

Nutrition Note



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Four months into the pandemic and many Tennesseans continue to face housing and job insecurity while struggling to feed their families. COVID-19 has disrupted many facets of our lives and has placed barriers to the most basic needs for families. Minority and immigrant communities are disproportionately impacted by food security during the pandemic and are at higher risk for contracting COVID-19. Children have lost access to the free meals that they rely on. Funding and food resources such as the P-EBT program have been made available through the stimulus and changes by USDA to the nutrition safety net. Read on to learn more about these programs and how your community can access this support. More needs to be done to support the food security of families in Tennessee.

COVID-19 Updates

Pandemic- Electronic Benefit Transfer (P-EBT) Program Comes to Tennessee

P-EBT provides money to families with children who receive free or reduced-price school meals, or who attend a Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) school that offers free school meals to all students.

P-EBT Updates

- Families started to receive money in June.
- There's still time to apply! The application was extended, through July 13.

- Eligible families who do not participate in SNAP (food stamps), [must apply here](#).
- Families who applied and were approved will receive their P-EBT cards in July.
- Families who participate in SNAP, received their first P-EBT installment in June.
- Both SNAP and non-SNAP families will receive the second installment of P-EBT funds at the end of July.
- Note: Families may continue to receive free meals from schools, pick-up points, and SFSP meal sites. Participation does not disqualify eligibility for P-EBT or reduce the number of dollars you will receive.
- Note: Children in pre-school are eligible for P-EBT if they participate in free or reduced-price meals.
- P-EBT provides \$5.70 (the daily total cost of school breakfast and lunch) per student per school day disrupted by the pandemic, (approximately 44 days), totaling \$250.80 per child.

TJC will send updates on any breaking news regarding P-EBT as we learn about them. [Sign-up here to be the first to know](#).

UPCOMING EVENTS

Virtual Rural Hunger Summit

Thursday July 9 from 9-11am CT/10am-12pm ET.

Join the Tennessee Justice Center and the Second Harvest Food Bank of Northeast Tennessee for a Virtual Rural Hunger Summit on July 9 from 9:00 am – 11:00 am CT/ 10:00 am to 12:00 pm ET. We will discuss issues related to SNAP and the Child Nutrition Programs and how the nutrition safety net is working to support families during COVID-19. We will have speakers from the region and ask you to bring your questions and share information about the work you are doing in your community to address hunger at this time. We hope you will register to join us. [Register here](#).

TJC COVID-19 Webpage for Partner Organizations

The nutrition team has compiled all our COVID-19 resources for partner organizations on our website. Find policy updates, advocacy opportunities, and additional resources:

[SNAP & COVID-19](#)

[WIC & COVID-19](#)

[Child Nutrition Programs & COVID-19](#)

If you or someone you know is experiencing food insecurity and needs assistance, please [click here](#).

SNAP

SNAP Benefits Changes

Maximum SNAP Allotment extended through July

Due to COVID-19, the USDA allowed states to provide all SNAP households the maximum monthly amount for their household size (\$194 for a household of 1). This has been extended through July for all existing and new SNAP applicants. It will be given automatically. [Read more about the Maximum SNAP benefit.](#)

Online SNAP Purchasing – Available Now!

As of June 1, 2020 SNAP participants can buy groceries online through Amazon and Walmart and have them delivered. SNAP benefits do not cover delivery fees. SNAP participants can also purchase groceries online through Kroger, for pick up at their local Kroger store. [Read more.](#)

DHS Offices Reopen

DHS offices are open by appointment only. Call your local DHS Office to set up an appointment. Learn more about the COVID-19 precautions TDHS is taking and rules for visiting in person [here](#).

- DHS phone numbers by county can be [found here](#).
- SNAP applications can be submitted online, by mail, or by fax to your county DHS or Family Assistance Office. A list of county offices and contact information can be found [here](#).
- **DHS will not contact applicants for interviews before making determinations** – be sure to include all relevant information, such as medical bills if applicable, when applying to receive the correct amount.

If you have questions about these new changes or if you experience barriers to applying to SNAP please contact Sarah Henson at shenson@tnjustice.org

College Hunger

As many campuses are deciding what to do for the Fall semester, our college partners are hard at work during this time to ensure TN students basic needs are met. Our last College Hunger Call was July 1. Find the [recording](#) here.

Email Sarah at shenson@tnjustice.org to join the next College Hunger call.

The WIC Program

WIC Benefits Changes

USDA has extended all approved WIC waivers through September 30! These waivers allow for a continuation of remote and flexible services, including:

- Remote WIC certification for new applicants
- Remote appointments
- Remote benefit issuance
- Expanded options for WIC-eligible foods

If you or someone you know is experiencing barriers to scheduling or attending a WIC appointment, please contact Signe Anderson at sanderson@tnjustice.org.

Due to grocery store inventory shortages, WIC participants have some flexibilities in the food they purchase with WIC. If the designated WIC food is sold out at the grocery, WIC participants can purchase alternative food. For more information about what food is currently eligible in WIC benefits packages, [please see here](#).

Newly Eligible for WIC?

The COVID-19 pandemic has created economic challenges for families across the state. As a result, there may be women, infants and children who are newly eligible for this nutrition food support. Here are some resources that share more information about WIC and how to apply.

