Community Food Security Workshop

Resource toolkit

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Federal Programs

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)

"Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) provides food assistance benefits that help low income households buy the food they need for good health. The amount of food assistance benefits each household receives is based on the Thrifty Food Plan, the model diet plan the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) uses to project the cost of food for one month for different household sizes." (from benefits.gov)

To be eligible for this benefit program, applicants must be a resident of the state of Maine and meet one of the following requirements:

- The applicant has a current bank balance (savings and checking combined) under $2,001, or
- The applicant has a current bank balance (savings and checking combined) under $3,001 who share their household with one of the following:
  - A person or persons age 60 and over or
  - A person with a disability (a child, your spouse, a parent, or yourself).

In addition, the applicant must have an annual household income below a certain amount. According to November 2023 guidelines*, households were eligible based on the following income guidelines:

Household Size*	Maximum Income Level (Per Year)
1	$26,973
2	$36,482
3	$45,991
4	$55,500
5	$65,009
6	$74,518
7	$84,027
8	$93,536

*To see up-to-date eligibility criteria, visit benefits.gov/benefit/1272

SNAP applicants may apply online, speak to an Office of Family Independence (OFI) eligibility specialist over the phone, or may visit their local OFI office to apply.

➢ Online applications may be accessed at mymaineconnection.gov/benefits;
➢ The OFI can be contacted via phone at 1-855-797-4357;
➢ Applicants can visit an OFI office at the following addresses:
  ○ Ellsworth: 17 Eastward Lane, Ellsworth, Maine 04605
  ○ Calais: 338 North Street, STE 1, Calais, ME 04619
  ○ Machias: 38 Prescott Drive, Suite 3, Machias, Maine 04654
  ○ Bangor: 19 Maine Avenue, Bangor, Maine 04401
➢ More office locations and their contact information can be found at maine.gov/dhhs/about/contact/offices

Low-income Home Energy Assistance Program (LiHEAP)

LiHEAP helps qualified homeowners and renters pay for heating costs. Benefits include help paying for fuel and emergency fuel delivery. You can also qualify for energy-related repairs if you are eligible for HEAP.

Households are encouraged to apply for HEAP as early as possible. The application process involves both an application and an interview, to help determine eligibility and the level of benefit. The amount of benefit eligible households receive varies depending on household size, income and other factors (from MaineHousing.org).

HEAP funds are processed by Community Action Partnership agencies throughout the state. In Hancock and Washington counties, HEAP is administered by Downeast Community Partners. They can be contacted at:

Downeast Community Partners
240 Bucksport Road
Ellsworth, ME 04605
Phone: (207) 664-2424
Fax: (207) 872-6747
Email: Heap@downeastcommunitypartners.org

Clients need to reapply for LiHEAP every year, as the guidelines change annually. Visit www.downeastcommunitypartners.org/services/house-and-home/info.php/Heating-Assistance-2/ to learn about eligibility requirements, the application process, and other forms of assistance that may be available.

Women, Infants, and Children (WIC)

WIC is the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children. It is funded by the United States Department of Agriculture Food and Nutrition Service (USDA FNS) and administered in Maine by the Department of Health and Human Services, Maine CDC. Services are provided by local WIC agencies statewide.

In Hancock and Washington Counties, WIC services are administered by Maine Family Planning.

WIC assistance includes food benefits that can be purchased with an EBT card, breastfeeding support, nutrition counseling, car seat safety checks and free car seats for qualifying families, access to local food through the Farmer's Market Nutrition Program and collaboration with the Downeast Gleaning Initiative, well water testing, and referrals to countless community support organizations (heating assistance, housing, child development, healthcare providers etc.)

Those eligible for WIC include:
➢ Pregnant people
➢ Breastfeeding/chestfeeding women and birthing parents, up to 1 year postpartum
➢ Non-breastfeeding/postpartum women and birthing parents, up to 6 months, and post-partum (including women post-miscarriage/loss)
➢ Children from birth- 5 years of age
➢ Foster children under the age of 5
➢ Fathers can apply for their children who qualify

Eligibility is based on the following criteria:
➢ Residency (Maine resident, migrant)
➢ Income (those who receive Mainecare, SNAP, and/or TANF are automatically eligible)
➢ For a household size of 2: $36,482 is the upper income limit.
➢ For a household size of 4: $55,500 is the upper income limit.

For more information about WIC in Hancock and Washington counties, potential applicants may call a WIC office at:
Ellsworth: 207-667-5304, ext. 7228
Machias: 207-255-8280
Calais: 207-454-3634

A poster for the WIC program is included in the appendix.

Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP)

"The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP) is a federal program that helps supplement the diets of low-income Americans by providing them with emergency food assistance at no cost. USDA provides 100% American-grown USDA Foods to the Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation, & Forestry (DACF) to provide the food to local agencies that they have selected, mostly food pantries and soup kitchens, which in turn distribute the food directly serve the public. DACF currently collaborates with over 250 participating organizations to combat food insecurity in Maine." (from Maine.gov)

Contact the DACF TEFAP Office to learn about becoming a TEFAP partner: (207) 287-7513. All staff and volunteers interacting with those seeking food assistance are required to take civil rights training.

Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CFSP)

Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP), also known as Senior Brown Bags, Commodity Boxes, or Senior Boxes, is a Federal program that works to improve the health of low-income elderly people at least 60 years of age by supplementing their diets with nutritious USDA foods. The Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry collaborates with organizations statewide to distribute units of food monthly to over 8,000+ seniors across the state.

