

Advocacy Update 08.16.2021

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In Brief -

- Large permanent boost to SNAP announced today
- Congressmen Castro/Taylor introduce school food bill

NTFB Policy Flipboard available to help capture current food policy news

If you do not currently have the Flipboard app, download it for your phone's mobile app store

Keeping up with the world of anti-hunger policy and trends in food insecurity can be difficult with so much information out there. To help keep you up to date, [we invite you to visit and follow the NTFB Food Policy FlipBoard](#) to help aggregate all the trending news. Make sure to click "**Follow**"! You can use the phone app or bookmark the site it on your computer.

Thrifty Food Plan moves to 2021 - The USDA moves to update SNAP to reflect the current cost of food

Way back in January 2021, one of the first Executive Orders signed by the President asked for a review of the SNAP food cost plan. SNAP benefits are currently calculated through the "Thrifty Food Plan," and you can read more about this here:

[What is the Thrifty Food Plan?](#)

Briefly -

- There are 4 plans used by the USDA, that estimate the monthly cost of groceries for household with a family of four.
 - The four are Thrifty (\$627), Low (\$822), Moderate (\$1,024), Liberal (\$1,243)
- The Thrifty Food plan exercises minimal food costs
- The Thrifty Food Plan is used to calculate SNAP benefits for households, while the other higher priced food plans are used to create military meal plans or child custody support costs.
- [The Thrifty Food Plan](#) has not been revisited for 15 years
- The 4 different plans reflect 4 different food choices, the Thrifty Food Plan being the most restrictive, impractical, unrealistic, and ignores dietary needs, but is how we determine SNAP benefit allowances for families and seniors.
- To set the cost of each of the food plans the USDA creates "baskets of food" from a grocery store.
 - Often with unrealistic package sizes (example a weekly thrifty food basket contains .02lbs of bacon or lunchmeats for adult males...that is 1.5 slices of bacon or .75 slices of bologna)

[Following the review of the current Thrifty Food Plan](#), the USDA has announced today that it will increase the SNAP benefits by approximately 25% to reflect the change in food prices that have soared in the past 15 years. The announcement states that SNAP benefits will increase by \$36.24 per person, per month, or \$1.19 per day, for Fiscal Year 2022 beginning on October 1, 2021

...the [new] plan was calculated using updated purchasing data – collected from stores versus self-reported by households – to reflect the current price of foods in today's marketplace.

What does that mean for our area? Let's look at Dallas County -

In July 2021, Dallas County had ~138,000 households participating in SNAP, which is approximately 300,000 people, of which 64% are children or seniors. A \$36.24/person/month increase in benefits translates to **an extra \$10.6 million dollars** that will flow into those homes and into our local grocery markets...each month.

Texas Members of Congress re-introduce school food anti-waste bill

The Texas Department of Agriculture may already have a plan to combat school food waste, however the "food sharing table" plan available to schools, can sometimes hit a few roadblocks, including the allocating of staff time/resources and disagreeable local control over city health code interpretation.

[HR 4802, the Feeding Hungry Students Act](#), was recently introduced to the US Congress and will allow schools to re-purpose uneaten, unopened food. This food will be used to stock on-campus school food pantries if a representative on campus completes annual food safety training and partners with a local charitable organization. We will be watching this bill closely and working with congressional staff to ensure this bill reaches its full potential.

Questions or Comments?

Ain't got time? [5 minute business books podcasts, my new love](#)

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