

**IN SEARCH OF A HUNGER-FREE COMMUNITY**

An Assessment of the Emergency Food Network in Milwaukee

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## Executive Summary

This report presents the findings of an extensive assessment of clients within the Hunger Task Force emergency food network. The purpose of this study was to gain insight into the needs and circumstances of clients accessing emergency food assistance within Hunger Task Force's network of food pantries and meal sites. This report also evaluates the role of volunteers within the Hunger Task Force emergency food network. Most significantly, this report sheds light on the various conditions affecting people seeking emergency food assistance in Milwaukee, provides a voice for their stories, and offers a plan of action to address the poverty and hunger factors that contribute to the need for emergency food.

Surveys and interviews were conducted at 62 food pantries and meal sites throughout the metro Milwaukee area. Our sample size consisted of 1,285 food pantry and meal site clients and 229 food pantry and meal site volunteers.

### **MAJOR FINDINGS**

**Food stamps are not accessed by most emergency food clients.** Fifty-five percent of food pantry respondents and 66 percent of meal site respondents did not participate in the program.

**Disabled clients suffer from insufficient government assistance benefits.** Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and Social Security were the most frequently reported sources of primary income.

**There is a severe need for emergency food in Milwaukee County.** Clients reported frequent use of food pantries and meal sites.

**Clients remain food insecure.** Despite reports of frequent emergency food use, food pantry and meal site users reported skipping and cutting the size of meals on a monthly basis.

**Clients lack affordable housing.** Respondents spend a disproportionate amount of income on housing costs.

**Children comprise a significant portion of emergency food households.** More than half of food pantry households included children; almost one-fourth of meal site households included children.

**Lack of employment and low wages contribute to the need for emergency food assistance.** Three-fourths of respondents were unemployed. The median hourly wage for food pantry respondents was \$9; the median hourly wage for meal site respondents was \$7.75.

**Emergency food volunteers report an increase in the need for emergency food assistance.** Most volunteers reported observing an increase in the demand for emergency food over the course of the last 1-5 years.

**A substantial portion of emergency food assistance volunteers are retired and elderly.** Over one-third of volunteers are age 70 and older. More than one-half are retired.

**Food pantries rely on volunteer labor.** Only 41 percent of food pantry coordinators are paid staff.

**Emergency food volunteers commit years of service to food pantries and meal sites.** Over one-third of emergency food volunteers reported being volunteers for more than five years.

## Introduction

Hunger is one of the most pressing issues faced by many Wisconsin residents. Between 2003 and 2004, the poverty rate in Wisconsin grew faster than in any other state, increasing from 9.2 percent to 11 percent.<sup>1</sup> In 2004, 9 percent of the state's residents were food insecure.<sup>2</sup> The rise in the number of poor, food-insecure households may account for increased participation in federal nutrition programs experienced in recent years. Participation in FoodShare, the Wisconsin version of the Food Stamp Program, grew by 9.3 percent between August 2004 and August 2005<sup>3</sup> and the WIC (Women, Infants and Children) program is experiencing record caseloads.<sup>4</sup> However, despite the evident need for participation in federal nutrition-assistance programs, Wisconsin ranks last for School Breakfast Program participation.<sup>5</sup>

As the seventh-poorest city in the U.S., it is not surprising that hunger persists in Milwaukee. According to the 2004 American Community Survey, 26 percent of Milwaukee residents were poor in 2004, a 4.7-percent increase from 2000. The metro Milwaukee area comprises one-third of Wisconsin's poverty total. Regarding Milwaukee's children, 41 percent live in poverty-stricken households, which is triple the state total; Milwaukee ranks fourth nationally for child poverty.<sup>6</sup>

While providing emergency food addresses the pressing, immediate need that hunger creates, hunger will persist unless the root causes of the problem are addressed. The findings of this assessment present common themes related to personal circumstance among Hunger Task Force emergency food users that contribute to emergency food use—inadequate government-assistance benefits, low wages, lack of affordable housing, insufficient healthcare. While Hunger Task Force emergency food services help thousands of hungry Milwaukee residents meet the nutritional needs they may otherwise be unable to reach, these hungry people will remain in need of these emergency services until the economic and social factors related to hunger are addressed.

The purpose of this extensive assessment of emergency food users in the Hunger Task Force emergency food network is to gain insight into the needs and circumstances affecting the people who utilize our services. We intend to use the findings of this study to devise strategies to better serve and advocate for people battling with hunger in Milwaukee. This is the first extensive assessment of the Hunger Task Force network since 1998. However, this report's focus on the individuals receiving food from emergency food sites makes it uniquely different from previous Hunger Task Force emergency food assessments. This study not only sheds light on conditions affecting people who seek emergency food assistance; it also provides a voice for their stories.

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<sup>1</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey; 2004.

<sup>2</sup> M., Nord, M. Andrews, & S. Carlson. 2005. *Household Food Security in the United States, 2004*. United States Department of Agriculture, Economic Research Service, Economic Research Report 11.

<sup>3</sup> The Food and Research Action Center (FRAC); November 2005.

<sup>4</sup> Department of Health and Family Services

<sup>5</sup> The Food and Research Action Center (FRAC); December 2005.

<sup>6</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey; 2004.

