



The Research Packet For  
**THE SNAP TASK FORCE**  
Meeting of December 2018



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## SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (SNAP) TASK FORCE

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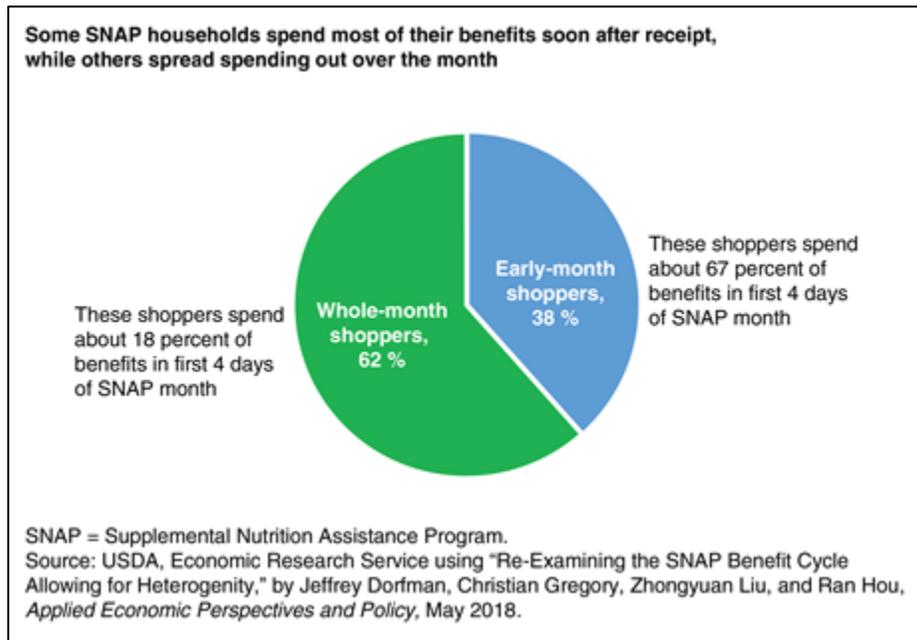
## I. United States Department of Agriculture



### Monthly Timing of SNAP Spending Less Smooth for Some Households

<https://www.ers.usda.gov/amber-waves/2018/december/monthly-timing-of-snap-spending-less-smooth-for-some-households/>

If SNAP benefits were budgeted equally across the month, 13 percent would be redeemed in the first 4 days following receipt. Findings show that 38 percent of SNAP households spent a much higher share in that timeframe. These early-month shoppers spent about 67 percent of their benefits over this period, while whole-month shoppers (62 percent of SNAP households) spent an average of 18 percent of their benefits in the first 4 days after receipt. Thus, uneven spending patterns over the 30 days after receipt of benefits may be more of an issue for a subset of SNAP households. The monthly patterns were not explained by any of the observed differences in households, pointing to the need for further research on SNAP households' temporal spending patterns.



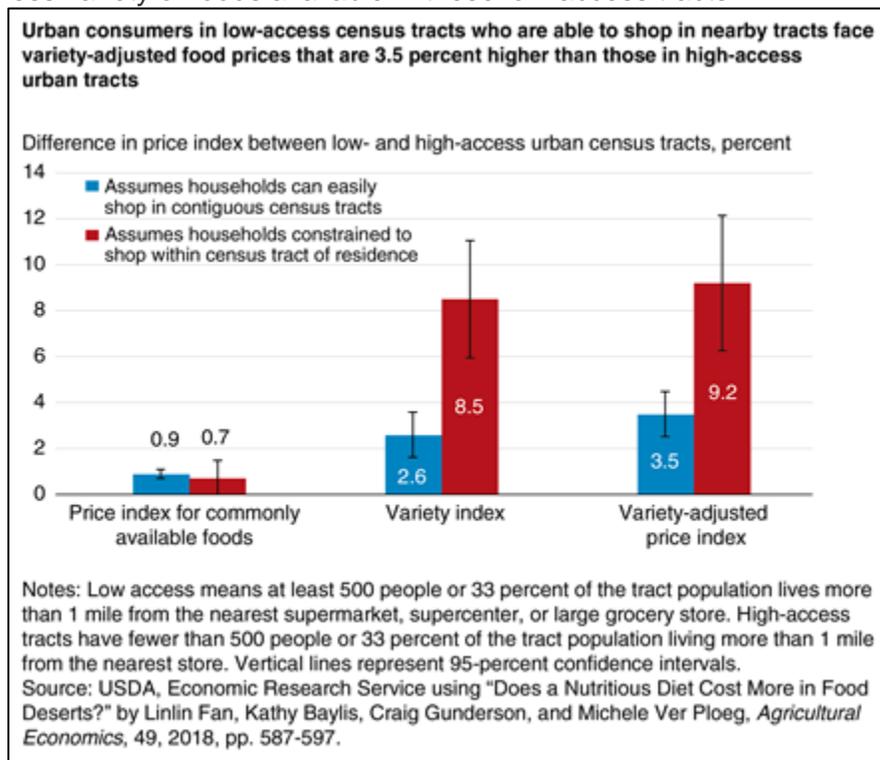
## Variety-Adjusted Food Prices Are Slightly Higher in Census Tracts Where Households Have Limited Access to a Supermarket

