



NOTICE OF ASSEMBLY ONLINE VIDEO PUBLIC HEARING

ASSEMBLY STANDING COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL SERVICES
ASSEMBLY STANDING COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE
ASSEMBLY TASK FORCE ON FOOD, FARM & NUTRITION POLICY

SUBJECT: The impact of COVID-19 on food insecurity in New York State.

PURPOSE: Examine the effects that financial instability caused by the Covid-19 pandemic has had on food insecurity in New York State.

Wednesday,
September 9th, 2020
at 11:00am

Web Link: <https://www.nyasembly.gov/av/live/>

ORAL TESTIMONY BY INVITATION ONLY

While the unemployment rate has continued to slowly decline, millions of Americans are still out of work, or are forced to work limited hours due to business closures or other issues. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, as of July, 10.2% of Americans were still unemployed, with tens of millions still working limited hours due to the COVID-19 pandemic. With heightened unemployment, and the increased cost of groceries caused by a greater demand on the food supply chain as cited by the Bureau of Labor Statistics, food insecurity is an ongoing issue for many American households across the country.

According to Feeding America, prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, food insecurity in the United States was at its lowest point since the Great Recession of 2008, and yet more than 37 million people, including 11 million children, were experiencing food insecurity. Those numbers have dramatically increased during the COVID-19 pandemic, with more than 54 million people, including 18 million children currently experiencing food insecurity. Experts believe these numbers will continue to rise as the pandemic continues to ravage families' economic stability. According to The Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, the economic crisis spurred by COVID-19 has resulted in an unprecedented increase in those seeking Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits, with an increase of approximately 17%, or an additional 6 to 7 million people receiving SNAP benefits between February and May. In comparison, during the Great Recession, it took 17 months for states to see an increase of that kind of SNAP recipients. If unemployment levels increase again, the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities believes SNAP caseloads are likely to rise as well.

New York has not escaped the effects of the pandemic. There are currently 2.2 million people across New York State struggling with food insecurity. Additionally, the emergency supplemental SNAP funding that was included in the Families First Corona Virus Response Act of 2020 expired on July 31, 2020, therefore households have reverted back to their pre-pandemic SNAP benefit amount as of August 2020, leaving many individuals without adequate resources for food. The pandemic impacted the State's food supply infrastructure and presented many challenges for New York farms, food suppliers, processors, wholesalers and retailers which contributed to food insecurity within the State. Finally, with schools, childcare centers, and older adult meal sites continuing to close their doors, access to free food programs are continuing to become more and more limited putting more strain on overburdened emergency food programs and the need to address food insecurity has become vital. The Committees and Task Force seek to hear how stakeholders are addressing the food needs in their communities and ways to better serve the people of New York who face food insecurity issues on a daily basis.

Persons invited to present pertinent testimony to the Committees and Task Force at the above hearing should complete and return the enclosed reply form by **Friday, September 4th**. It is important that the reply form be fully completed and returned so that persons may be notified of means by which to testify and/or in the event of emergency postponement or cancellation.

Oral testimony will be limited to 10 minutes' duration. In preparing the order of witnesses, the Committee will attempt to accommodate individual requests to speak at particular times in view of special circumstances. These requests should be made on the attached reply form or communicated to Committee staff as early as possible.

Written testimony should be submitted via email two days prior to the hearing.

Attendees and participants at any legislative public hearing should be aware that these proceedings are video recorded. Their likenesses may be included in any video coverage shown on television or the internet.

In order to further publicize these hearings, please inform interested parties and organizations of the Committee's interest in hearing testimony from all sources.

In order to meet the needs of those who may have a disability, the Assembly, in accordance with its policy of non-discrimination on the basis of disability, as well as the 1990 Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), has made its facilities and services available to all individuals with disabilities. For individuals with disabilities, accommodations will be provided, upon reasonable request, to afford such individuals access and admission to Assembly facilities and activities.

Andrew Hevesi
Chair, Assembly
Committee on Social Services

Donna A. Lupardo
Chair, Assembly
Committee on Agriculture

Michaëlle C. Solages
Chair, Assembly
**Task Force on Food, Farm
& Nutrition Policy**

PUBLIC HEARING REPLY FORM

Persons invited to present testimony at the public hearing on examining the effects that financial instability caused by Covid-19 has had on food insecurity in New York State are requested to complete this reply form by Friday, September 4th and mail, email or fax it to:

Lauren Ryan
Legislative Associate
Assembly Committee on Social Services
Room 442 - Capitol
Albany, New York 12248
Email: ryanl@nyassembly.gov
Phone: (518) 455-4371
Fax: (518) 455-4693

I plan to attend the following public hearing on examining the effects that financial instability caused by Covid-19 has had on food insecurity in New York State to be conducted by the Assembly Committees on Social Services and Agriculture and the Assembly Task Force on Food, Farm & Nutrition Policy on Wednesday, September 9th, 2020.

I have been invited to make a public statement at the hearing. My statement will be limited to 10 minutes, and I will answer any questions that may arise.

I will address my remarks to the following subjects:

I do not plan to attend the above hearing.

I would like to be added to the Committee mailing list for notices and reports.

I would like to be removed from the Committee mailing list.

I will require assistance and/or handicapped accessibility information. **Please specify the type of assistance required:** _____

ALL INFORMATION BELOW MUST BE COMPLETED:

NAME: _____

TITLE: _____

ORGANIZATION: _____

ADDRESS: _____

E-MAIL: _____

TELEPHONE: _____