## An Overview of Emergency Food Assistance

The concept of emergency food assistance in the United States can be traced back to the first breadlines and soup kitchens of the 1930s during the Great Depression. Due to the prevalence of extreme poverty throughout the country, the government provided commodities for mass distribution in response to the crisis. The breadlines and soup kitchens served as direct-service providers, providing needy people with access to food.<sup>7</sup> Despite the virtual disappearance of breadlines and soup kitchens at the onset of World War II and a rising economy, the government continued to distribute commodities occasionally in order to reduce agricultural surplus and to aid hungry people from the time of the conclusion of the war to the late 1970s.<sup>8</sup>

Emergency food assistance as we know it today is typically linked to the early 1980s. After an extreme recession skyrocketed the need for nutrition assistance, Congress created a commodity distribution program known today as The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP), a large federal nutrition program that provides United States Department of Agriculture commodities to organizations providing emergency food assistance to those in need.<sup>9</sup>

Today, emergency food assistance serves a key role in America's safety net for millions of Americans struggling to maintain access to adequate nutrition. Food banks distribute billions of pounds of food per year to people lacking resources to provide their households with enough food. According to the first extensive, USDA report on emergency food assistance in the United States, there were 5,262 meal sites and 32,737 food pantries operating in 2000.<sup>10</sup> This resulted in 173 million meals served at meal sites and 2.9 billion pounds of food distributed by food pantries.<sup>11</sup> The second volume of the study reported that 4.3 million households utilized a food pantry on any given month during 2001; nearly 1.1 million utilized a meal site.<sup>12</sup>

During the 2005 fiscal year, Hunger Task Force distributed 9,509,509 pounds of food to 73 food pantries, meal sites and shelters in Milwaukee County, an 83,273-pound increase from 2004. Over 39,000 individuals received food from Hunger Task Force food pantries and Stockbox<sup>13</sup> drop-off sites every month, and over 64,000 meals were served monthly

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<sup>7</sup> Poppendick, 1986; Eisinger, 1998.

<sup>8</sup> Bery, 1994.

<sup>9</sup> USDA; Economic Research Service. *The Emergency Food Assistance System-Findings from the Provider Survey Volume II: Final Report*. August 2002.

<sup>10</sup> USDA; Economic Research Service. *The Emergency Food Assistance System-Findings from the Provider Survey Volume II: Final Report*. August 2002.

<sup>11</sup> USDA; Economic Research Service. *The Emergency Food Assistance System-Findings from the Provider Survey Volume II: Final Report*. August 2002.

<sup>12</sup> USDA; Economic Research Service. *The Emergency Food Assistance System-Findings from the Client Survey*. July 2003.

<sup>13</sup> Stockbox is a program that provides low-income seniors, post-partum mothers and children in Milwaukee County with free, nutritious food every month. The program utilizes USDA commodities through the Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP).

at our community meal sites. If poverty levels in Milwaukee continue to rise, the need for Hunger Task Force emergency food services can also be expected to increase.

Meal sites, frequently referred to as soup kitchens, provide meals prepared on-site to clients. For the purpose of this study, the term “meal site” refers to a congregate meal program providing meals to recipients that do not reside on the meal site facility and shelters providing meals to shelter residents.

Food pantries are organizations that provide uncooked food items to recipients for preparation offsite. The variety of food items distributed by food pantries varies based on individual pantry capacity. In general, food pantries provide clients with canned fruits and vegetables, and cereals and starches. In some cases food pantries also provide protein items: milk, meat and poultry, and infant formula.

## METHODOLOGY

Data collected for this report are based on responses to surveys administered within the Hunger Task Force emergency food network. Data is gathered during the fall and winter of 2005. A Bill Emerson National Hunger Fellow administered all surveys and interviews.<sup>14</sup> Sixty-two emergency food assistance locations were surveyed, including 45 food pantries, 11 community meal programs and six shelters. Food pantries were selected based on their adherence to Hunger Task Force standards of excellence and primary population served, eliminating programs that have not yet met all of the standards of the network, as well as the “infant needs only” pantries.<sup>15</sup> All community meal programs within the emergency food network were selected for the assessment. One shelter that functions as a daycare center for shelter residents was excluded from the assessment.

Three surveys were utilized for data collection, a food pantry survey, meal site survey and volunteer survey. The food pantry survey was a four-page, 22-item questionnaire; the meal site survey was a four-page, 20-item questionnaire; and the volunteer questionnaire was a five-page, 27-item questionnaire (see Appendices II, III, and IV). The meal site survey was utilized in the community meal programs and shelters. The volunteer questionnaire was distributed with a supplemental self-addressed stamped envelope and cover letter explaining the purpose of the study. Volunteers completed surveys at their convenience and returned questionnaires in the mail. Client surveys were completed during site visits. Most surveys were completed by clients independently; however, a significant portion of surveys were completed through interviews.

Surveys and interviews were conducted from Sept. 10-Dec. 21. Clients were randomly selected during agency hours of operation. Clients were not required to fill out questionnaires in order to receive food. Food pantry clients completed surveys while waiting to receive emergency food allocations, and community meal program clients completed surveys during and after their meal. Since most shelters do not have scheduled congregate meals as the traditional community meal program does, shelter clients completed surveys at their convenience throughout the course of a site visit. A confidence interval was calculated for food pantries based on the average number of households served between August 2004 and July 2005; the community meal program confidence interval was based on the average number of meals served between August 2004 and July 2005. No confidence interval was set for shelters due to the inability to accurately track the number of meals served over the course of a year. A confidence interval of five at the 95 percent confidence level was reached

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<sup>14</sup> The Bill Emerson National Hunger Fellowship program, a project of the Congressional Hunger Center, is a unique year-long leadership development program designed for recent college graduates interested in working to eliminate hunger and poverty. Participants spend their first six months working for a local community-based organization in order to gain knowledge of local efforts to end hunger. Fellows complete their final six months of the program working in Washington, D.C. for a national organization in order to work with hunger and poverty issues from a national perspective. <http://hungercenter.org>

<sup>15</sup> Hunger Task Force rates food pantries on a scale of 1-4, one being the lowest and four being the highest, based on their adherence to the Hunger Task Force Standards of Excellence. “Infant needs only” food pantries limit their food supply to infant food items

for all food pantry and meal programs.<sup>16</sup> A total of 1,514 surveys were collected—760 food pantry, 525 meal site and 229 volunteer surveys.

