



Virginia Poverty Law Center

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9.5 Percent of Virginia Households Struggling with Hunger

RICHMOND – One in 11 households in Virginia struggled with hunger, on average, over the years 2011-2013, according to [new data released](#) this week by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Economic Research Service in its annual report on food insecurity.

Nationally, more than 17.5 million American households, or 14.3 percent, struggled against hunger in 2013. The 2013 numbers were statistically unchanged from the 2012 rate and represent a slight dip from the 2011 rate of 14.9 percent. However, the 2013 figure well exceeds the 11.1 percent rate in 2007, before the recession.

“The data released this week show that far too many Virginians are still struggling with hunger,” said LaTonya Reed, Director of Virginia Hunger Solutions. “They also underscore our pressing need for a strong food safety net. With 1 in 11 households struggling to put food on the table in our state alone, it’s time for Congress to focus on strengthening, not cutting, the federal nutrition programs. And it’s time for Virginia to do its share in fully putting these programs to work.”

Among the 9.5 percent of households in Virginia considered to be food insecure during the 2011-2013 period, 3.8 percent were considered to have “very low food security.” People that fall into this USDA category had more severe problems, experiencing deeper hunger and cutting back or skipping meals on a more frequent basis for both adults and children.

Visit FRAC's website at www.frac.org for ongoing analysis.

About the USDA Report

Since 1995, the United States Department of Agriculture, using data from surveys conducted annually by the Census Bureau, has released national and state estimates of the number of people in households that are food insecure. Food insecure households are those that are not able to afford an adequate diet at all times in the past 12 months. For states, USDA uses three-year averages to give a better estimate (with a smaller margin of error) of the number of households experiencing food insecurity. Experts agree that the Census/USDA measure of food insecurity is a conservative one, with the result that only households experiencing substantial food insecurity are so classified.

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The Virginia Poverty Law Center is a nonprofit corporation that provides advocacy, education and litigation support for civil justice issues that affect low-income Virginians. www.vplc.org