

[The State of Senior Hunger in America in 2018 Executive Summary](#)

1. Coleman-Jensen, A., Rabbitt, M. P., Gregory, C. A., & Singh, A. (2019). *Household Food Security in the United States in 2018*. United States Department of Agriculture, Economic Research Service. Retrieved from: <https://www.ers.usda.gov/publications/pub-details/?pubid=94848>
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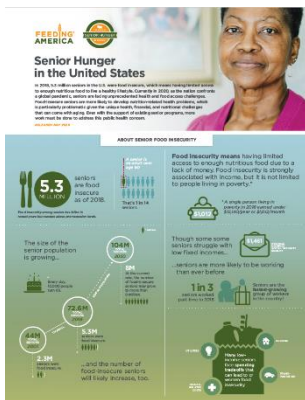


Hunger Among Adults Age 50-59 in 2018 Executive Summary

1. Coleman-Jensen, A., Rabbitt, M. P., Gregory, C. A., & Singh, A. (2019). *Household Food Security in the United States in 2018*. United States Department of Agriculture, Economic Research Service. Retrieved from: <https://www.ers.usda.gov/publications/pub-details/?pubid=94848>
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3. Gundersen, C., Dewey, A., Engelhard, E., Strayer, M., & Lapinski, L. (2020). *Map the Meal Gap 2020: A Report on County and Congressional District Food Insecurity and County Food Cost in the United States in 2018*. Produced by Feeding America.
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Senior Hunger Infographic



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5.3 million seniors are food insecure as of 2018.

Source: Ziliak, J. P. & Gundersen, C. (2020). *The State of Senior Hunger in America in 2018: An Annual Report*. Produced for Feeding America.

Every day, 10,000 people turn 65.

Source: United States Census Bureau (2019). *By 2030, all Boomers will be age 65 or older*. Census.gov: America counts. Retrieved from: <https://www.census.gov/library/stories/2019/12/by-2030-all-baby-boomers-will-be-age-65-or-older.html>.

2.3 million seniors were food insecure in 2001.

Source: Ziliak, J. P. & Gundersen, C. (2019). *The State of Senior Hunger in America in 2017: An Annual Report*. Produced for Feeding America.

About 8 million seniors will be food insecure in 2050.

Source: Ortman, J. M., Velkoff, V. A., & Hogan, H. (2014). *An aging nation: The older population in the United States*. US Department of Commerce, Economics and Statistics Administration, United States Census Bureau. Retrieved from: <https://www.census.gov/prod/2014pubs/p25-1140.pdf>

An Aging Nation: The Older Population in the United States provides population projections for the senior population age 65 and older. To estimate projections for the 60 and older population, we first look at Figure 2. As shown, the population for the age groups from 45 to 64 is distributed in a roughly even way. Using this information, we can say that in 2050, about 25% of those in the 45 to 65 are in the 60-65 age range. By taking 25% of the middle projection for the 45 to 64 age group in Figure 3 (95 million/4) and adding this to the middle projection of those 65 and older (80 million), you get 104 million people over the age of 60. Calculations are below.

$(95,000,000 \text{ seniors}/4) + 80,000,000 \text{ seniors} = 104,000,000 \text{ seniors}$
 $104,000,000(.077) = 8,008,000 \text{ seniors}$

A single person living in poverty in 2018 earns under \$12,140 /year or \$1,012 /month.

Source: Internal Revenue Service. (2019). *Federal poverty lines*. Retrieved from: <https://aspe.hhs.gov/2018-poverty-guidelines>

The average monthly Social Security benefit in 2018 was \$1,461.31.

Source: Social Security Administration (2019). *Annual statistical supplement to the social security bulletin*. Retrieved from: <https://www.ssa.gov/policy/docs/statcomps/supplement/2019/supplement19.pdf>

Some seniors stay employed to meet basic needs due to increased life expectancy, decreased savings, and higher healthcare costs.