In Hancock County and in Washington County, the Commodity Supplemental Food Program is administered by the Eastern Area Agency on Aging. EAAA can be reached at (207) 941-2865, ext. 167.

Applications and a flyer for the Commodity Supplemental Food Program can be found in the appendix.

Hunters for the Hungry

"The Maine Hunters for the Hungry Program was founded in 1996 and its impact has grown steadily ever since. Maine sportsmen and sportswomen can play a major role in game management while providing wild game meat to hunger relief locations across the state. The Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry facilitates the donations to food pantries, soup kitchens, and shelters affiliated with The Emergency Food Assistance Program. There are a limited number of food assistance sites with the capacity to accept wild game meat.

"The Maine Hunters for the Hungry Program is a collaboration with Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife that works with the Maine Warden Service, state biologists, Maine State Troopers and hunters towards a common goal of helping Mainers in need.

"The program accepts bear, deer and moose donations. When a connection can be made between a donor, processor, and pantry, hunters do not pay for the processing of donated meat. Meat processing costs are paid for by the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry or the charity that receives the food. "Hunters choosing to keep their game can still donate a few pounds to the program. Meat processors that are interested in participating should call 207-287-3491 or email H4H@maine.gov.

"The program has been successful annually by supplying lean, high protein meats to food pantries, soup kitchens, and homeless shelters throughout Maine." (from Maine.gov)

More information about donation requirements for hunters and approved processors can be found on the Hunters for the Hungry page on the Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation, and Forestry website.

Maine Senior FarmShare

The Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry (DACF) receives a grant from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) to fund the Maine Senior FarmShare Program (MSFP). This program provides eligible low-income seniors the opportunity to receive a share (worth $50) of first-quality, fresh, local produce at no cost directly from local Maine farmers during the growing season.

To participate in MSFS, an applicant must meet the following eligibility criteria:
> ➢ Applicant is a Maine resident
> ➢ Applicant is 60 years old or older (55 years old or older for Native Americans)
> ➢ Applicant meets 2023 Income Guidelines, with a gross income at or below:
>> ○ $26,973/per year for a one-person household; or
>> ○ $36,482/per year for a two-person household

Eligible participants will receive $50 worth in fresh produce from an approved farm. Each farm operates MSFS in its own way; some will deliver and some will offer participants farm stand or farmers market credit.

MSFS authorized farms by county can be found on the Maine Senior FarmShare "For Seniors" page on the DACF website.

Furry Friends Food Bank

Administered by the Eastern Area Agency on Aging, the [Furry Friends Food Bank (FFFB)](#) provides pre-packaged standardized bags of pet food and basic pet care supplies to low-income older adults on a monthly basis.

Pets give older adults a sense of purpose by providing comfort day and night. They don't mind being told the same story over and over again, need attention and affection to survive and provide unconditional love. Pets make people, especially older adults, thrive and feel useful. The number one goal of FFFB is to keep local older adults and their pets together.

Applications and a flyer for FFFB can be found in the appendix.

Transportation Resources

Downeast Community Community Partners Community Action Partnership (DCP CAP)

Medicare Covered Rides
Transportation service for MaineCare covered reimbursement and rides is available, but must be arranged through the broker service by calling 1-855-608-5176. This includes self-driver friends and family reimbursement.

Transportation to Child Protective Visits
Provides transportation to supervised visits for those who are referred by the Maine Department of Health and Human Services. DCP offers safe and appropriate transportation to family reunification meetings and services. Please call DCP at 1-877-374-8396 or 664-0012 or 546-7547 for more information.

DCP Rides
DCP rides are open to the general public. You can call 664-0012 or 1-877-374-8396 to learn more about rides and pricing.

Free Bus Rides for Seniors
DCP Rides in cooperation with Eastern Area Agency on Aging and the FTA provides free bus rides for seniors. Service is FREE on a first come first served basis.

Visit downeastcommunitypartners.org/services/transportation to learn more.

Friends in Action

Friends in Action's mission is to empower older adults and people living with disabilities to thrive and to live independently, with dignity and a strong quality of life.

Rides to a wide variety of destinations (medical, food, exercise, volunteering and more) are provided by trained volunteers in their own vehicles. Scheduling is arranged through the Friends in Action coordinator. There is no charge for the service. Donations are appreciated!

To arrange for a ride, you must be registered in advance with Friends in Action and approved for transportation services. This simply depends on safety, your location, and the needs you anticipate. Friends in Action assists people throughout Hancock County and sometimes beyond.

Friends in Action can assist from within the home to within the appointment. If you use a cane, walker or wheelchair, you will need to be able to get in and out of a vehicle with minimal arm assistance.

Advance notice is required (at least 5 business days). For more information contact the Friends in Action office at 207-664-6016 or email info@friendsinactionellsworth.org.

Friends in Action also offers food and medicine delivery, friendly visits and calls for conversation and companionship, and chores and shopping.

Island Connections

Island Connections offers free rides to those in need of transportation services or food delivery from Meals on Wheels or the Food Access Project.

More information can be found at islconnections.org/free-transportation. Island Connections can be reached at 207-288-4457 to arrange a ride.

Water Security

Free water test kits

1 in 10 wells in Maine has dangerous levels of arsenic, uranium, radon, or other harmful chemicals.

It is recommended to test well water once a year for bacteria and nitrates, and every 5 years for arsenic, fluoride, uranium, radon, lead, and manganese.

You can visit wellwater.maine.gov or call 1-866-292-3474 to find a certified well water testing lab.

