for children attending eligible child care centers and homes, Head Start, and Early Head Start.
- Contact your [state agency](#) for participating child care centers and homes. Ask your child care provider to see if they are participating in CACFP.



Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children

WIC Eligibility

Individuals must meet four sets
of WIC eligibility criteria



Pregnant or Postpartum Individuals,
Infants, & Children up to 5 years old



Moderate to Low-Income



Nutrition Risk



Resident within State Agency Jurisdiction

Services Provided By WIC



Free Healthy Foods

Get everyday groceries like fresh fruits and vegetables, baby food, milk, eggs, beans, cheese and more.



Breastfeeding Support

Meet one-on-one with staff skilled in breastfeeding support who can give you helpful tips and answer your questions.



Nutrition Education

Get personalized tips on healthy eating, meal planning and resources from nutritionists, dietitians, nurses and other skilled staff.



Health and Community Resources

Get help finding and connecting to medical, dental and mental health care, along with other community-based services.


Source: USDA

How to Access WIC


- Apply through your local WIC clinic. Contact your [state's WIC agency](#) for information on local WIC service sites and how to apply.
- Check USDA's WIC prescreening tool to see if you might be eligible: <https://wic.fns.usda.gov/wps/pages/preScreenTool.xhtml>



WIC Resource for Kinship/Grandfamilies



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Kinship/Grandfamilies and the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC)

The Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) is a federal nutrition program that protects and improves the health of nutritionally at-risk infants, children up to 5 years old, and pregnant and postpartum individuals from households with low incomes. As a grandparent or other caregiver raising children whose parents cannot, you can apply for WIC for infants and children up to age 5 in your care. If approved, your local WIC clinic will give you an electronic benefits transfer (EBT) card to purchase a food package tailored to the infant or child's needs.

This document shares answers to frequently asked questions from grandfamilies and kinship families, so that you can better understand WIC and your options.

What is a WIC tailored food package?

WIC's tailored food packages are based on the infant or child's nutritional needs as prescribed by a WIC nutritionist. WIC approved foods include yogurt, eggs, milk, iron-fortified cereal, peanut butter, beans, whole-grain bread, tortillas, and rice, as well as infant formula, specialty formula, baby food, and infant cereal.

How do I get the food in the WIC food package?

Your local WIC clinic will provide you with a WIC electronic benefits transfer (EBT) card. You can then use your EBT card to shop for WIC foods at authorized grocery stores and other WIC approved vendors. The fruit and vegetable benefit of WIC has a cash value, and WIC also guarantees a voucher for one dozen eggs, while the fruit and vegetable voucher allows participants to buy a specific dollar amount of fruits and vegetables of their choosing.

The terms "grandfamily," "kinship family," and "kinship/grandfamily" can be used interchangeably to refer to all families in which grandparents, other relatives, or close family friends are raising children whose parents are unable to do so.



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In addition to a food package, are there other services available through WIC?

WIC provides nutrition education and counseling. You can access nutritional resources and materials with strategies for both children and caregivers. Resources include fact sheets, online curricula, classes, and sometimes even an individual nutritional counselor, all meant to answer any questions you may have.

WIC also offers screening referrals to other health, welfare, and social services, including Medicaid, the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), counseling, and family support.

How do I apply for WIC?

WIC is federally funded through the U.S. Department of Agriculture and is operated through local clinics by state WIC agencies and Indian Tribal Nations. To apply for WIC, contact your state or local WIC agency via the [state agency website or toll-free number](#).

The WIC agency will inform you about documents necessary to apply and conduct an appointment to confirm eligibility and enroll your household in WIC.

What must I show to apply for WIC?

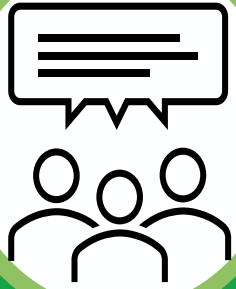
Grandparents and other caregivers need to show their identification and proof that they live at their address, that the child lives with them, and that they are responsible for the child. A caregiver enrolling an infant or child must sign the Rights & Responsibilities statement, which includes a statement that "I have legal authorization to provide information and to consent to medical treatment for the child/infant listed." Authorization can include a [power of attorney or delegation of parental authority](#) from parents or a [health care authorization form](#); it is not restricted to court-ordered custody. In some communities, the caregiver may be required to share these legal documents, and in others, the Rights & Responsibilities statement will be enough.

What are the income requirements to qualify for WIC?

Households are automatically income-eligible for WIC if your household or the child in your household is in Medicaid or SNAP. You are also income-eligible for WIC if you are low income (household income at or below 185 percent of the federal poverty guidelines, as displayed in Table 1). For the purposes of WIC, income is usually defined as the income of all members of the household.

Get the resource:

- <https://www.gksnetwork.org/resources/kinship-grandfamilies-and-wic/>



Answer in the chat:

What barriers have you seen in your area when it comes to connecting grandfamilies and kinship families to nutrition programs?

