Tennessee Immigrant Access to Nutrition Safety Net

April 27th, 2023 | 1:00 PM
TJC and the Nutrition Team

Signe Anderson (she/her)
Director of Nutrition Advocacy

Crys Riles (they/them)
Anti-Hunger Advocate

Anna Luttrell (she/her)
Nutrition Client Advocate

Vanessa Zapata (she/her)
Nutrition Attorney
TJC Anti-Hunger Advocacy

Our mission: End hunger in Tennessee by protecting and strengthening the federal nutrition programs: SNAP, WIC, Child Nutrition Programs

- Improve access and remove barriers to programs
- Advocate for solutions to systemic issues
- Educate and inform
- Provide policy expertise
- Direct client work
## Federal Nutrition Programs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SNAP</td>
<td>Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WIC</td>
<td>Special Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program for Women, Infants, and Children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NSLP</td>
<td>National School Lunch Program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SBP</td>
<td>School Breakfast Program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SFSP</td>
<td>Summer Food Service Program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CACFP</td>
<td>Child and Adult Care Food Program</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### The Special Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program

- Reduces Food Insecurity
- Improves Dietary Intake and Health
- Protects Against Obesity
- Boosts Learning and Development
- Supports Economic Security
- Lifts Families out of Poverty
- Acts as Stimulus for Local Economies

**SNAP STRENGTHS**

- **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 BOLSTERS LOCAL ECONOMIES** by increasing money spent for food at local retailers.
- **SNAP LIFTS MILLIONS OF PEOPLE** out of poverty.

---

FRAC (Food Research & Action Center)
Immigrant Data

• 5% Tennesseans (1 in 20) are immigrants\(^1\)

• 4% Tennesseans are born citizens w/ one immigrant parent\(^1\)

• **Children of immigrants** are fastest growing demographic of American youth\(^2\)

• >40% **poor children** (nationally) are children of immigrants\(^2\)
Benefit Program Access Issues

- 5-year ban to safety net programs, includes naturalized citizens
- Mixed-eligibility household status and income requirements
- Inadequate translation services
- Cultural differences
Available Programs

- **WIC** does not require proof of citizenship
- **School Meals** does not require proof of citizenship
- **Citizens and "qualified non-citizens"** can qualify for SNAP, WIC, CNP
- **Refugees and Asylees** can qualify for SNAP, WIC, CNP
Why We Care

• Immigrant/LEP issues are a priority of TJC's casework, advocacy, and partner agencies

• Food should be a Human Right

• Our clients speak many languages

• SNAP and safety net creates growth for families AND the economy
Luis Pedraza (he/him)
Resource Coordinator
Luis@tnimmigrant.org
TIRRC Services & Resources

- English Classes
- Citizenship Classes
- Covid-19 Vaccine Resources
- Immigration Services & Legal Consultations
- Medical Services Referrals
- Food Bank Referrals

615-414-1030 | Monday-Friday, 9am-5pm CT
3310 Ezell Rd, Nashville, TN 37211
TNIMMIGRANT.ORG
BECOME A CITIZEN NOW!

BASIC ELIGIBILITY

- Be at least 18 years old
- Be a permanent resident for at least 5 years (or 3 years if you are married to a U.S. citizen)
- Have lived continuously in the U.S. for at least 5 years
- Be able to read, write, and speak basic English

CALL OR TEXT TO MAKE AN APPOINTMENT
615-282-5544

SATURDAY, JUNE 17TH, 2023

*Free citizenship screening will be done to verify eligibility*
MAY OPEN HOUSE

JOIN US AND OUR COMMUNITIES FOR A FREE & FUN ICE CREAM & SUMMER GAMES PARTY!

WE WILL HAVE FREE DIAPERS, COVID-19 VACCINES FOR ALL AGES 5+, AND ASSISTANCE WITH SNAP/WIC/OTHER BENEFITS ENROLLMENT.

THURSDAY, MAY 11, 4-7PM
3310 EZE LL RD., NASHVILLE, TN (615) 414-1030
Anna Luttrell (she/her)

Nutrition Client Advocate

SNAP Caseworker for

Tennessee Justice Center
## Citizenship Requirements

### SNAP

**Public charge does not apply**

**Who is eligible?**
- Immigrants with Lawful Permanent Residency (LPR)/ a Green Card for 5+ years
- Children under age 18 with LPR/citizenship with no 5-year waiting period
- Cuban and Haitian entrants
- Most refugees with no waiting period

### WIC

**Public charge does not apply**

**Who is eligible?**
- Tennessee residents
- No SSN necessary
- No proof of status necessary
- Pregnant/postpartum women, children under 5
Carmen Hunter (she/her)
Welcome Center Specialist
carmen@latinomemphis.org
Our impact model has 3 aspects:

We are empowering families and individuals
Through direct social and legal services. From making over 7,000 contacts for information and referrals, reuniting 351 migrant children, working with 300 current clients with affordable immigration legal services, human trafficking victims, and a new workforce development pilot, Latino Memphis is bridging service gaps. We pilot, innovate, and bridge gaps because everyone deserves an opportunity.