There are a couple of options if the cost of a water test kit poses a barrier to testing.

1. Free well water test kits may be available through WIC. You can contact the Ellsworth Maine Family Planning office at (207) 667-5304, ext. 7228.

2. Free well water test kits are also available through a citizen science initiative offered through a partnership with MDI Bio Lab and the Island Institute called Healthy Water, Healthy Aging. You can visit allaboutarsenic.org to join the project and receive a free test kit.

Well Water Abatement Program

There are also resources available to help pay for water treatment, if well water contains dangerous levels of contaminant(s).

You can visit MaineHousing at 800-452-4668 or Maine Relay 711, or visit mainehousing.org to learn about MaineHousing's Well Water Abatement Program. This program provides grants to eligible single-family homeowners or landlords for dwellings with four rental units or less with private well water that shows evidence of high levels of contamination. Abatement is important to provide clean drinking water to lower-income households, especially those with children under 7 years of age or pregnant people who live or spend a considerable amount of time in the house.

Eligibility
- ❖ Homeowner Eligibility:
  - ➢ Single-family homeowners whose income is at or below 120 percent of area median income (AMI) and whose private well water was tested within the last 12 months and indicates evidence of contaminants as determined by the Maine Centers for Disease Control. The house must be the primary residence and the applicant will need to show evidence of homeownership.
  - ➢ Applicants wishing to qualify for assistance may not have "liquid assets" in excess of $5,000. Applicants 60 years or older however, may have "liquid assets" up to a maximum of $50,000. Also, the Applicant may not have real estate in excess of that considered necessary and appropriate for their primary residence and the lot it occupies. See Asset Requirements.

- ❖ Landlord Eligibility:
  - ➢ Landlords whose income is at or below 120 percent of area median income (AMI) and whose private well water was tested within the last 12 months and indicates evidence of contaminants as determined by the Maine Centers for Disease Control. Eligible dwellings must have four units or less to qualify.
- ❖ Eligible Uses:
  - ➢ Grant disbursement will go directly to the vendor upon satisfactory completion and/or installation of remediation systems at the point of access to water or the point of water use.
  - ➢ New point of access remediation system (maximum project grant of $15,000)
  - ➢ New point of use remediation system (maximum project grant of $3,000)
  - ➢ Ancillary water treatment systems to ensure performance of remediation.
  - ➢ Post-abatement water test.
  - ➢ Eligible uses do NOT include replacement filters or system maintenance.

Interested homeowners or landlords must complete an application and submit it and supporting documents to MaineHousing for processing. Upon completion of review and determination of eligible applicants, MaineHousing will contact a water purification vendor with applicant's information. Vendors will visit eligible homeowners, determine the best remediation option, and send recommendations to MaineHousing for review and approval.

Applications are available on Mainehousing.org's [Well Water Abatement Program](#) page. Questions may be referred to Betty Mezoff at EHSHousing@mainehousing.org or 207-624-5787.

Grants

Community Building Grant Program

The Community Building Grant Program is a grant program through **Maine Community Foundation** that invests in local projects and organizations to build stronger communities. Consider applying for a Community Building Grant Program if your organization is undertaking, or plans to undertake, a project that invests in people by supporting their education or well-being, engages its served population in its design and delivery, and strengthens community resources.

Both general support grants (for ongoing projects and operational needs) and project grants are offered. These two types of grants offered through this program have different

eligibility criteria and requirements. More information about eligibility and requirements can be found on the MCF webpage at mainecf.org/apply-for-a-grant/available-grants-deadlines/community-building-grants/

Applying for the Community Building Grant Program

- Community Building has an annual application deadline of Feb. 15.
- The program will reopen for 2024 on Nov. 15, 2023.
- The webpage will be updated with changes for 2024 on Nov. 15.
- A list of the 2023 Community Building awards by county/region is also available on the website.
  https://www.mainecf.org/apply-for-a-grant/recent-grants/community-building/
- MaineCF will be offering a virtual information session for the 2024 Community Building grant program on Tue., Dec. 5, 2023, at 12:00 PM. You can register to attend by accessing the webpage link provided above after Nov. 15.

COVID Resources

COVID-19 Vaccine Bridge Access Program

The CDC launched a new program to help the underinsured and the uninsured have access to COVID-19 vaccines. According to the CDC's press release, it will provide "continued free coverage for the estimated 25-30 million adults who would have otherwise lost access to affordable COVID-19 vaccines now that the distribution of vaccines has transitioned to the commercial market."

Individuals may be eligible to receive free COVID-19 vaccines and COVID-19 test kits by visiting covidaccess.com.

Contact Information for Panelists & Workshop Participants

State & Federal Updates

Christina Breen
Regional Representative for Hancock, Waldo, & Knox Counties|
Office of Senator Angus S. King, Jr., Maine
207-945-8000
Christina_Breen@king.senate.gov

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Senior Director, Administration, Compliance & Development
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Vice President & Chief Impact Officer
Heart of Maine United Way
mattd@homeunitedway.org

WIC WOMEN, INFANTS, & CHILDREN

Hancock and Washington Counties

WIC is a supplemental food program funded by the USDA. We serve income-eligible, Maine residents who are pregnant, breastfeeding or recently post-partum, as well as children under the age of 5. WIC provides tailored food benefits that are research based and that is just the beginning!

Breastfeeding Support

- Peer Counselor Program
- Loaner breast pumps
- Breastfeeding supplies
- In person lactation counseling

Nutrition Counseling

- Access to our Registered Dietitian
- Infant Formula guidance
- Individualized nutrition education for all life stages!