Food Distribution Programs

The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP)

How It Works	Who Can Apply	Learn More
<p>Food distributed (e.g., grocery bags or boxes) via food bank partners, including pantries, senior centers, and faith-based groups.</p> <p><i>Many food banks use The Emergency Food Assistance Program, a means-tested federal program that provides food commodities at no cost to individuals and families in need of short-term hunger relief.</i></p>	<p>For people/households with low income, but requirements vary depending on the site.</p> <p>Some sites require referrals.</p>	<p>Check out Feeding America for information on food banks and emergency food sites.</p>

Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR)

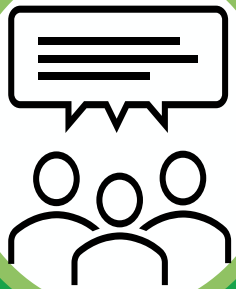
How It Works	Who Can Apply	Learn More
<p>Provides a monthly package of foods to participants.</p> <p>Administered by more than 107 Indian Tribal Organizations and three state agencies that store and distribute USDA foods, determine applicant eligibility, and provide nutrition education to participants.</p>	<p>For households with low income living on Indian reservations and Native American households residing in designated areas near reservations or in Oklahoma.</p> <p>There are caps on the number of people who can participate.</p> <p>Households cannot participate in FDPIR and SNAP in the same month.</p>	<p>See USDA's website for more information</p>

Commodity Supplemental Food Program

How It Works	Who Can Apply	Learn More
<p>Provides a monthly food box with items like canned fruit and vegetables, cheese, shelf-stable milk, cereals, grains, peanut butter, and dried beans.</p> <p>Authorized to operate in every state, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico, and by several Indian Tribal Organizations. Administered by a State agency in conjunction with local food banks, nutrition programs, and community action organizations.</p>	<p>For adults age 60 and older with low incomes (at or below 130% of the federal poverty level).</p> <p>There are caps on the number of people who can participate, and the program is not available in every area.</p>	<p>See USDA for more information</p>

Older Americans Act Nutrition Programs

Program	How It Works	Who Can Apply	Learn More
Congregate Meals Program	<p>Provides group meals at participating sites throughout the country, such as recreation centers, senior housing, places of worship, and other community spaces.</p> <p>Meals (typically lunch) served Mondays through Fridays and must provide at least one-third of the recommended daily dietary allowance.</p> <p>Meals are free but voluntary contributions are accepted.</p>	<p>For adults age 60 and older (plus spouse, household member with a disability, or caregiver accompanying an older adult to site, as well as site volunteers).</p> <p>Preference is given to those with the greatest economic and social needs, with particular attention to: older individuals with low incomes, older adults from marginalized communities, older adults with limited English proficiency, older individuals residing in rural areas, and older adults at risk of institutional care.</p>	<p>Check out the Eldercare Locator to locate a participating site.</p> <p>Meals on Wheels provides a listing of sites</p>
Home-Delivered Meals Program	<p>Meals are delivered to places of residence (number of meals and frequency vary).</p> <p>Meals must provide at least one-third of the recommended daily dietary allowances.</p> <p>Meals are free but voluntary contributions are accepted.</p> <p>Note: Meals on Wheels programs throughout the country offer home-delivered meals and may have different criteria for participation; some are funded with Title III, OAA funding, while others rely in whole or in part on non-governmental funding.</p>	<p>For people who are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •60 years of age or older •frail, homebound, or isolated •the spouses of or a person with disabilities who lives with a participating older adult <p>There are caps on the number of people who can participate, and, while there is no means test for participation, preference is given to those with the greatest economic and social needs, with particular attention to: older individuals with low incomes, older adults from marginalized communities, older adults with limited English proficiency, older individuals residing in rural areas, and older adults at risk of institutional care.</p>	<p>Check out the Eldercare Locator for information on home delivered meals in your area.</p> <p>Meals on Wheels provides a listing of sites as well as other home-delivered meal services.</p>



Answer in the chat:

What resources, training, technical assistance, and/or relationships would help you connect grandfamilies and kinship families to nutrition programs?

Resources

Grandfamilies and Kinship Support Network Resources on Federal Nutrition Programs

SNAP

- [Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program \(SNAP\) for Kinship/ Grandfamilies](#)
- [Promising Practices for Ensuring Kinship/Grandfamily Access to SNAP](#)

School Meals

- [School Breakfast and Lunch Programs for Grandfamilies and Kinship Families](#)

Summer Programs

- [Summer Nutrition Programs for Kinship/ Grandfamilies](#)

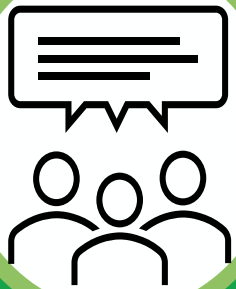
WIC

- [Kinship/Grandfamilies and the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children \(WIC\)](#)

Additional resources and reports from FRAC: [frac.org](https://www.frac.org)

Sign up for FRAC news:
[frac.org/subscribe-to-enews](https://www.frac.org/subscribe-to-enews)

Generations United's report produced with support from FRAC:
[Together at the Table: Supporting the Nutrition, Health, and Well-Being of Grandfamilies](#)



Answer in the chat:

What's one action you'll take to connect grandfamilies/kinship families to nutrition programs?

Connect With Us!

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Food Research & Action Center
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Let's Celebrate National Kinship Care Month!

Toolkit to Raise Awareness and
Celebrate Kinship Families

September 2025



**generations
united**
Because we're stronger together®

**GRANDFAMILIES & KINSHIP
SUPPORT NETWORK**
A National Technical Assistance Center

Join Us For Our Next Webinars

How to Strengthen Tribal State Relationships to Maximize Resources for Families

September 22, 2025, from 2:00-3:30 PM ET

Join the National Indian Child Welfare Association and the Grandfamilies & Kinship Support Network to explore how states and Tribes can work together to best support relative caregivers and families.

Data-Driven Insights on Kin Placements & Kin Stability

September 29, 2025, from 2:00-3:30 PM ET

Join us for a discussion on what we can learn about kinship families using placement data, and how these data-driven insights can help further the case for a kinship-first culture.



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