We were impacting systemic change
Through advocacy and engagement. According to the 2020 Census, the Latinx population was the solo group that showed growth by a significant 43% margin. Yet, we are still underrepresented in just about every table. Being a voice, a thought partner, and a critical friend essential to our mission: from voting registration and activation to educating policymakers and decision-makers about issues impacting the Latinx community.

We are scaling impact
Through strategic and meaningful collaboration. We know well that nobody can do this work alone. This is why we leverage our understanding and connections of the Latinx community with the expertise and focus of our government, companies and nonprofit partners. This work is about contribution rather than attribution, and it was particularly evident during our efforts to increase testing, vaccination, and resources during the pandemic.
8 programmatic areas:

EL CENTRO: Information & Resources

DERECHOS: Immigrant Rights Defense Center

JUSTICIA: Civil legal services

TU VOZ: Advocacy engagement and partnerships.

SENDEROS: Workforce Development

PUENTES: Unaccompanied minors and support for victims of trafficking

CONECTATE: Bridging the digital divide

TU SALUD: Community Health
EL CENTRO
Information & Resources

El Centro is the oldest and largest program at Latino Memphis. El Centro’s work is two-fold: mission focused direct client services and collaborative community wide efforts towards that end.

This center provides information and referral services connecting clients with in-house services as well as external agencies. This allows us to serve their critical needs in the areas of health, justice, education and clerical assistance among many others.

Latino Memphis seeks to ensure that Latinos are on a path to improved health and self-sufficiency. However, the majority of our clients are in extremely vulnerable situations and many who visit El Centro lack sufficient documentation and English language proficiency to access available services, and do not have the knowledge to reach out to alternative resources. The majority of our clients are women between the ages of 30-50, with 2-3 children, an equivalent of a middle school education and little to no English skills. Additionally, the rapid growth of this community has meant that regional nonprofits, healthcare providers and other social service agencies have struggled to keep up with the unique needs of this population. Latino Memphis works to bridge this gap and make meaningful services available to our community.
EL CENTRO
Information & Resources

We answer over **50 calls** and welcome **15 in-person visits daily**

Last year we received more than **5,804 calls.**
El Centro SNAP Services

- Helping apply via DHS portal
- Assistance with Renewal/Changes/Simplified form
- Faxing, uploading verification documents and forms

El Centro on average helps about 6-10 clients apply for benefits per week. We facilitated faxing docs or forms on behalf of clients between 2-5 times a day.
Challenges

- **Accessibility**
  - No email
  - Internet access
  - Portal not smartphone friendly
  - No more Faxes
  - Drop offs (no transportation)
  - Long phone wait times/language barriers
  - Questions about benefits/how to apply

- **Education Barriers**
  - Spanish is their second language (Speak home langauge like K’iche’ and Mam)
  - Digital Literacy
  - Poor education
LM Support

- Digital Skills 4 Life
- Language Line Access
- Setting up portal for clients that don’t have one
- Reading letters and documents from DHS
- Making sure client understand that DHS is mailing a few documents together to make sure they don’t miss deadlines
ADVOCACY/ACTION OPPORTUNITIES
LIFT the BAR Act /Federal Legislation

• Reintroduced soon (by Rep. Pramila Jayapal)
• Potential legislation for 2023 Farm Bill
• Lifts 5-year bar on "Lawfully present non-citizens" to accessing safety net programs like SNAP
• If passed, 1.2 million people would benefit
• LIFT the BAR Week

• May 1-5, 2023

• [Food Research and Action Center](#) and [Protecting Immigrant Families](#)

• [Sign up Now!](#)

• LIFT The BAR Act Webinar from PIF – Will be in follow up email
LIFT the BAR Resources

- LIFT the BAR Act Fact Sheet from PIF in Spanish & English
- Five-Year Bar Resource kit for agencies
- 74% of Americans support expanding access
- Agency Letter of Support
- Individuals: Call your legislator!
Information & Resources

- New York Times Article
- Urban Institute Report
- USDA eligibility info for non-citizen SNAP Access
- SNAP/USDA/FNS Guidance on non-citizen eligibility
- Protecting Immigrant Families website
- CLASP – Lists of resources
- FRAC - Food Over Fear
- Migration Policy Institute Report
- American Immigration Council TN Facts Sheet
- Academic Pediatrics Article
- Protecting Immigrant Families Webinar – In follow up email
QUESTIONS?

Tennessee Justice Center

Crys Riles (they/them)
Anti-Hunger Advocate
criles@tnjustice.org

Signe Anderson (she/her)
Director of Nutrition Advocacy
sanderson@tnjustice.org

Anna Luttrell (she/her)
Nutrition Client Advocate
aluttrell@tnjustice.org

Vanessa Zapata (she/her)
Nutrition Attorney
vzapata@tnjustice.org