Car Seat Safety

- Car seat safety checks
- Car seat distribution program

Access to Local Food

- Farmer's Market Nutrition Program
- Fresh produce through the Gleaning Initiative
- Annual Community Baby Shower

And More!

- Referral to community support organizations
- Comfort Cases for foster children

Scan the QR Code to see if you and your family are eligible!
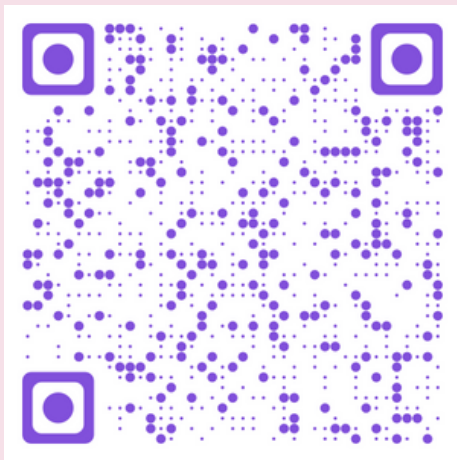
For more information please call one of our offices!
Ellsworth: 207-667-5304 ext 7228
Machias: 207-255-8280
Calais: 207-454-3634

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

The Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP)

would like to give you a free thirty-pound box of groceries every month! A $50 value!

Applicants must be **60 years of age or older** & meet income requirements **$1580** per month or less for single person household or **$2136** per month or less for a two-person household.

Each free box of food contains: *juice, shelf-stable milk, cereal, peanut butter, canned protein, pasta or rice, assorted canned goods, and a two-pound block of cheese.*

IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS OR TO SEE IF YOU QUALIFY CONTACT US EAAA @ 941-2865!

2023-2024 MAINE COMMODITY SUPPLEMENTAL FOOD PROGRAM APPLICATION

Eastern Area Agency on Aging, 240 State St. Brewer, ME 04412, 1-800-432-7812

Please complete a separate application for each person enrolling in the program.

Name _____ **Date of Birth** _____

Address _____**City** _____ **ZIP** _____

County _____ **Phone** _____ **Is mailbox full or not set up?**_____

Type of Identification Provided (complete this line in person)_____

Ethnicity: Is the applicant Hispanic or Latino? (Response will not influence eligibility) ☐ Yes ☐ No

Race: Please indicate applicant's race(s) using ONE OR MORE: (For civil service statistical purposes only)

1)	American Indian or Alaskan Native	☐ Yes ☐ No	2)	Asian	☐ Yes ☐ No
3)	Black or African American	☐ Yes ☐ No	4)	Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	☐ Yes ☐ No
5)	White	☐ Yes ☐ No			

Age: Is the applicant 60 years old or older? ☐ Yes ☐ No

INCOME: What is the applicant's household size (number of persons in economic / family unit)? _____

What is the applicant's household income (USD)? $_____

Updated January 17, 2023. This table indicates 130% of the federal poverty line.

Check Family Unit Size		Weekly	Monthly	Annual
1		$364.50	$1580	$18,954
2		$493	$2,136	$25,636
3		$621.50	$2,693	$32,318
4		$750	$3,250	$39,000
For each additioinal household member add		$128.50	$556	$6,682

Is the applicant's household income LESS than the amount listed in the above table? Yes ☐ No ☐

YOUR RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES IN THE MAINE COMMODITY SUPPLEMENTAL FOOD PROGRAM (CSFP)
I AGREE TO:

- Provide proof of my income, address, and identification *if requested*.
- Give staff correct information about my current household and its income.
- Let staff know if my address, income or household composition changes or if I plan to move within 10 days.

I UNDERSTAND THAT:

- CSFP will provide supplemental foods.
- The CSFP local agency will provide information on other nutrition, health, or assistance programs, and make referrals as appropriate.
- I will be dropped from this program if I participate in another CSFP.

- I have the right to appeal through the fair hearing process, any decision made by the local agency regarding denial, disqualification, or termination from the program.
- If I do not pick up food 2 months in a row, without telling staff, I will be taken off the Program.
- I may be taken off the program if I sell or barter with CSFP foods.
- I may be taken off the program if I intentionally make false or misleading statements, orally or in writing.
- I may be taken off the program for intentionally withholding information pertaining to eligibility in CSFP.
- I may be taken off the program if I physically abuse or threaten to physically abuse program staff.
- Improper use or receipt of CSFP benefits as a result of dual participation or other program violations may lead to a claim against you to recover the value of the benefits. It may also lead to disqualification from CSFP.

CERTIFICATION: The following statement must be read by, or to, the applicant or caretaker before signing.

This application is being completed in connection with the receipt of Federal assistance. Program officials may verify information on this form. I am aware that deliberate misrepresentation may subject me to prosecution under applicable State and Federal statutes. I am also aware that I may not receive CSFP benefits at more than one CSFP site at the same time. Furthermore, I am aware that the information provided may be shared with other organizations to detect and prevent dual participation. I have been advised of my rights and obligations under the program. I certify that the information I have provided for my eligibility determination is correct to the best of my knowledge.

I authorize the release of information provided on this application form to other organizations administering assistance programs for use in determining my eligibility for participation in other public assistance programs and for program outreach purposes. (Please indicate decision by placing a checkmark in the appropriate box.)

YES ☐   NO ☐

Signature: _____   Date: _____

Any questions please contact the agency that provided this application.