Three percent of respondents completed surveys translated in Spanish, and 3 percent completed surveys that were orally translated in Hmong.

The results of the study are limited by the self-selective nature of the surveying tool. Clients answered questions selectively; thus, certain findings may not be representative of the entire sample.

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<sup>16</sup> The confidence interval is an estimated range of values that are likely to cover the true population value. <http://www.ablongman.com/html/abrami/glossary/glossary.html#GLOSSARY> C A confidence level indicates the level of certainty that results will produce the true population value. <http://www.surveysystem.com/sscalc.htm#terminology>



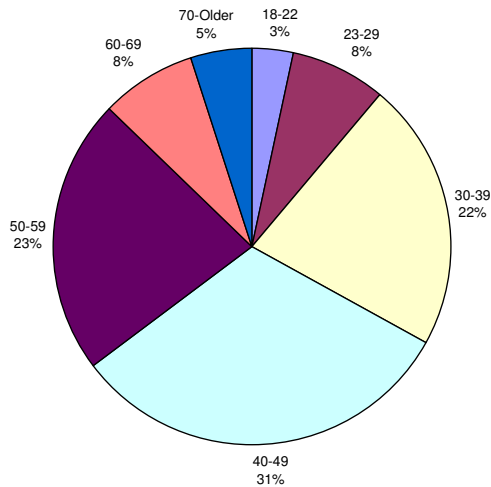
## Food Pantry and Meal Site Client Profiles

Demographic data provides information on the characteristics of people served by the network. Demographic data was gathered for both food pantry and meal site respondents. Information on age, household composition, race and ethnicity, and gender was requested.

### AGE

The following charts identify the ages of the people who actually went to the pantries and meal programs to get food. They do not reflect the total age composition of the households using the food that was received from pantries.

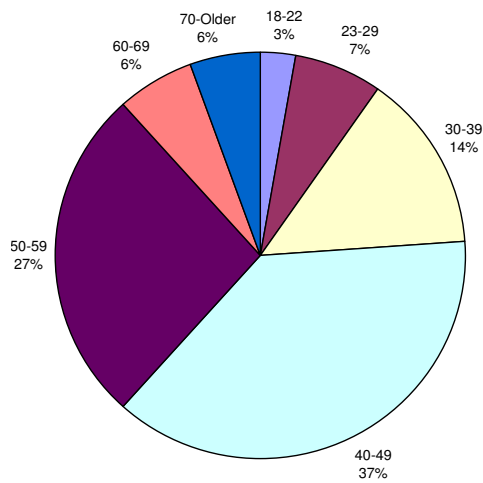
**Chart 1: Age of Food Pantry Respondents**



n= 645

**The average food pantry respondent was 45 years old.**

**Chart 2: Age of Meal Site Respondents**



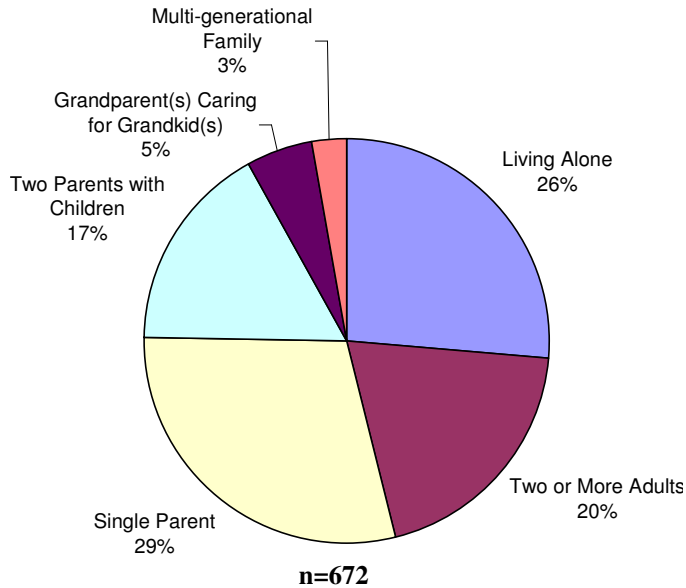
n= 449

**The average meal site respondent was 46 years old.**

## HOUSEHOLD COMPOSITION

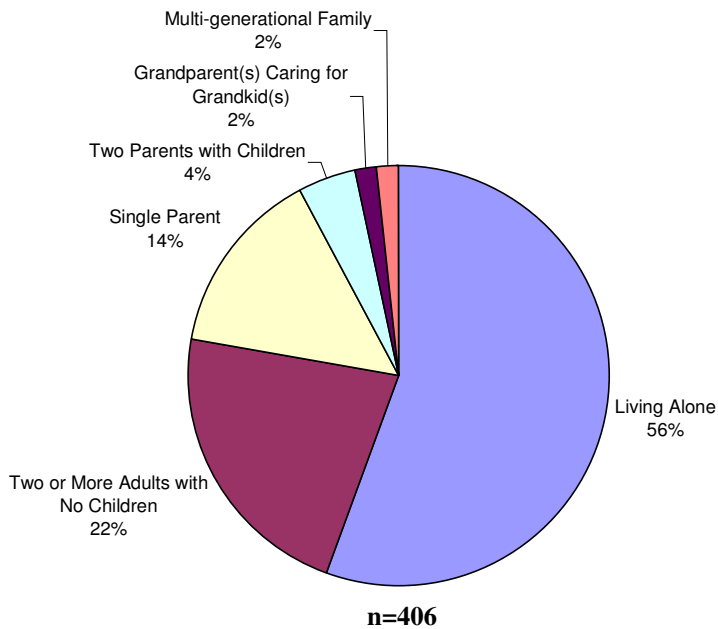
In terms of household composition, food pantries typically served more households with children and meal programs typically served more individuals who are living alone.