<https://www.ers.usda.gov/amber-waves/2018/december/variety-adjusted-food-prices-are-slightly-higher-in-census-tracts-where-households-have-limited-access-to-a-supermarket/>

Food prices in neighborhoods without a supermarket, or with a limited number of such stores, may be higher than those in neighborhoods where there is competition among stores. Consumers in neighborhoods with limited numbers of supermarkets would have to pay the higher prices or travel farther to shop for their foods, incurring travel time and expenses. This would add to the challenges already faced by households with low incomes or without a vehicle. New research using data collected as part of USDA’s 2012-13 National Household Food Acquisition and Purchase Survey (FoodAPS) examined how food prices differ between urban areas with limited access to supermarkets and urban areas with better access.

The researchers found that variety-adjusted food prices were 3.5 percent higher in low-access urban census tracts than in otherwise similar tracts with high access, mostly due to lower variety of foods in low-access tracts. Prices for food products commonly available in both types of tracts were found to be less than 1 percent higher in low-access tracts than in high-access tracts.

If households are constrained to shop within their own census tract because of a lack of transportation, then households in low-access urban tracts face variety-adjusted food prices that are 9.2 percent higher than those in high-access urban tracts. Similar to the scenario in which consumers are not constrained to shop within their own tract, the price difference is mostly driven by less variety of foods available in these low-access tracts.



## II. New York State Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance



### GIS 18 TA/DC042: Federal Actions Regarding Temporary Protected Status Designations

<https://otda.ny.gov/policy/gis/2018/18DC042.pdf>

Individuals from certain foreign countries designated by the Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) who are physically present in the United States (U.S.) may be eligible to receive TPS under federal law when conditions in their home country temporarily prevent a safe return. DHS issues TPS designations for 6 to 18 months and can extend or terminate TPS depending on the conditions in the designated country. Per GIS 16 TA/DC053, the Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance (OTDA) recognizes non-U.S. citizens with TPS as Permanently Residing Under Color of Law (PRUCOL) for the purposes of Safety Net Assistance (SNA) eligibility. If otherwise eligible, individuals with TPS can receive SNA.

The countries currently designated for TPS are: El Salvador, Haiti, Honduras, Nepal, Nicaragua, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan, Syria and Yemen. Within the last year, DHS announced the pending termination of TPS designations for several of these countries. However, as required by the order of the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of California in *Ramos v. Nielsen*, DHS announced on October 31, 2018 that the TPS designations of Sudan, Nicaragua, Haiti, and El Salvador will remain in effect for as long as the court's order remains in effect. Accordingly, even individuals with expired TPS-related documentation may continue to have lawful status, employment authorization, and retain their potential eligibility for SNA, if otherwise eligible.

Until further notice, individuals with TPS remain eligible for SNA, if otherwise eligible, including those from Sudan, Nicaragua, Haiti, and El Salvador. If any additional federal actions, including the termination of a country's TPS designation, take place in the future, OTDA will issue guidance to districts regarding the changes. Districts are reminded that if individuals present expired TPS-related documentation, they may still be eligible for SNA.

### III. New York City Human Resources Administration



#### POLICY BULLETIN#18-78-OPE - REVISIONS TO SELF-SERVICE INITIATIVES FOR CHECK-IN AND DOCUMENT RETURN

This policy bulletin is being revised to inform staff that:

- The accessible Self-Service Check-In station (kiosk) has been added to accommodate individuals with physical disabilities including those who are blind or low vision.
- The self-service clerk must assist those individuals who prefer to use the accessible kiosk in completing the check-in process, obtaining a ticket, and getting to their service area.
- You Have a Right to Free Interpretation Services (HRA-125) notice has been updated to be the DSS-4.
- "I Speak..." (HRA-101) card has been updated to be the PALM-20; and that it is a detachable portion of the DSS-4, used to identify the applicant/participant as LEP when presented to staff.
- HRA is Changing for You (FIA-1139) has been obsoleted.
- The Self-Service Check-In Tablet Log (FIA-1145) that tracked the use of tablets to assist individuals is obsoleted, as the tablets are no longer used in the check-in process.

