HUNGER in TENNESSEE

P-EBT Is Here!

Tennessee DHS has been approved to distribute P-EBT benefits for the 2022-23 school year, including Summer 2023 P-EBT! Early childcare P-EBT has been approved for another year, and for the first-time eligible home schooled and virtual students may receive P-EBT benefits. Families with eligible children should expect benefits in the upcoming months. See the Child Nutrition section for more details on the P-EBT program.

LEARN MORE
May is Older Americans Month

When it comes to food insecurity, older Americans are often the most affected. However, only 43% of eligible Tennessee seniors are participating in the SNAP program. Feeding America’s research shows that hunger rates among those 60 and older have increased by 45% since 2001. And seniors in Memphis face the highest rate of food insecurity compared to all other metropolitan areas in the United States. Click the button below to read more about this issue.

LEARN MORE
Senior Hunger in Tennessee

Shahrazad Rashid is a mother, a senior citizen, a refugee, and a SNAP participant. When her children were young, Shahrazad and her husband, Younus, brought them to the USA to escape persecution in Kurdistan. Since then, she has become the full-time caregiver to her three sons, all of whom have disabilities that require around-the-clock care. Her husband works, but one income alone is not enough to support a family in Nashville. In addition, the family faces disability-related barriers to citizenship which have affected their ability to access other forms of government aid, meaning that SNAP is a lifeline for Shahrazad and her three children.

Despite the challenges, Shahrazad’s spirit never falters and TJC is proud to honor her as a 2023 Mother of the Year! To see her full story, click the button below.

TJC’s 2023 Mothers and Caregivers of the Year
The Public Health Emergency Has Ended and this Impacts SNAP

The Federal Public Health Emergency (PHE) ended on May 11 and this will negatively impact many working adults ages 18-49 and college students trying to access SNAP. Working adults, known as Able-Bodied Adults Without Dependents (ABAWDs), will face a 3-month time limit to SNAP benefits unless they are working or meet an exemption. College students face greater restriction to SNAP. Under the PHE, any student eligible for work
study programs was exempt from such requirements whether they worked or not. Check out the PHE timeline, posted to Instagram.

SNAP Overpayment Petition

Thank you to the 700 individuals who signed TJC’s SNAP Overpayment petition, sending letters of action directly to Governor Bill Lee. The state continues to demand that families pay back thousands of dollars for food aid that they received during the pandemic, even though the federal government has allowed states to waive pandemic overpayments.

We will continue to urge Governor Lee and Tennessee to remove this burden of debt from families who struggled to make ends meet during the pandemic and continue to feel the impact. If you or someone you know has been impacted by this issue and want to share your story, we are here to listen. Please contact TJC’s Nutrition Team at nutrition@tnjustice.org.

CLICK HERE to see News Channel 5 in Nashville interview our very own Nutrition Client Advocate Anna Luttrell about this issue.

CLICK HERE to see the Openline interview on News Channel 5.
Research Opportunity for College Students

The Education Trust – Tennessee is researching the cost of higher education and its impact on student success. For participating in a 40-minute Zoom focus group, current college students will receive a $25 VISA gift card. If you are interested complete this 5 minute survey. Questions can be directed to Sonny Metoki at smetoki@edtrust.org.
Join the WIC Champions Group!

Do you want to help more moms and young children access healthy food? The WIC Champions group is reconvening on June 21 at 1:30pm CT. This group will meet monthly and is for partners who are interested in improving access for women, children, and caregivers of young children to the WIC program. TJC, along with other experts, will share information about the program, focus on outreach, collaborate, and learn about how WIC works in communities across Tennessee. We share program details, discuss opportunities to eligible families, and hear updates from you! Please join us!

JOIN THE GROUP
CHILD NUTRITION

P-EBT is Approved!

**P-EBT benefits for the 2022-23 school year**
Students who receive free or reduced school meals may be eligible for benefits for days they missed school due to COVID during this past school year.

**Summer 2023 P-EBT**
Students who are enrolled in free or reduced-price school meals may be eligible for Summer P-EBT.

**Early Child Care P-EBT**
Children 6 and under are once again approved for P-EBT benefits.

**Home schooled and Virtual students**
For the first-time, students who moved to virtual schooling in response to the pandemic may be eligible for P-EBT.