**Chart 3: Food Pantry Household Composition**



- 54 percent of food pantry households included children.
- Among households with children, 82 percent were characterized as single parent homes.

**Chart 4: Meal Site Household Composition**

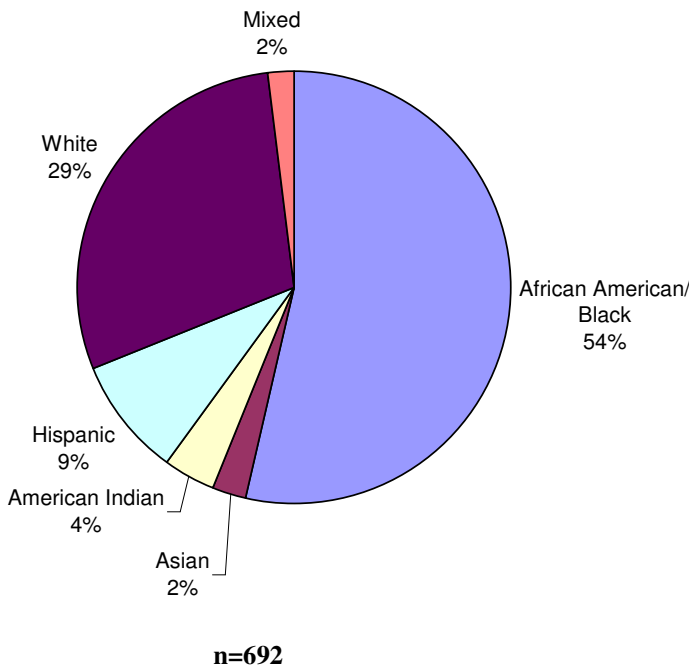


- 22 percent of meal site households included children.
- Among households with children, 64 percent were characterized as single-parent homes.
- More than half of all meal site respondents lived alone.

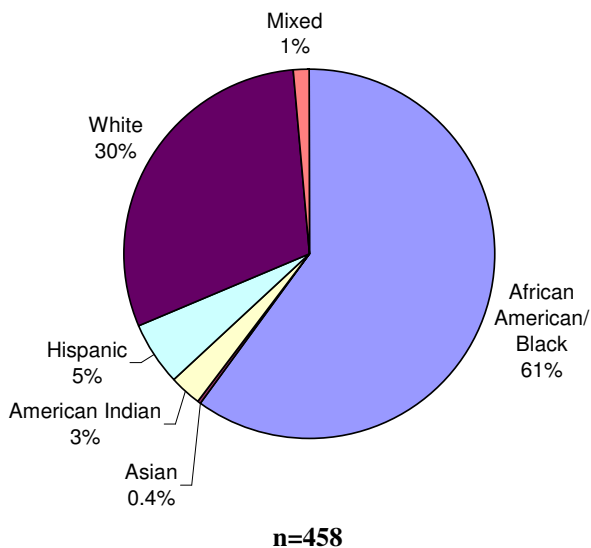
RACE AND ETHNICITY

African American/Blacks are over-represented in the emergency food programs. The United States Census for 2004 indicates that African American/Blacks comprise 40 percent of the residents in the city of Milwaukee. However they represented 54 percent of food pantry clients and 61 percent of meal site clients. White/Caucasians, who make up 47 percent of city residents, represented only 29 percent of food pantry clients and 30 percent of meal program users. These figures reflect the racial economic disparity that exists in Milwaukee.

**Chart 5: Food Pantry Race and Ethnicity**



**Chart 6: Meal Site Race and Ethnicity**



## GENDER

Gender appears to be an important factor in the selection of the means by which emergency food assistance is accessed. Women are far more likely to choose a meal pantry for assistance, while men are more likely to choose a meal program. This gender difference in the choice of emergency food programs is probably largely due to the presence of children in the household. While most meal program users are single, most food pantry users have children and are often single parents. Table 1 identifies the gender of emergency food clients by program type.

<b>Table 1: Food Pantry and Meal Site Gender</b>				
	Female		Male	
	n	Percent	n	Percent
Food Pantry	444	64%	255	36%
Meal Site	153	32%	324	68%

- Most food pantry respondents were women.
- Most meal site respondents were men.

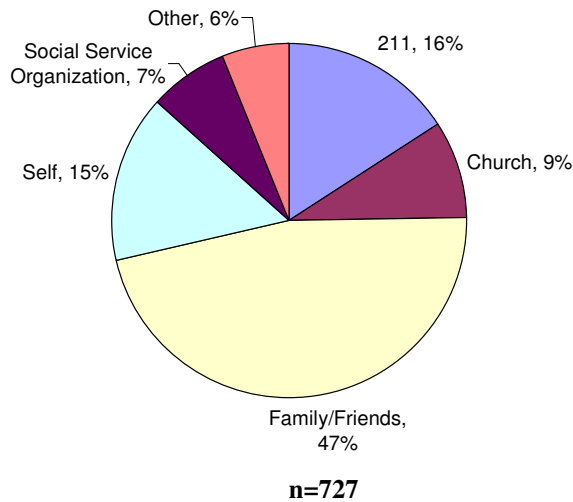
# USE OF EMERGENCY FOOD ASSISTANCE

A major purpose of our study was to better understand emergency food assistance clients and their use of the emergency food network. An attempt was made to understand how clients learn about emergency food sites; what circumstances contribute to emergency food assistance use; how frequently services are accessed; and to what extent clients are satisfied with services.

