

Food Insecurity Survey

Denver Department of Public Health & Environment | 2024

The following results are from the Food Insecurity Survey by Kupersmit Research contracted by the Denver Department of Public Health & Environment. The standard USDA questions were used to measure food insecurity.

Findings are from two surveys conducted in mid 2024. A phone survey was taken of 1,000 randomly selected Denver residents over 18 years old. An in-person survey of 315 food pantry clients at local food pantries was taken to improve our understanding of food insecurity of specific subpopulations who are unlikely to be included in the phone survey.

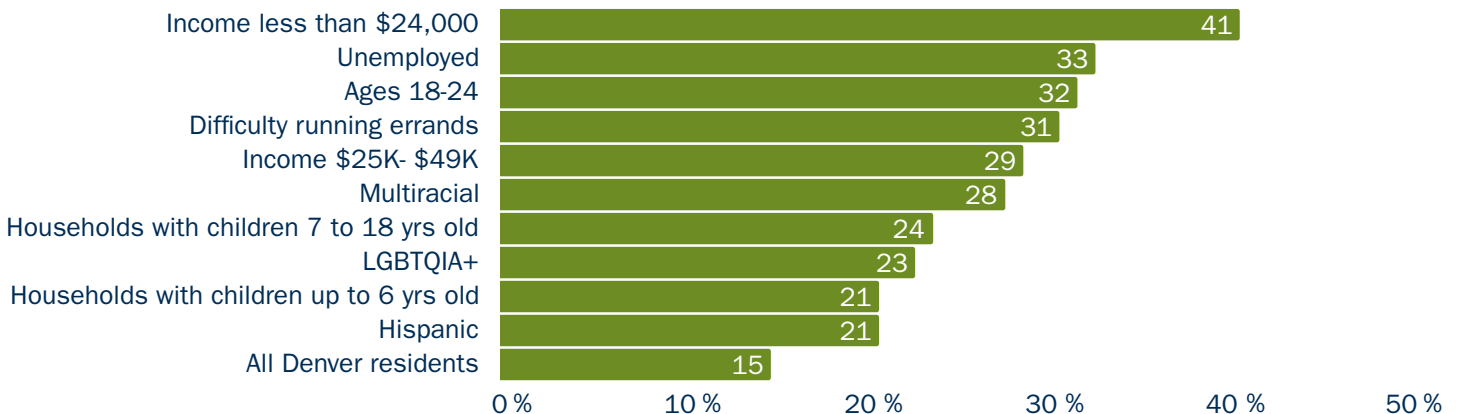


15% of Denver residents are experiencing food insecurity.

Who is experiencing food insecurity in Denver?

Food insecurity is influenced by several factors such as income, employment, race/ethnicity, and disability. In Denver, many subpopulations are experiencing higher rates of food insecurity in comparison to the general population of Denver. For this project, “food insecurity” is defined as: a household-level economic and social condition of limited or uncertain access to adequate food.

Figure 1: Percentage of Denver Resident Adults Who Cut or Skipped Meals by Demographic Group



In Figure 1, we see the following subpopulations who experience food insecurity rates higher than 15%, and that are statistically significant (unlikely to have occurred by chance) based on the phone survey.

How do food pantry clients identify?

45% are experiencing food insecurity

89% identified as Hispanic



54% reported a household income of less than \$24,000

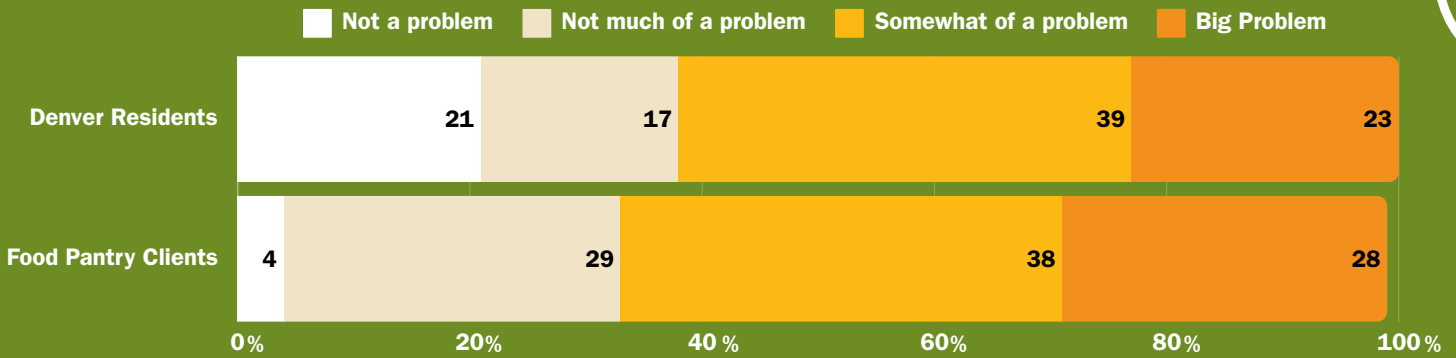


22% reported that their child did not eat for a day in the past 12 months because there was not enough money for food

How big of a problem is the cost of healthy foods?

Two-thirds of Denver residents and food pantry clients indicated that the high cost of healthy foods at their local grocery store is either a “big problem” or “somewhat of a problem.”

Figure 2: Percentage of Participant Responses Regarding the High Cost of Healthy Foods at Local Grocery Stores



Where do participants source food assistance?

When food pantry clients were asked about sources of food assistance (in the past three months), they reported using more food assistance programs as compared to Denver residents.

Figure 3: Participant Responses about Sources of Food Assistance

Sources of food assistance	Denver Residents	Food Pantry Clients
Children received free meals at school	11%	36%
Household members received Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program	8%	10%
Some food came from local food pantries	8%	41%
Children and or parents received Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program or Women, Infants & Children (WIC)	2%	8%
Did not use any of these in the past three months	77%	16%

Among Denver residents who utilize WIC or SNAP, more than 80% of respondents indicated WIC and SNAP do not cover all of their household food needs.

What is the role of Denver elected officials and civic leaders?

89% of Denver residents agreed that Denver elected officials, and civic leaders should make it a major priority to ensure that everyone in Denver can get enough healthy food to eat.