Check out the DHS website for more details [HERE](#).

For more information, contact us at nutrition@tnjustice.org or click below.
Federal Legislation

Needlessly Harming SNAP to Raise the Debt Ceiling

Don’t let Congress harm SNAP to raise the Debt Ceiling. SNAP and other safety net programs are under attack. Representative Kevin McCarthy proposes to cut vital programs like SNAP, Medicaid, and TANF; taking them away from the poorest Americans who are struggling to make ends meet.

This bill is headed to the Senate. You can protect SNAP and other safety net programs:

TAKE ACTION

Farm Bill 2023 Legislation

The 2023 Farm Bill is set to expire in September 2023 and is an opportunity for Congress to consider policy changes that affect millions of individuals and families who rely on SNAP to put food on the table. Here are a few pieces of legislation proposed at the federal level that will affect Tennesseans’ access to nutrition programs.
Support these bills to ensure better access to SNAP:

- The LIFT The BAR Act would remove the 5-year bar on immigrants and other non-citizens in accessing federal safety net programs like SNAP. For more information, click HERE.
- The Improving Access to Nutrition Act would remove work requirements for participation in the SNAP program.
- The Enhanced Access to SNAP Act (EATS Act) would remove unequal work-related eligibility requirements for college students, allowing enrollment in classes to fulfill those requirements.
- The MEAL Act would end the almost 30-year drug felony ban on the SNAP program. The bill would allow inmates to begin the application process while still in prison, ensuring they have benefits from Day One.

*Take Action on These Bills: [Click Here to Take Action]*

Oppose this harmful bill to SNAP:

- **R. 1581** would 1) increase the age limit of SNAP time limits from 18-49 to 18-65, limiting millions of senior citizens to just 3 months of SNAP benefits and, 2) also limit the parents of children over the age of 7 to just 3 months of SNAP benefits if they are underemployed or unemployed. This bill is co-sponsored by Tennessee Rep. Andy Ogles (district 5) in Nashville.

*Take Action on This Bills: [Click Here to Take Action]*

**Improving School Meals**

The School Meals During School Closures Act, introduced by Reps. Ilhan Omar, Adam Schiff, and Jahana Hayes, would ensure that schools have the necessary federal flexibilities to continue serving meals to students during certain unanticipated school closures such as natural disasters and extreme weather events, public health emergencies, or other such events.

Contact your Representative and ask them to endorse this legislation. Find your representative by clicking the button below:

**TENNESSEE STATE LEGISLATION**

The Tennessee state General Assembly adjourned the 2023 legislative session for the year on April 21. Stay tuned for future updates as we get closer to the 2024 legislative session set to reconvene on January 9, 2024.

**UPCOMING WEBINARS AND EVENTS**

Addressing Senior Hunger in Tennessee Webinar
Thursday, May 23, 2023, at 1:00pm CT -- 43% of eligible Tennessee seniors have access to SNAP, leaving well over half of the state’s low-income seniors without this support to afford food. Seniors face unique circumstances when it comes to food insecurity. Join us to learn how hunger impacts seniors, and how SNAP and other safety net programs can be a lifeline for seniors. There is more that Tennessee could do to ensure better access to the program. We will share information about the Elderly Simplified Application Project (ESAP) and talk about how the state and advocates can address food insecurity among Tennessee seniors.

REGISTER HERE

SNAP Access

Thursday, May 18, 2023, at 10:00am CT – Join us to discuss SNAP advocacy, casework best practices, and nutrition program updates. E-mail nutrition@tnjustice.org for more information.

REGISTER HERE

Ending Hunger for People Exiting Prison

Thursday, June 22 at 1:00 pm CT – People exiting the prison system are twice as likely to experience food insecurity. In addition to hunger people leaving prison can also face housing insecurity, struggle to find employment and face the risk of recidivism. In 2021, the recidivism rate in Tennessee was 46%. SNAP and other supports are available to help individuals who are leaving the prison system, but barriers and misinformation can keep some people from applying. Join us to discuss how the nutrition safety net programs can help incarcerated persons regain a firm standing when reentering society after release, how programs like SNAP can help reduce recidivism, and strategies that are being used to make sure these individuals have access to benefits on Day One.

REGISTER HERE

{{Disclaimer}}

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