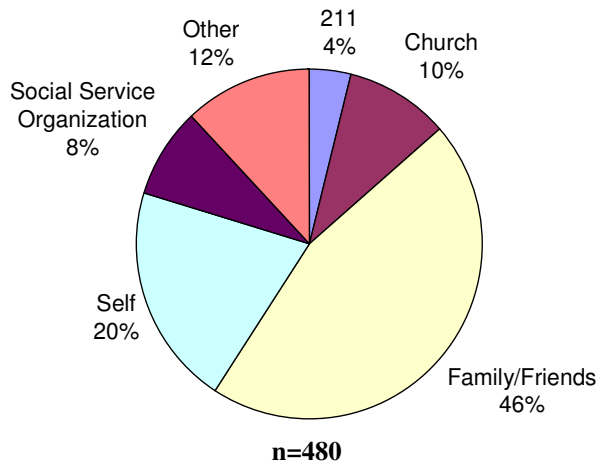
## REFERRAL SOURCES FOR EMERGENCY FOOD ASSISTANCE

Clients were asked questions related to food pantry and meal site referral sources. The intention was to better understand how clients discover emergency food assistance sites. It appears that personal networks of family and friends were significant factors in accessing emergency food assistance. The following chart summarizes the referral responses:

**Chart 7: Food Pantry Referral Sources**



**Chart 8: Meal Site Referral Sources**



- Almost half of food pantry and meal site respondents were referred to food pantries and meal sites by family and friends.
- Only 4 percent of meal site respondents were referred to meal sites through 211.

## REASONS FOR ACCESSING EMERGENCY FOOD ASSISTANCE

One survey question inquired about circumstances contributing to emergency food use. Respondents were asked to check all factors that applied to their use of emergency food assistance. Low wages, the high cost of daily living expenses such as rent, utilities and medical costs, and insufficient help from food assistance programs all played heavily in the need to seek food assistance from a food pantry. Table 2 summarizes the responses for pantry users.

<b>Table 2: Circumstances Contributing to Food Pantry Use</b>		
	<b>n</b>	<b>Percent</b>
<b>Benefits</b>		
<b>Food Stamps Ran Out</b>	<b>220</b>	<b>15.9%</b>
Food Stamps Cut Off	118	8.5%
W2 Check is Not Enough	41	3.0%
Loss of W2	6	0.4%
Unemployment Benefits Ran Out	37	2.7%
<b>High Costs</b>		
Medical Cost	150	10.8%
Childcare Costs	26	1.9%
<b>Utility Costs</b>	<b>273</b>	<b>19.7%</b>
<b>Rent/Mortgage</b>	<b>267</b>	<b>19.3%</b>
<b>Personal Factors</b>		
Recent Divorce/Separation	37	2.7%
Not Receiving Child Support	71	5.1%
<b>Low Wages</b>	<b>109</b>	<b>7.9%</b>
Other	28	2.0%
<b>Total Responses</b>	<b>1383</b>	

- Food pantry respondents most frequently reported food stamps running out, high rent and utility costs, and low wages were their main reasons for utilizing a food pantry.

Meal-site users appeared to have more difficulty in identifying their reason(s) for seeking emergency meal program assistance than did food pantry clients. Fewer than 10 percent of meal site responders identified any of the reasons given on the survey as contributing to their use of meal sites. This may be due to a complete lack of life resources available to meal site clients. If you do not have a job, a place to live or access to food assistance programs to begin with, they can not be claimed as reasons for needing assistance. Table 3 identifies the reasons for accessing emergency meal site assistance for those users who were able to identify contributing circumstances.

<b>Table 3: Circumstances Contributing to Meal Site Use</b>		
	<b>n</b>	<b>Percent</b>
<b>Benefits</b>		
<b>Food Stamps Ran Out</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>7.9%</b>
Food Stamps Cut Off	58	4.7%
W2 Check is Not Enough	10	0.8%
Loss of W-2	10	0.8%
Unemployment Benefits Ran Out	36	2.9%
<b>High Costs</b>		
Medical Cost	46	3.8%
Childcare Costs	9	0.7%
<b>Utility Costs</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>6.5%</b>
<b>Rent/Mortgage</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>8.1%</b>
<b>Personal Factors</b>		
Recent Divorce/Separation	30	2.5%
Not Receiving Child Support	19	1.6%
<b>Low Wages</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>5.6%</b>
<b>Other</b>	<b>156</b>	<b>12.8%</b>
<b>Total Responses</b>	<b>716</b>	

- The “other” selection under the personal factors category was the most frequently reported reason for visiting a meal site. Homelessness, insufficient funds and a sense of community were the most frequent “other” personal factors reported.
- Food stamps ran out, high rent and utilities, and low wages were reported as reasons for accessing the system, but on a much less frequent basis than reported by pantry users.

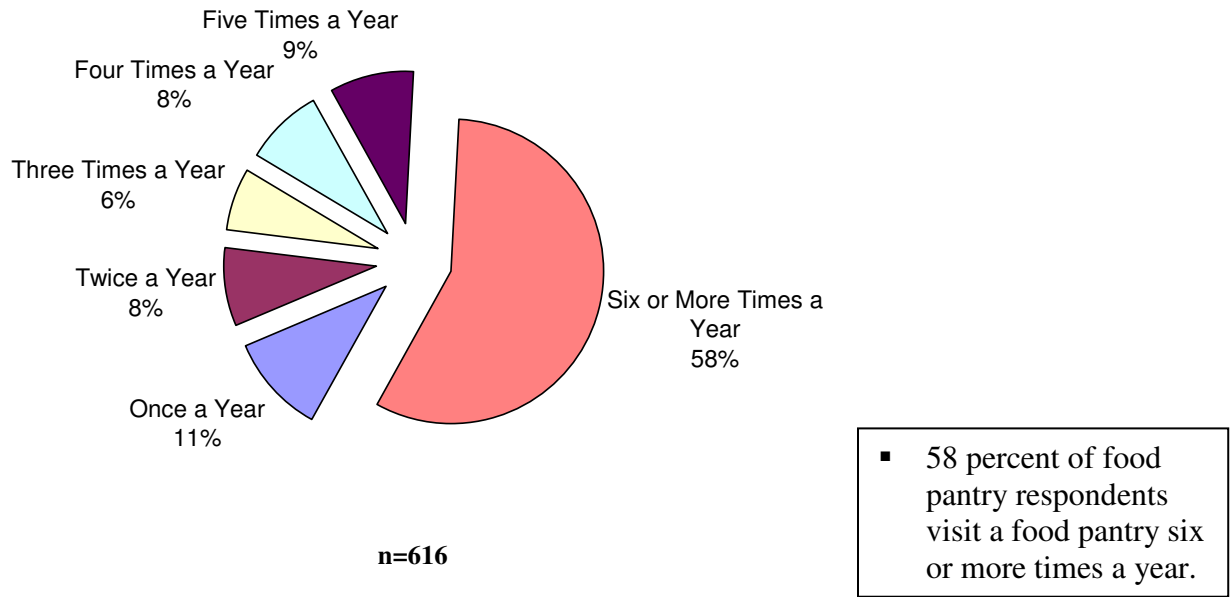
#### FREQUENCY OF EMERGENCY FOOD ASSISTANCE USE