STAFF USE ONLY: Certifying Action Taken

Approved _____   For period ending last day_____

ID Verified in person_____   Date Put on Waiting list if necessary_____

Denied _____   Letter of Fair Hearing Given_____

Date_____   Signature of Verifying & Determining Official _____

In accordance with federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex (including gender identity and sexual orientation), disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity.

Program information may be made available in languages other than English. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication to obtain program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language), should contact the responsible state or local agency that administers the program or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339.

To file a program discrimination complaint, a Complainant should complete a Form AD-3027, USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form which can be obtained online at: https://www.usda.gov/sites/default/files/documents/ad-3027.pdf, from any USDA office, by calling (866) 632-9992, or by writing a letter addressed to USDA. The letter must contain the complainant's name, address, telephone number, and a written description of the alleged discriminatory action in sufficient detail to inform the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights (ASCR) about the nature and date of an alleged civil rights violation. The completed AD-3027 form or letter must be submitted to USDA by:

1. **mail:**
   U.S. Department of Agriculture
   Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
   1400 Independence Avenue, SW
   Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; or
2. **fax:**
   (833) 256-1665 or (202) 690-7442; or
3. **email:**
   Program.Intake@usda.gov

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

Why Service Insights on Meal Connect?

Streamlined, easy-to-use intake process

Service Insights on MealConnect (SIMC) was developed and designed by Feeding America with input from many who have worked in food banking and understand the unique needs of neighbors and agency staff/volunteers. Feeding America is continuously updating the platform with feedback from agencies nationwide.

Once a neighbor is in the SIMC system, they will not need to enroll again at any other agency they visit that also uses this system. Each additional visit only takes a few clicks to record. To protect neighbor privacy, visit data to individual agencies will not be made available.

SIMC is electronic, so you can reduce your reliance on paper forms for intake. Neighbors' data is secure!

Example: Sample Intake Process (Non-TEFAP)

Design an individualized intake process that works for your agency!

While some questions are required by Feeding America and Good Shepherd Food Bank, your agency can decide whether to ask additional, optional questions such as:

Food preferences and dietary restrictions

- Health conditions and disability status
- Participation in other government programs
- Employment and military status
- And more!

Example: Intake Question Options. Orange signifies optional questions.

	Off/On	Required	Visit	Question Review Frequency			Off/On	Required	Visit	
	All	All				⌄ Disability Status	⬤	☐	3 ⌄	Every 6 mo.
⌄ Basic Information: Age	⬤	☑	1 ⌄	Every time		⌄ Income: Monthly Range	⬤	☐	2 ⌄	Every year
⌄ Gender Identity	⬤	☑	1 ⌄	Once only		⌄ Military Status	⬤	☐	3 ⌄	Every year
⌄ Race or Ethnicity	⬤	☑	1 ⌄	Once only		⌄ Dietary Restrictions	⬤	☐	2 ⌄	Every year
⌄ Contact	⬤	☑	1 ⌄	Every time		⌄ Health Conditions	⬤	☐	3 ⌄	Every year
⌄ Living Situation	⬤	☑	2 ⌄	Every 6 mo.		⌄ Food Insecurity	⬤	☐	1 ⌄	Every year
⌄ Language(s)	⬤	☑	1 ⌄	Every year		⌄ Assistance	⬤	☐	1 ⌄	Every year
⌄ Household Members: Age Breakdown	⬤	☑	1 ⌄	Every time		⌄ Additional Notes	⬤	☐	1 ⌄	Every time
⌄ Proxy	⬤	◼	2 ⌄	Every time		⌄ Historical Notes	⬤	☐	1 ⌄	Every time
⌄ SNAP Benefits	⬤	☑	1 ⌄	Every 3 mo.		⌄ Services Provided: Primary	⬤	☑	1 ⌄	Every time
⌄ Other Government Programs	⬤	☐	2 ⌄	Every 3 mo.		⌄ Services Provided: Additional	⬤	☐	1 ⌄	Every time
⌄ Employment Status	⬤	☐	3 ⌄	Every 6 mo.		⌄ Data Sharing	⬤	☐	1 ⌄	Once only
						⌄ Print Or Add Card	⬤	☐	1 ⌄	Every time

Your agency can also decide at which visit to ask additional questions to reduce time spent in lines at any one visit. For example:

Example: Sample Sequential Intake Process

First Visit
- Contact Information
- Basic Demographic & Household Information

➡

Second Visit
- *Optional Questions:*
- Living situation
- Employment Status
- Languages spoken in the home

➡

Third Visit
- *Optional Questions:*
- Food preferences
- Military Status
- Disability Status
- Health Conditions
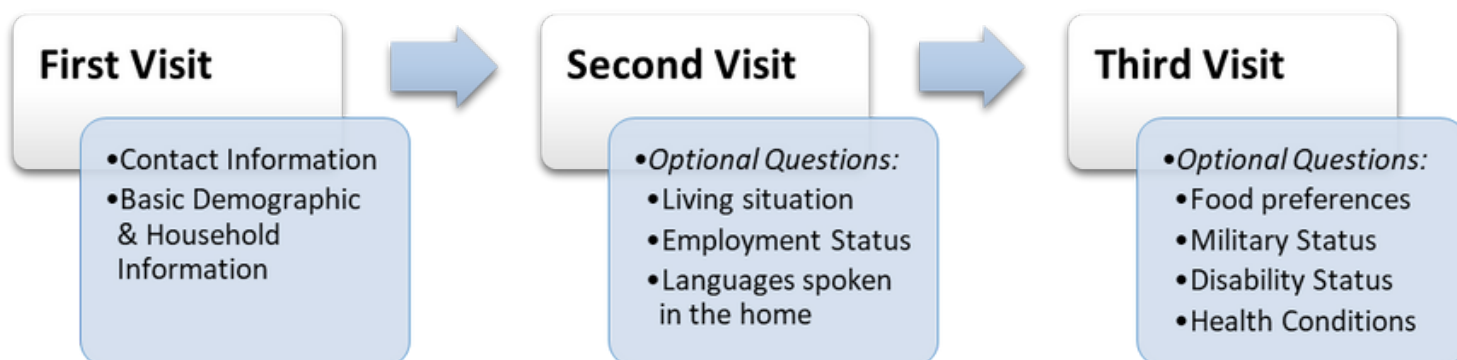
Collect data about other programs/wraparound services you offer