[WIC Basics](#)

[Find out if you are eligible](#)

Reminder – WIC offices are taking applications over the phone and have limited or no in person visits because of the pandemic. Call your local WIC office (800) DIAL-WIC if you would like to apply. [Find your WIC office here](#).

Child Nutrition

Although schools closed for the remainder of the 2019-2020 school year, many schools across the state are still providing meals to children. Operating schools are providing pick-up meals and delivery. Visit this site locator to find out where school meals are available: [School Meal Finder](#).

School Meals and Community Eligibility Provision (CEP)

As the 2020-2021 school year approaches, applications for the National School Lunch Program (Free/Reduced Lunch Program) will be distributed to families within the following weeks. Schools are responsible for sending eligible families the application. Families receiving SNAP or Families First (TANF) can apply regardless of income. The remaining families must meet the income requirements of the Federal Income Eligibility Guidelines, which can be found [here](#).

USDA is extending the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) deadlines for this coming school year. Deadlines for CEP reporting, notification, and election have all been extended so that the deadline to elect a school for CEP in the 2020-2021 school year is now August 31.

Summer Meals

In an effort to keep children fed as COVID-19 continues to disrupt daily life, the USDA has extended a waiver allowing **local partners** the ability to **continue serving free meals to all children** – regardless of where they live – **for the remainder of the summer**.

Previously, USDA extended 3 waivers to help kids continue to access food through August 31. As communities continue to be impacted by school closures and economic downturn, these waivers allow sponsors and sites to continue meal service during the summer as they begin to coordinate long term responses to the pandemic into the fall.

Remember that these waivers are still in place:

1. **Non-Congregate Feeding:** To support social distancing, meals may be served outside group settings. For example, meals may be distributed at a pick-up site or delivered to directly to homes.
2. **Meal Service Times:** Meals may be served outside of the standard designated meal times. This way, multiple days-worth of meals may be provided at once.
3. **Parents may Pick Up Meals for Children:** Students no longer have to be present for meal pick-up. A parent or guardian may now pick up children's meals.

Hunger Intersects with Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion

June was Pride month. But the end of Pride is not the end of the fight for justice in the LGBTQIA+ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex, Asexual) community. LGBTQIA individuals face a number of health and food access barriers that make protections against discrimination all the more critical. The LGBTQIA

community includes other minority groups, often placing them at the intersection of racial and ethnic discrimination in addition to sex and gender identity discrimination. Additional discrimination in housing and employment makes LGBTQIA people more likely to experience poverty, housing insecurity, and food insecurity. 27% of LGBTQIA people experienced food insecurity compared to 17% of non-LGBTQIA people. In the last year, some groups among the LGBTQIA community experienced even higher rates: 31% of LBT women, 22% of GBT men, 42% of Black LGBT people, and 33% of Latinx LGBTQIA people. Pride Month is over, but the fight against food insecurity in the LGBTQIA community is far from over. [Read more.](#)

Meet the Nutrition Team Interns

This summer, the TJC Nutrition Team has grown to include three interns – Anna, Lauryn, and Lana. Here's a little bit more about them:

Anna Luttrell



Anna was raised in Athens, Tennessee and is a rising senior at Washington and Lee University in Lexington, Virginia. She studies English, Poverty and Human Capability Studies, and Studio Art. Passionate about equitable nutrition policy and health outcomes, Anna hopes to attend law school with a goal to be a public interest attorney. In her free time, she loves cooking, painting, and hiking in the Appalachian Mountains.

Lauryn Cravens



Lauryn grew up on a farm in Gallatin, Tennessee and is a rising senior at Pomona College in Claremont, California. There, she studies Public Policy Analysis, Biology, and Chinese. Passionate about fostering a career in community food justice in K-12 schools, Lauryn hopes to study nutrition policy in graduate school next year. In her free time, she loves photography, yoga, backpacking, weightlifting, and learning new languages!

Lana Schwartz

Hi team, my name is Lana and I'm a rising senior at Vanderbilt University double

majoring in Medicine, Health and Society and Philosophy. I've always been interested in how policies constrain or expand access to health care; food and nutrition policy is my primary interest. I love to write and am excited to be working on such an important initiative by sharing people's stories.

Social Media

TJC Tennessee Tuesday Tweetstorms

Join TJC for the #FeedTN Tweetstorms on Tuesdays from 1-2pm CT. In June we focused on Pandemic EBT. Find our most recent [thread here](#). If you would like to cohost or request a topic to focus on, email Sarah at shenson@tnjustice.org.

We're also highlighting Black Anti-Hunger Advocates who have paved the way for our work today. Check out these posts on Shirley Chisholm and the Black Panthers. (We will be posting Friday and Wednesday, so need to wait to like them.)

What We're Reading

[TJC's interview about Pandemic EBT](#), News Channel 5, July 7

[Stark racial disparities emerge as families struggle to get enough food](#), Politico, July 6,

2020 [Farmer's Market Nutrition Program provides WIC participants with fresh food](#), WBBJ 7 Eyewitness News, June 30, 2020

Through the Farmer's Market Nutrition Program, those who are participating in WIC can get \$30 to spend at local farmers' markets in Jackson, Tennessee.

[Expanding eligibility for food aid is smart government](#), The Gazette, June 29, 2020

[USDA Just Made it Easier to Serve School Meals Amid Coronavirus Precautions](#), Education Week Blog, June 25, 2020

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