## IV. Reports, News and Notable Items

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### Center on Budget and Policy Priorities: Bipartisan 2018 Farm Bill Protects SNAP

<https://www.cbpp.org/press/statements/greenstein-bipartisan-2018-farm-bill-protects-snap>

SNAP, a key part of the farm bill, has long been our nation's most powerful and effective anti-hunger program. The new farm bill conference agreement reauthorizes SNAP and provides for modest improvements to program integrity and administration. The agreement would also encourage and prioritize approaches to job training and other employment-related activities that are proven to be successful by the findings from employment and training pilot projects that the 2014 farm bill established. The conference agreement rejects the House farm bill's cuts and other harmful changes to SNAP that would have caused more than 1 million households with more than 2 million people to lose their benefits altogether or face reductions in them.

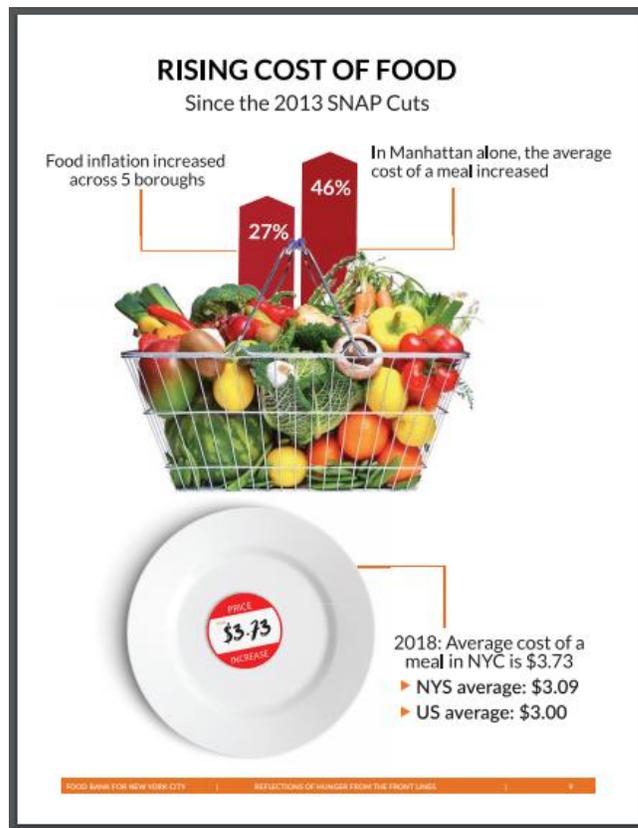
The conference agreement's SNAP provisions are not entirely without flaws. The agreement includes a provision that would end bonuses to states that demonstrate significant improvements in program operations, and it doesn't include changes that would strengthen access for those who can face difficulties participating, such as seniors and people with disabilities. It also doesn't address the problem of some SNAP households running low on or out of food at the end of each month. But the conference report represents a solid bipartisan compromise that maintains and modestly strengthens SNAP, a program that helps 1 in 8 Americans afford food.

### Reflections of Hunger From the Front Lines: Findings From Food Bank For New York City's Charity Food Network

<https://www.foodbanknyc.org/research-reports/>

Earlier this year, Food Bank For New York City asked its network of soup kitchens and pantries to share insights that may only be provided from hunger's front lines. This analysis is New York City's only set of reflections from the men and women most intimately involved in ending hunger one New Yorker at a time. These reflections provide a new perspective on the response to the daily emergency of serving people who are struggling to make ends meet in New York. Eighty percent of the leaders of soup kitchens and pantries are seeing more visitors today than before the 2013 cuts to SNAP. The majority of the network also report seeing longer lines with more first-time visitors, senior citizens, and families with children. While charities are already stretched in serving their community, they are doubling down by serving New Yorkers from across the city. In fact, nearly 70% of the food pantries and soup kitchens report serving New Yorkers from more than one borough – and incredibly, nearly half serve community New

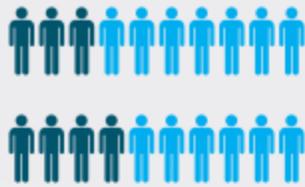
Yorkers from more than two boroughs outside their own. Yet, the average emergency food program has a budget of less than \$25,000 and five full time volunteers their operations regularly rely on.