Source: United States Department of Health and Human Services. (2013). *The state of aging and health in America 2013*. Atlanta, GA: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Retrieved from: <https://www.cdc.gov/aging/pdf/state-aging-health-in-america-2013.pdf>

1 in 3 seniors work part- or full-time.

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2019). *Labor force statistics from the Current Population Survey: 2018 annual averages*. Retrieved from: https://www.bls.gov/cps/cps_aa2018.htm

Seniors workers are the fastest-growing group of workers in the country.

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2017). Older workers: Labor force trends and career options. Retrieved from: <https://www.bls.gov/careeroutlook/2017/article/older-workers.htm>

Many low-income seniors face tough choices, including choosing between food or utilities, housing, health costs, and transportation.

Source: Feeding America. (2014). *Hunger in America*. Chicago, IL. Retrieved from: <https://www.feedingamerica.org/research/hunger-in-america>

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Minnesota, North Dakota, and Idaho are the states with the lowest levels of senior food insecurity, whereas D.C., New Mexico, and Mississippi are the states with the highest levels of senior food insecurity.

Source: Ziliak, J. P. & Gundersen, C. (2020). *The State of Senior Hunger in America in 2018: An Annual Report*. Retrieved from: <https://www.feedingamerica.org/research/senior-hunger-research/senior>

Seniors are more likely to experience food insecurity if they are racial/ethnic minorities, divorced or separated, living with grandchildren, disabled, unemployed, or female.

Source: Ziliak, J. P. & Gundersen, C. (2020). *The State of Senior hunger in America in 2018: An Annual Report*. Retrieved from: <https://www.feedingamerica.org/research/senior-hunger-research/senior>.

Poor health can be both a cause and a consequence of food insecurity for seniors. Disability and disease contribute to employment instability and income challenges. Inadequate nutrition can increase the negative effects of disabilities and chronic health conditions.

Sources: Berkowitz, S.A., Basu, S., Meigs, J.B., & Seligman, H.K. (2018). Food insecurity and health care expenditures in the United States, 2011-2013. *Health Services Research*, 53(3), 1600-1620.

Gundersen, C. & Ziliak, J. P. (2015). Food insecurity and health outcomes. *Health Affairs*, 34(11), 1830-9.

Gregory, C. A., & Coleman-Jensen, A. (2017). Food insecurity, chronic disease, and health among working-age adults (No. 1477-2017-3689). United States Department of Agriculture, Economic Research Service.

Food-insecure seniors are 233% more likely to experience depression, 90% more likely to experience asthma, 57% more likely to experience congestive heart failure, 32% more likely to experience limitations in activity, and 19% more likely to experience high blood pressure.

Source: Ziliak, J. P. & Gundersen, C. (2017). *The health consequences of senior hunger in the United States: Evidence from the 1990-2014 NHANES*. Produced for Feeding America. Retrieved from: <https://www.feedingamerica.org/sites/default/files/research/senior-hunger-research/senior-health-consequences-2014.pdf>

Nearly 5 million senior households receive, on average, \$121/month in SNAP benefits.

Source: Lauffer, S. and Genser, J. (2019). *Characteristics of supplemental nutrition assistance program households: Fiscal year 2018*, by. United States Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service, Office of Policy Support. Alexandria, VA. Retrieved from: <https://fns-prod.azureedge.net/sites/default/files/resource-files/Characteristics2018.pdf>

Only 48% of SNAP-eligible seniors are enrolled.

Source: Vigil, A. (2019). *Trends in supplemental nutrition assistance program participation rates: Fiscal year 2010 to fiscal year 2017*. United States Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service, Office of Policy Support. Alexandria, VA. Retrieved from: <https://fns-prod.azureedge.net/sites/default/files/resource-files/Trends2010-2017.pdf>

The Feeding America network of food banks serves 7 million seniors through grocery programs, meal programs and benefit outreach.

Source: Feeding America. (2014). *Hunger in America*. Chicago, IL. Retrieved from: <https://www.feedingamerica.org/research/hunger-in-america>

For questions or comments, please contact the Feeding America Research team at research@feedingamerica.org.