SIMC is designed to collect data about multiple programs within your agency. Create intake processes and collect data about your food pantry, meal program, benefits assistance, and other services. If SIMC doesn't have a service your agency offers, we can work with you to create it in the system so that you can collect and report on your unique program.

Example: Additional Services

Data visualization tools at your fingertips

SIMC comes with an integrated, data visualization platform called Tableau. The Tableau dashboard provides broad overviews of important neighbor data, while allowing you to dig deeper into questions that matter.

Example: Sample Tableau Dashboard
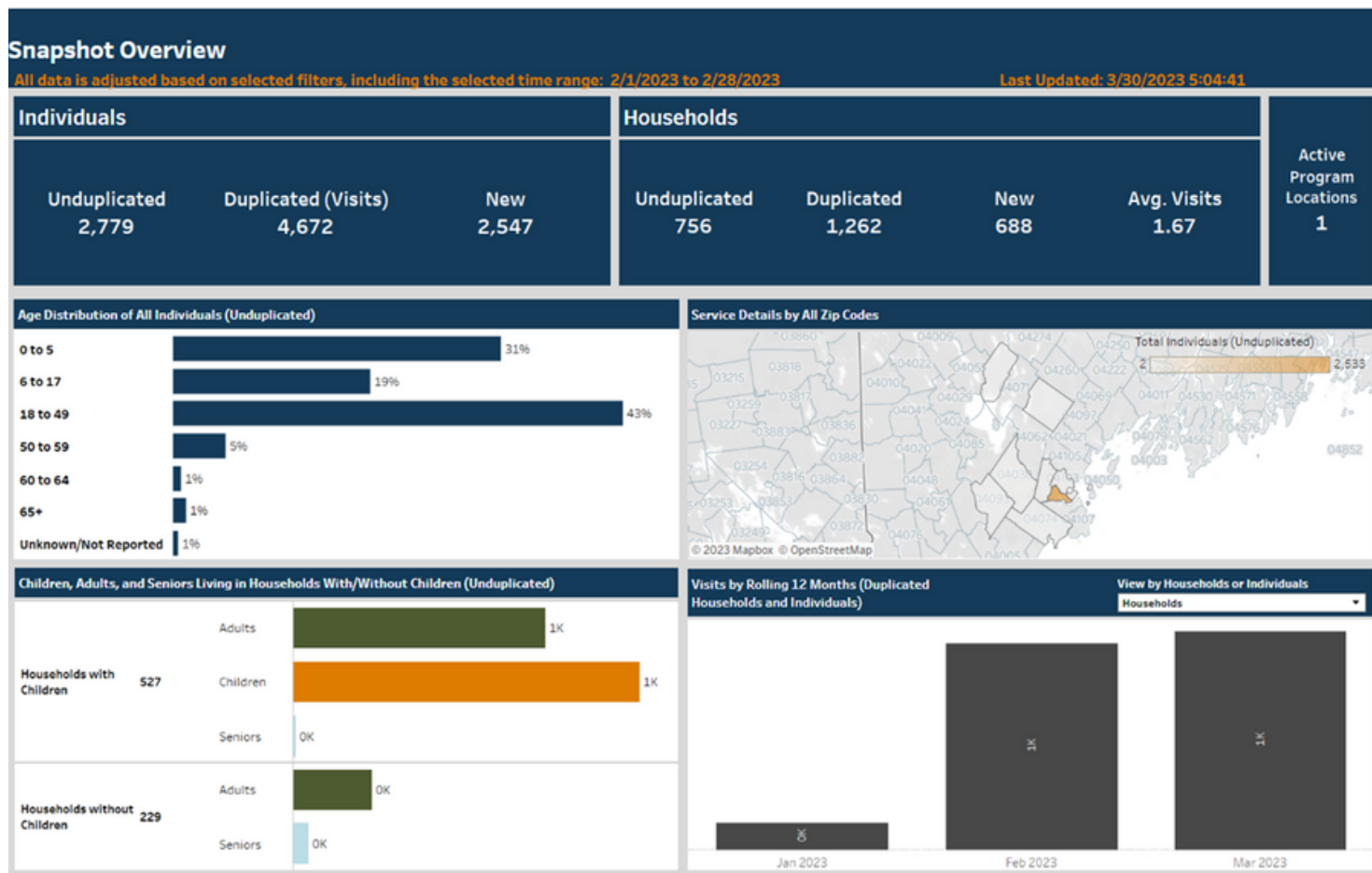
Through Tableau, you can see, at a glance, how many unique families your agency serves and how many times they visit your agency in a given timeframe. These numbers can be powerful tools in communicating the need in your community to program directors/executives/boards, media outlets, donors, and to Good Shepherd Food Bank.