Clients were asked questions related to how often they visit a food pantry or meal site. Most meal pantries in the Hunger Task Force network set a standard allowing a maximum of one pantry visit per month. However, **69 percent of food pantry respondents reported having to use a food pantry more than once a month during 2005**. Their need was great enough to lead them to seek out a second pantry. Table 4 illustrates the need for more than one pantry visit per month.

<b>Table 4: Reports of Visiting a Food Pantry More than Once a Month this Year</b>		
	<b>n</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Yes	340	69%
No	154	31%

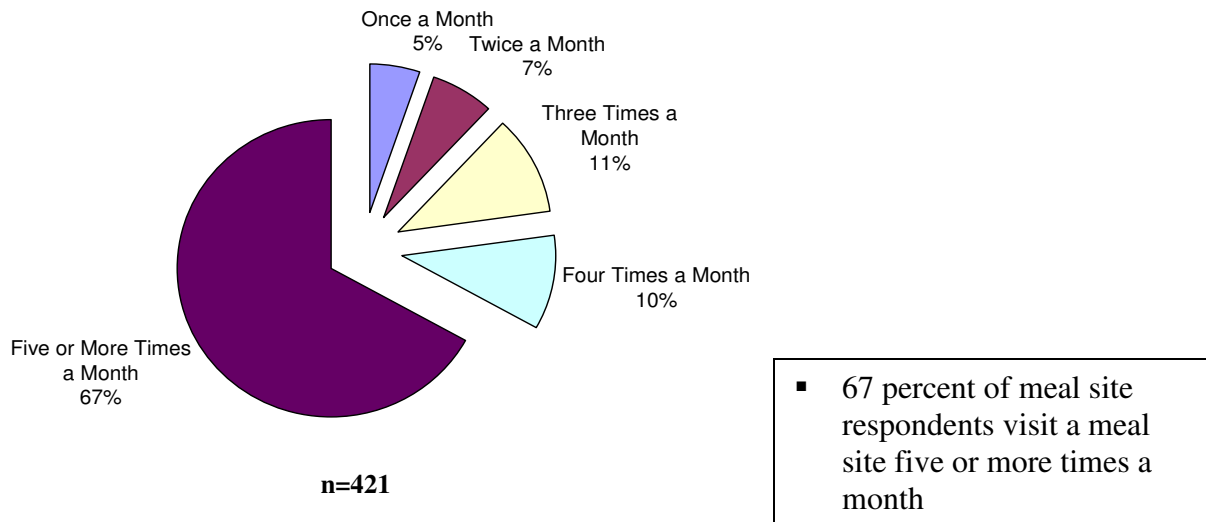
Clients were also asked how often they visited a food pantry or meal site in the last 12 months in an attempt to measure the duration of emergency food assistance needs. Chart 9 summarizes the number of food pantry visits made by each client during the previous 12 months, identifying a need that persisted for more than six months for most pantry users.

**Chart 9: Frequency of Food Pantry Visits within a Year**



Meal site users were also asked to identify how often they made use of a meal site. As in the case of food pantry users, meal site users also identified frequent need. While pantries seek to offer services once per month, meal sites offer meal access that is limited only by the days the program is open and the number of meals served per day. Most meal site users identified using a meal site more than five times per month. Chart 10 illustrates the frequency of meal site visits per user.

**Chart 10: Frequency of Meal Site Visits**





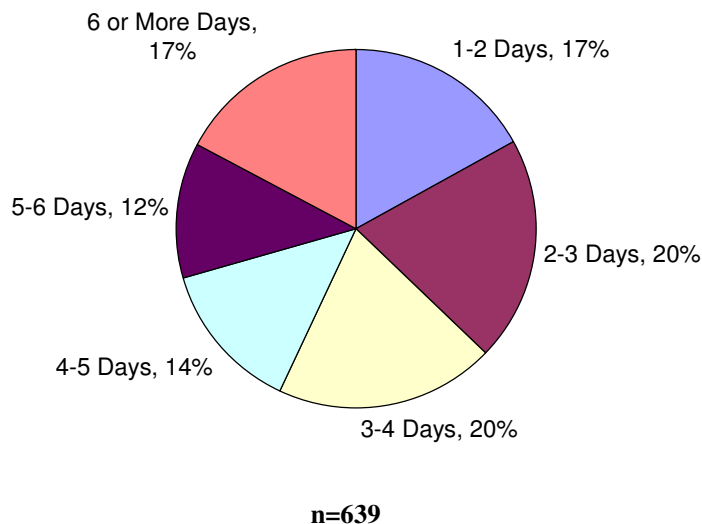
## CLIENT SATISFACTION WITH SERVICES

The Hunger Task Force emergency food network operates under a set of operating standards called *Standards of Excellence*. Adherence to these standards assures that individual programs have clean facilities, store and handle food safely, employ staff and volunteers who serve people equally, provide food that meets the need, and achieves compliance with program integrity and accountability. Client satisfaction measures were used to determine if clients felt programs were living up to these standards. In general, survey results show high client satisfaction with food and services received from the emergency food network.