## Spotlight on Food Hardship: Many New Yorkers May Be Going Hungry this Thanksgiving

[https://robinhoodorg-production.s3.amazonaws.com/uploads/2018/11/PovertyTracker\\_Food-Report.pdf](https://robinhoodorg-production.s3.amazonaws.com/uploads/2018/11/PovertyTracker_Food-Report.pdf)

Robin Hood Foundation's Poverty Tracker follows representative samples of New Yorkers over time, interviewing them every three months. The survey has been instrumental in documenting and tracking the dynamics of poverty and other forms of disadvantage and well-being over time. One such form of disadvantage is what is known as food insecurity or food hardship. The two questions in the Poverty Tracker ask: (1) how often the respondent worries about running out of food before having money to buy more; and (2) how often the respondent actually runs out of food before having money to buy more. In both cases, the choices are never, sometimes, or often. These two questions are part of the Department of Agriculture's "gold standard" 18-question measure, which provides us an opportunity to first look at levels and trends in reported levels of food insecurity and hardship in both the nation and New York City.



**3 IN 10**, or nearly 2.6 million, New Yorkers report often or sometimes running out of food each year. **4 OUT OF 10** New Yorkers, about 3.6 million people, experience at least one year where they report at least sometimes running out of food over the course of three years.



**HALF OF NEW YORK CITY CHILDREN** (about 900,000 children) experience running out of food at least sometimes over a three-year period.



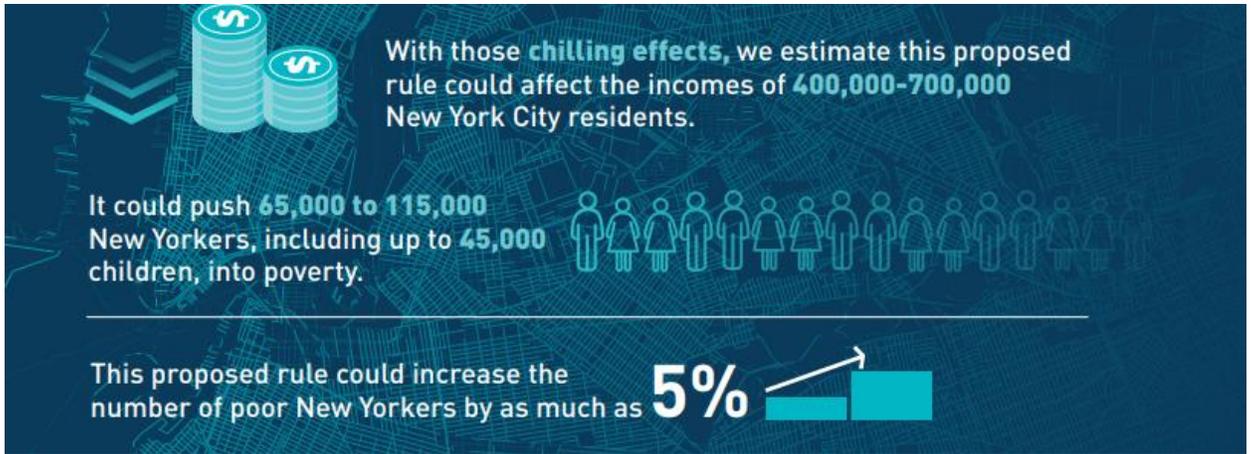
Many working New Yorkers wind up getting **FOOD FROM A PANTRY** each year. Among those using a pantry in the past 12 months, **NEARLY HALF WORKED** at least at some point during that same year, and nearly three in ten worked 11 or 12 months of the year.

### Public Charge: How A New Policy Could Affect Poverty in New York City

[https://robinhoodorg-production.s3.amazonaws.com/uploads/2018/12/Public\\_Charge\\_Report\\_FINAL-1.pdf?mc\\_cid=b2c7b24dbf&mc\\_eid=4894ccd931](https://robinhoodorg-production.s3.amazonaws.com/uploads/2018/12/Public_Charge_Report_FINAL-1.pdf?mc_cid=b2c7b24dbf&mc_eid=4894ccd931)

Using research from the Poverty Tracker, a partnership with Columbia University, Robin Hood Foundation's report found that proposed changes to the federal "public charge" rule could push between 65,000 and 115,000 New Yorkers, including up to 45,000 children, into poverty.

The report further estimates "chilling effects" from the "public charge" rule could negatively affect the incomes of 400,000 to 700,000 people in New York City. These estimates are derived from surveys conducted in 2018, which asked New Yorkers how they are changing their everyday activities in response to shifts in the federal immigration climate.





**THE FOOD BANK FOR NEW YORK CITY  
2018**