

Household Food Insecurity in Alberta

Access to a nutritious, adequate and culturally acceptable diet for all people is essential to creating strong and thriving individuals and communities.

BUT, many households in Alberta can't achieve this due to financial constraints (Household food insecurity).



A symptom of not having enough **MONEY** for basic needs

Food insecurity is about **income, not lack of effort, skill or motivation**

61%

of food insecure households receive **employment income**

66%

of households that rely on **social assistance** are food insecure

When there's not enough money, **food gets cut first**



It **MATTERS** for individuals and communities

It negatively affects individuals'...

Physical Health
81%

Mental Health
79%

Employment
57%

Meaning in Life
53%

Community Participation
58%

Family & Cultural Celebrations
46%

Relationships
64%

It negatively affects our communities...

- ↑ Costs to the health care system
- ↓ Productivity
- ↓ Community participation
- ↓ Social connections & belonging
- ↓ The well-being of children, which can last a lifetime

ALL Albertans should have the opportunity to make the choices that allow them to live a healthy life

Actions YOU can take

Explore creative solutions at the local level. Here are some ideas to get you started.



Offer flexible service hours – so those without paid sick leave don't have to take time away from their job to access services.



Ask about financial strain and connect individuals with services that help navigate income benefits.



Provide gift cards instead of food hampers – gift cards enable empowerment, dignity and choice.



Develop or promote free income tax clinics – income tax filing is needed to access federal and provincial benefits.



Offer free/discounted access to basic needs for low-income earners – low-cost transportation passes (taxi, bus, gas cards), recreation passes, free community events.



Promote understanding that household food insecurity is an issue of financial strain – to address root causes (e.g. policies or actions that reduce financial strain).



Ensure people can access programs and services with dignity – reduce stigma and barriers (e.g. remove intrusive intake processes).



Work with participants to co-design your programs – to create effective, accessible, client-centred programs.

For more information:
www.ahs.ca/HFIcommunity

Data Sources:

AHS, *Evidence Review: Household Food Insecurity Lived Experience and Strategy Effectiveness*, 2021

AHS, *building financial well being, A community planning toolkit*, 2020

Community Food Centres Canada, *Beyond Hunger: The Hidden Impacts of Food Insecurity*, 2020

Statistics Canada, *Canadian Income Survey*, 2020

Tarasuk V, Li T, Fafard St-Germain AA. *Household food insecurity in Canada, 2021. Toronto: Research to identify policy options to reduce food insecurity (PROOF)*, 2022