### 1. Food Pantry Provisions

Food pantry clients were asked how long pantry food provisions last for their household. This helps identify the extent to which food made available through pantries meets user needs. Hunger Task Force requests that pantries in the network provide food resources sufficient to last a household for 2-3 days. Only 17 percent of users found the food they received was not sufficient to meet this basic standard. Many clients were, in fact, able to stretch pantry food beyond this minimum, with some stretching the use of the food they received for six or more days. Chart 11 illustrates pantry user responses to a question about how long pantry food lasts for their household:

**Chart 11: Length of Time Food Pantry Provisions Last<sup>17</sup>**



■ 2 out of 3 clients reported their food pantry provisions lasted for at least the 2-3 day minimum standard

### 2. Food Pantry Food Ratings

Hunger Task Force intends for clients in our pantry network to receive nutritious food that is respectful of the circumstances, culture, diet and religion of people. There was a strong sense of user satisfaction with the food provided by food pantries in the Hunger Task Force network.

<sup>17</sup> The typical emergency food provision should last at least 2-3 days.

Over 90 percent of food pantry respondents reported that the food they received from food pantries was fresh, nutritious, appropriate for their culture or religion, and the type of food they like:

- 85 percent reported that the food was high quality
- 78 percent reported that the food met medical needs

Clients were also asked the types of food they would like to receive more often when they visit a food pantry. Foods that are generally more expensive, difficult to obtain and harder to store were mentioned the most:

- Meat, chicken, fresh vegetables and fruit, and milk were among the most frequently requested items

### 3. Food Pantry Facility Maintenance

Hunger Task Force requires its network food pantries to operate clean, safe and well-staffed programs, and it appears that pantries in the network are living up to this standard.

- Over 90 percent of food pantry respondents reported that food pantry facilities were clean, safe and staffed with enough people.

### 4. Food Pantry Customer Service

The following describes food pantry client responses to questions related to client relations:

- 97 percent of food pantry respondents reported that they were treated with respect and made to feel welcome.
- 78 percent reported that they were informed of other community services available to them.

### 5. Food Pantry Accessibility

It is the belief of Hunger Task Force that emergency food must be available and accessible when it is needed. Food pantry clients were asked what changes to food pantry operations would make it easier to receive emergency food. Respondents selected multiple choices related to improving food pantry accessibility. The operating practices that appeared to affect client access the most were all related to hours of operation. The need for additional operating hours was fairly constant across times and days. Food pantry respondents indicated that evening hours, weekend hours and increased hours during the week would all help in their need to access food resources.

- 35 percent requested additional weekday hours
- 30 percent requested additional evening hours
- 29 percent requested additional weekend hours
- 17 percent wanted a pantry that was closer to their home

- Food pantry respondents reported that increased weekday, weekend and evening hours would all make it easier to receive emergency food.

- 8 percent needed increased handicapped accessibility

## 6. Meal Site Food Ratings

Meal site respondents also reported satisfaction with the quality of food they receive.

- Over 90 percent of meal site respondents reported that the food they received from food pantries was fresh, nutritious, appropriate for their culture or religion, and the type of food they like
- 88 percent reported that the food was high quality
- 88 percent reported that the food met medical needs
- Meat, chicken, and fresh vegetables and fruit were among the most frequently reported types of food that respondents would like to receive at emergency meal sites

## 7. Meal Site Facility Maintenance

Meal site respondents were satisfied with the facility where the program was operated.

- Over 95 percent of meal site respondents reported that meal site facilities were clean, safe, and staffed with enough people

## 8. Meal Site Customer Service

The following describes meal site client responses to questions related to client relations:

- Over 95 percent of meal site respondents reported that they were treated with respect and made to feel welcome
- 74 percent reported that they were informed of other community services available to them

## EMERGENCY FOOD ASSISTANCE VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers are the core of Hunger Task Force emergency food services. Hunger Task Force depends on the support of 2,500-3,000 volunteers annually which translates into about 13,500 hours of service or a value of nearly \$200,000.<sup>18</sup> Volunteers assist Hunger Task Force with its anti-hunger efforts by providing direct-client services within food pantries and meal sites, participating in food sorts, and performing warehouse and clerical duties. Additionally, volunteers advance the Hunger Task Force advocacy mission by speaking for the agency in the community and participating in outreach efforts.

The Hunger Task Force network of food pantries and meal sites is heavily staffed by volunteers. Only **41 percent** of food pantry coordinators are paid staff. Volunteers serve as site coordinators, intake workers and food sorters. In addition to routine facility maintenance, some volunteers pick up food for their emergency food sites and deliver food to clients under special circumstances. This study sought to better understand both who our volunteers are and also what functions they perform.

### DEMOGRAPHICS

In an effort to better understand who the emergency food network volunteers are, demographic data was gathered for volunteer respondents. Information on age, gender, race and ethnicity, and employment status was requested.