Example: Sample Household Data
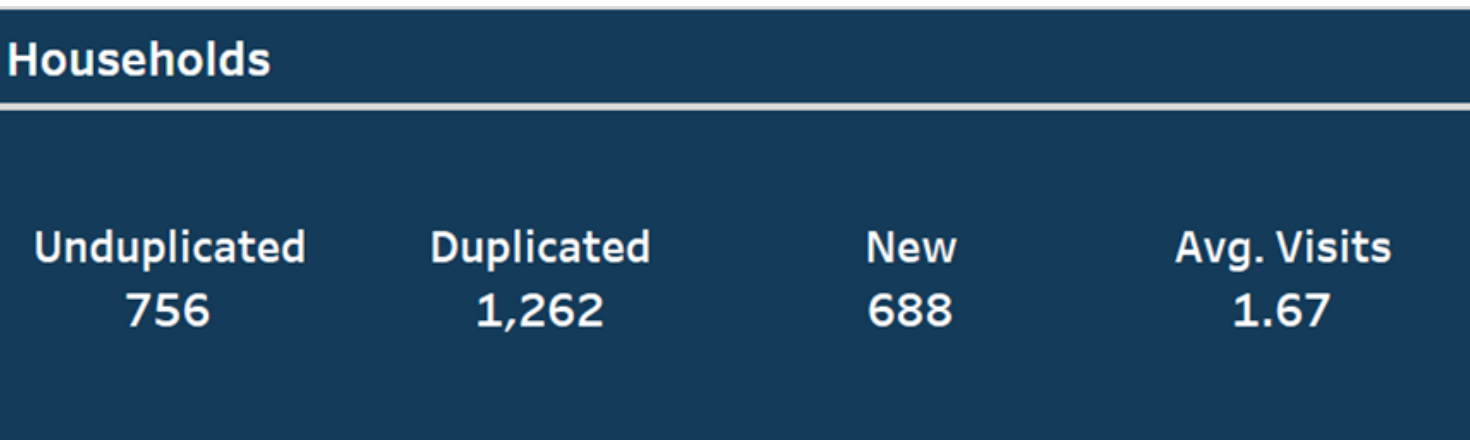
Discover trends in neighbor visits to learn which distribution days are the busiest so your agency can make informed decisions about staffing, volunteer recruitment, and product ordering.

Example: Sample Trend in Service (Individual by Day)

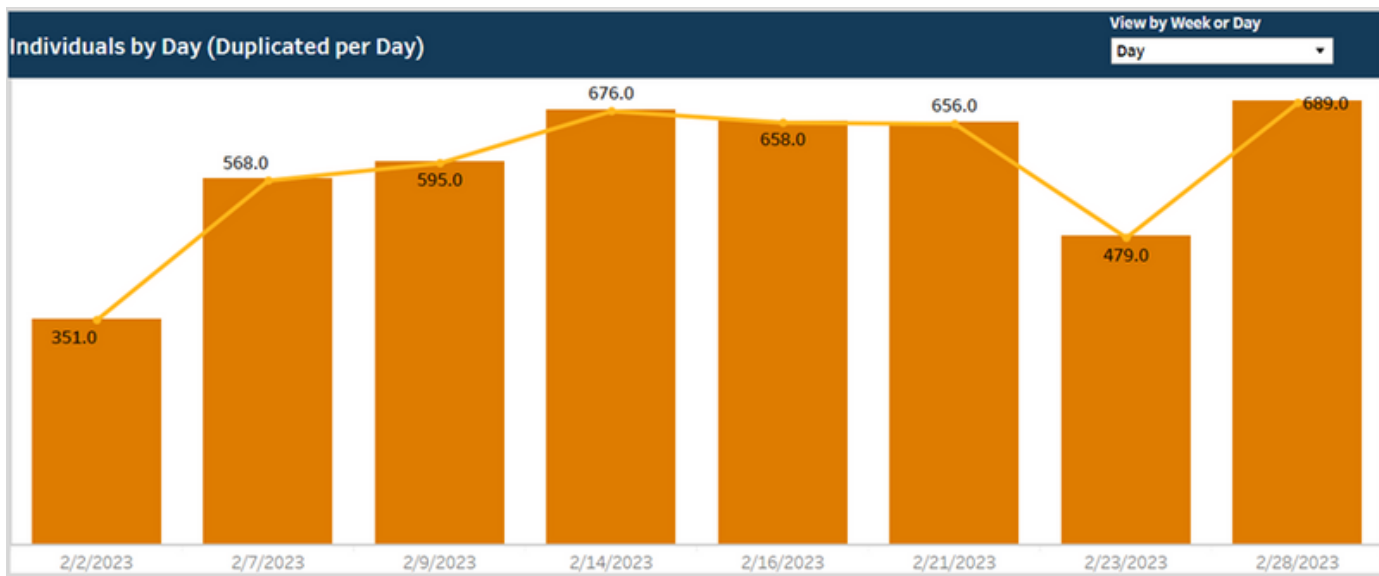In just a few minutes, your agency can create a report with tables and charts to communicate what you may be observing. In this example, the agency can show a need for increased support (financial, in-kind, staff/volunteer) due to an increase in the number of households served each month and that Tuesday distributions are busier than Thursdays (which can suggest that people are experiencing greater food insecurity over the weekends).

