

FACT SHEET: Food Insecurity

What is Food Insecurity?

Food insecurity is the uncertainty of how you will provide for your next meal.

How many African American seniors are food insecure?

We do not know! But, we do know that African American seniors have a higher risk of being food insecure compared to other seniors. Food insecurity has impacted almost 2 million people in Los Angeles County. One in every 12 seniors in California were food insecure in the past year.

What are the health consequences of food insecurity for seniors?

The health consequences are serious! Three of the most common chronic diseases among African American seniors – hypertension, diabetes and coronary heart disease – can be prevented and treated by a healthy diet. Having inadequate diets can aggravate health conditions and increase the risk of disability and poor physical and mental health.

What is a food bank?

A food bank is a huge warehouse that accepts grocery products for redistribution. Food Banks generally don't distribute directly to individuals, but distribute food to agencies or special programs that do. For more information, contact 211 or (800)339-6993 for 24/7 assistance on local resources.

What is a food pantry?

A food pantry is one type of direct distribution agency that distributes food to those who need it. Low income seniors can visit a pantry to receive a box or two of emergency

groceries. To contact your local food pantry, call Food Pantry LAX at (310)677-5597 **OR** Holman United Methodist Church Food Pantry at (323)731-7285 **OR** 211.

Where can I go for food assistance?

There are over 100 dining centers throughout LA that provide hot nutritious meals 5 days a week. Meals are available to any senior. Home delivered meals are available to seniors who are too ill, frail or whose disability prohibits them from going to a meal site. For food assistance, contact the Los Angeles Regional Food Bank at (323)234-3030 and press 7 **OR** City of Los Angeles, Department of Aging at (213)482-7252 **OR** Ward Villas at (213)745-5075 **OR** Ward AME Church at (213)747-1367 **OR** call 211.

Where can I go if I have a food emergency or if I need ongoing food assistance?

If you have an urgent or ongoing need for food assistance, there are a number of places that can assist you, including Catholic Charities Community Services at (213)662-4391 **OR** Food Pantry LAX (310) 677-5597 **OR** call 211 to find a location nearest you. You might also qualify for the CalFresh Program. Call the Customer Service Center to apply at 1(877)847-3663.

What can I do about food insecurity?

You can start a community garden. You can advocate for funding for nutrition programs, an increase in Supplemental Security Income payments, and more funding for the Older Americans Act's nutrition programs. You can support **AB 191**, which is legislation designed to improve alignment between CalFresh and Medi-Cal to ensure that low-income households receiving health benefits also receive nutrition benefits – by writing a letter of support to Governor Edmund G. Brown Jr. at: State Capitol, Suite 1173, Sacramento, CA 95814. CalFresh is a program that provides benefits to assist low-income households in purchasing healthy foods.