

Nutrition Note



TENNESSEE JUSTICE CENTER

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September is Hunger Action Month and an opportunity to elevate and better understand how hunger impacts Tennessee. The pandemic continues to exacerbate food security across the state. Children continue to struggle with hunger as many schools remain closed and school lunches are not guaranteed. Parents and other adults continue to face job loss making it difficult to afford food. The nutrition safety net can help Tennesseans during this time. Read on to learn more about SNAP, P-EBT, WIC and the child nutrition programs. Take action with us this month to end hunger across the state by [donating to support TJC's](#) anti-hunger work. Your donation will be matched dollar for dollar with our matching gift!



Engage with us during Hunger Action Month

- [Donate to TJC here](#), and help us meet our fundraising goal of \$5,000. Every donation will be doubled by our matching gift, which means your money goes twice as far to help end hunger in Tennessee.
- Raise Awareness
 - Spread the word about our work with your friends! Follow us on social media and reshare our posts for #HungerAwarenessMonth.
 - Create a peer-to-peer campaign with our easy-to-use fundraising page [here](#).
- Act to End Hunger

- Tell your Senators to support SNAP and P-EBT in the next stimulus- <https://www.tnjustice.org/snap-covid-relief/>
- [Volunteer](#)
- Learn More at TJC's Nutrition Page- <https://www.tnjustice.org/hunger-solutions/>

Child Nutrition

Pandemic-Electronic Benefit Transfer (P-EBT) Program

The P-EBT program provides money to families or guardians 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. The application period has ended and 200,000 eligible children were not able to apply. There is still time to act and TJC worked with partners across the state to do two things:

1. **Direct Issuance** - [We urged Governor Lee, DHS and DOE](#) to send P-EBT funds directly to the families of the 200,000 children that are still being missed and were not able to apply for the program.
2. **Extending Benefits** – USDA provided guidance to allow states to extend P-EBT funds to support children that missed meals in August in September as many schools have tried to return to school, but were forced to close or offered remote learning because of COVID-19. TJC and partners across the state sent a [letter to Governor Lee and DHS](#) urging the state to support families with children that are still missing out on school meals as the school year begins.

Do you have questions about Pandemic EBT? Call the TDHS P-EBT hotline at 1-833-496-0661

Have you been denied P-EBT but believe you are still eligible? Submit an appeal with DHS - <https://appealonline.dhs.tn.gov/Home/Login#>

Contact us if you have problems connecting with someone or are unable to access the application at nutrition@tnjustice.org

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.](#)

Summer Meal Program

Summer Meal Program Waivers Extended: On August 31 USDA extended waivers allowing schools and non-profits to continue to operate summer meals under simplified rules through the rest of 2020. Learn more about USDA's announcement [here](#). The flexibilities include the following:

- Allows SFSP and SSO meals to be served in all areas and at no cost;
- Permits meals to be served outside of the typically-required group settings and meal times;
- Waive meal pattern requirements as necessary; and
- Allow parents and guardians to pick-up meals for their children.

Back to School

More flexibilities needed for to support school meals for children beyond September 30. More than 100 mayors from across the country including Mayors Kincannon from Knoxville and Palazzolo from Germantown signed a U.S. Conference of Mayors' [letter](#) urging USDA to provide more flexibility for schools to adapt school meal operations during COVID-19. In addition to asking USDA to extend waivers through the school year, the mayors urged USDA to “[s]upport Congressional efforts to extend [Pandemic EBT (P-EBT)] benefits until the current pandemic has ended with increased flexibilities and common-sense approaches.

SNAP

Waiver extensions for September

- Every SNAP household will continue to receive the maximum household allotment in September – this includes new applicants.
- Interviews are required again for SNAP applicants and recertifications beginning September 1.

August SNAP Participation Numbers in Tennessee by County

Numbers remain as low as pre-pandemic participation but have increased slightly from July. [Find your County here.](#)

Congressional COVID-19 Legislative Update

Senate is back in session -- urge them to pass the HEROES act to include:

- 15% SNAP boost
- Raise SNAP minimum from \$16-\$30
- Suspend harmful rules that would weaken SNAP or knock participants off the program
- Extend Pandemic EBT to cover summer months
- Extend WIC and Child nutrition waivers

Reach out to your Senators [here](#) and ask that they include boosts to federal nutrition programs in the next COVID-19 legislation.

What Tennessee can do to improve SNAP access

DHS could apply for a waiver from USDA to allow Tennesseans to apply for SNAP over the phone. Currently it is not possible to apply by phone in Tennessee, which would help individuals have another way to apply. COVID-19 has closed SNAP offices and it is safer for individuals to stay home during the pandemic. **Would applying for SNAP over the phone help you or your clients – especially during COVID-19?** Email Sarah at shenson@tnjustice.org.

SNAP amounts will increase 5% October 1

Every year, SNAP amounts increase slightly for a Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA). This year it will increase 5% rather than 2%. The minimum amount will not increase from \$16. Read more [here](#).

Join our monthly SNAP Access Call! Email Sarah at shenson@tnjustice.org for details.

Join our quarterly College Hunger Collaborative! Email shenson@tnjustice.org for details.

The WIC Program

Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC)

Extend WIC Waivers - WIC waivers expire on September 30, unless USDA acts to extend them! 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

Learn more about expanding the WIC waivers here: <https://www.nwica.org/blog/wic-waivers-work-usda-message-from-rev-douglas-greenaway#.X1hUyMhKjIU>

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](#).

[WIC Basics](#)

[Find out if you are eligible](#)

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

Social Media

Twitter - Follow us [@TNJusticeCenter](#)

- **Tag us using these tags when posting about hunger this month:** #FeedTN, #TNPEBT, #HungerActionMonth

Facebook – Follow us at [facebook.com/tnjustice](https://www.facebook.com/tnjustice)

- Like, Share, Comment on [this post](#): to help us meet our fundraising goal!

Instagram – Follow us [@TNJustice](#)

- **BINGO!** Become an anti-hunger advocate with our hunger action step bingo! All you have to do is share the Bingo board on your social media with the hunger action items you've accomplished and tag us!

Media Mondays!

- Each Monday, we will be highlighting a series of Anti-Hunger partners in our posts. **Want your work to be featured?** Email shenson@tnjustice.org.

Fundraising Fridays!

- Donate to our nutrition work for Hunger Awareness Month by [clicking here](#). Every donation will be doubled by our matching gift to help us reach our \$5,000 goal. Can't give or want to share our fundraiser with friends and followers? Our campaign page makes it easy!

What We're Reading

[Tennessee plans to now waive application, allow schools to distribute food assistance to families](#), The Tennessean

[USDA should expand SNAP during pandemic, food bank officials say](#), Associated Press

[How hunger persists in a rich country like America](#), New York Time

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Stay connected:



Tennessee Justice Center
211 7th Ave N
Suite 100
Nashville, TN 37219
United States

info@tnjustice.org | 1-877-608-1009 | <https://www.tnjustice.org>

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