Example: Sample Service Trends
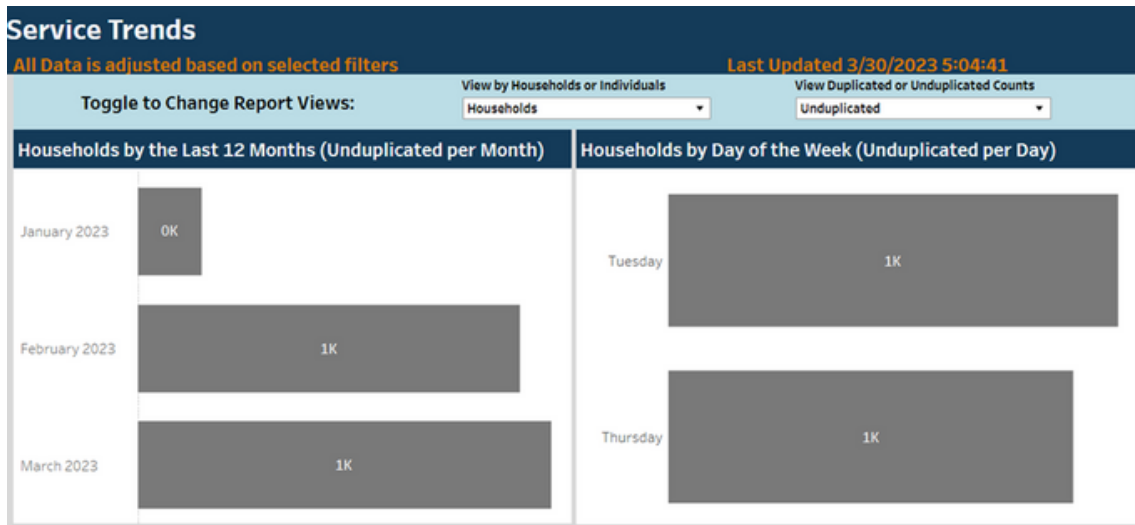
Available reports include:

- Snapshot Overview: Total individuals and households served, visits, and active programs by month.
- Individual Demographics: Individuals served by age, gender identity, and race or ethnicity.
- Core Household Characteristics: Households served, size, age composition, and government program participation.
- Other Household Characteristics: Household dietary factors, health, income, military status, living situation, etc.
- Service Trends: Individuals and age groups served by week, month, day, and time of day.
- Geographic Breakdown: Number of programs, events, individuals, and household served for all zip codes and counties.
- Agency Attributes: Status, service types, and individuals and households served by all programs and agencies

Built-in reports reduce burden

SIMC has built in TEFAP (The Emergency Food Assistance Program) Compliance and Denial Reports. These reports can be viewed in SIMC or exported to Excel for easy reporting!

Example: Sample TEFAP Compliance Report

Compliance Report

Events
[All ▾]

Locations
[All ▾]

Date Range
[1/1/2023 📅] TO [1/31/2023 📅]

Export to excel   **Run Report**

ss	Phone	Children Adults Seniors Unknown (Total)	Services Received	Form Type	Signed By	Initials	Household Position	Eligibility Type	Eligibility Criteria	Signed On
St s	504-222-2222	0 + 1 + 1 + 0 = 2	Food Pantry - Donations	Non TEFAP Form	Anne Black	AB	Head of Household	Categorical: Government Program	Supplemental Security Income (SSI), SNAP	1/8/2023
St s	504-222-2222	0 + 1 + 1 + 0 = 2	Food Pantry - USDA	Non TEFAP Form	Anne Black	AB	Head of Household	Categorical: Government Program	Supplemental Security Income (SSI), SNAP	1/8/2023
e	504-333-3333	0 + 1 + 1 + 0 = 2	Food Pantry - Donations	Non TEFAP Form	Carl Dunn	CD	Head of Household	Income: Amount	$12,000 per year	1/8/2023

Data Export Options to Provide Insights while Prioritizing Neighbor Confidentiality

If your agency has a need to export Neighbor, Household, or all data, there are data export tools available. Only certain individuals within each agency will have access to export this data as it does contain personally identifiable information about each neighbor and household. Your agency will receive training from Good Shepherd Food Bank on appropriate reasons to export potentially identifying neighbor and household data and how to securely store that data – including how to destroy or delete the data after use.

Harness Your Agency's Historical Data

Feeding America is currently devising protocols so that historical neighbor data can be added to SIMC. Good Shepherd Food Bank will work with each agency to plan the best way to clean and upload historical data when this feature is available.

Make Your Data Count!

Through Service Insights on MealConnect, your pantry's data will become part of the most extensive dataset about people seeking charitable food assistance, while providing local, state, regional, and national insights. Since debuting in Spring 2022, SIMC has been piloted by food banks across the country. Over one million agency visits representing more than 300,000 unique neighbors were logged in 2022.

Data is critical currency in the fight against hunger. The Service Insights Initiative is a network-wide approach to electronically collect data about neighbors and their families to better understand the experiences of people who experience hunger in Maine. By collecting this data, our network can measure its collective impact, allocate resources more efficiently, and successfully drive social change through data-driven stories to bust myths about hunger and the charitable food network.

What are agencies across the country saying about Service Insights on MealConnect

"Love all the ways we can personalize the platform for different agencies and programs."

– Pilot Food Bank

"It's easy to use! We continually have new volunteers using the system at our pilot distributions, and all of them take to it so quickly, even though they have different levels of experience with technology."

– Pilot Food Bank

Next steps

If your pantry is ready to learn more about Service Insights on MealConnect, please contact Research Associate Jada Wensman at JWensman@GSFB.org or (207) 544-3813. Or, contact your Community Resource Representative.