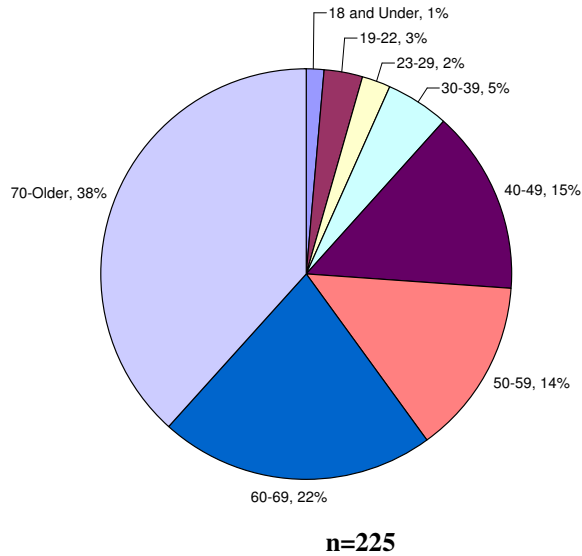
#### AGE

The age of network volunteers is significant for several reasons. Nearly 40 percent of volunteers are age 70 or older and 60 percent are age 60 or above. This reflects a need for emergency food programs to be mindful of future needs in the area of volunteer recruitment, especially given the heavy reliance on volunteer staffing. In addition, Hunger Task Force must recognize the need to package the food it provides to pantry operations with appropriate size and weight considerations. Consideration of ways to recruit younger volunteers would also be helpful. Chart 13 identifies the ages of emergency food program volunteers.

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<sup>18</sup> The value of volunteer hours of service were calculated based on estimations provided by the Volunteer Center of Greater Milwaukee.

**Chart 13: Age of Food Pantry and Meal Site Volunteers**

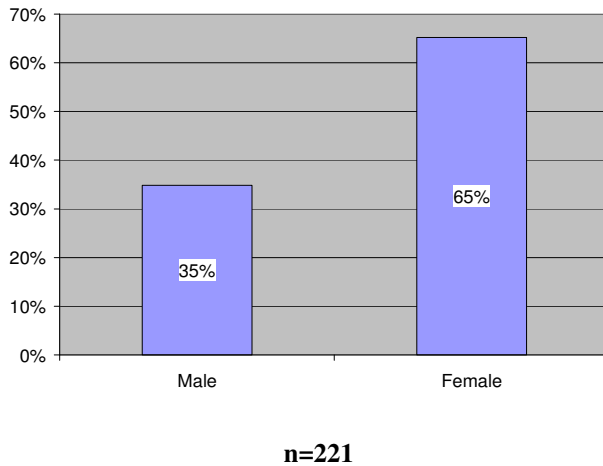


**Almost 40 percent of emergency food volunteers are age 70 or older.**

GENDER

Most emergency food network volunteers are female. It would be useful to gain an understanding of what appeals to female volunteers and also how volunteering in the programs could be made more attractive to men. Chart 14 illustrates the gender of program volunteers.

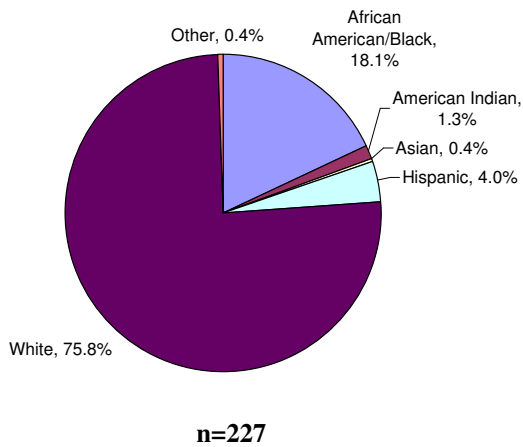
**Chart 14: Gender of Volunteers**



RACE AND ETHNICITY

Well over half of emergency food programs users in the Hunger Task Force network are African American/Black. Yet, volunteers are predominately white. Chart 15 identifies the race and ethnicity of program volunteers.

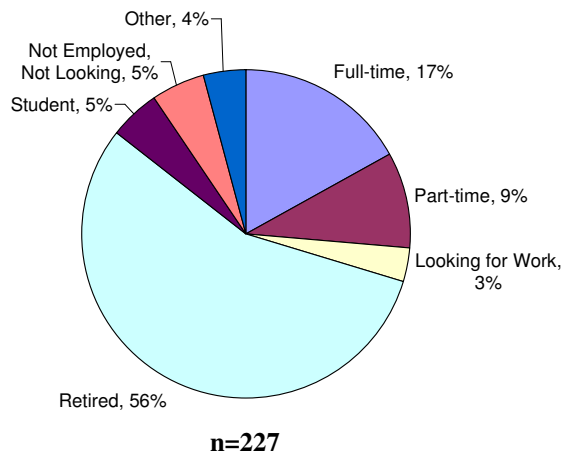
**Chart 15: Race and Ethnicity**



EMPLOYMENT STATUS OF VOLUNTEERS

Only 17 percent of volunteers work full-time. Their service is a testament to the importance they place upon the work of the emergency food network. While most of the remainder of the volunteers are retired, the program has also attracted students, part-time workers and people who are not in the labor market. Chart 16 illustrates the employment status of the volunteers.

**Chart 16: Employment Status**



**While most volunteers were retired, 17 percent were employed full-time.**

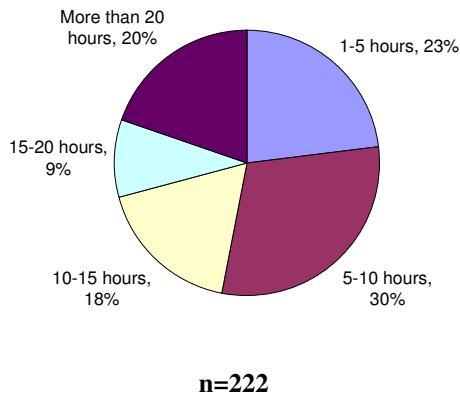
VOLUNTEER ACTIVITIES

Understanding volunteer roles and motivation is important to ensuring that the emergency food network is properly staffed. Knowing volunteer motivations, being aware of volunteer availability and other commitments and monitoring volunteer duties are all important to maintaining satisfactory services within the emergency food network.

FREQUENCY AND DURATION OF SERVICE

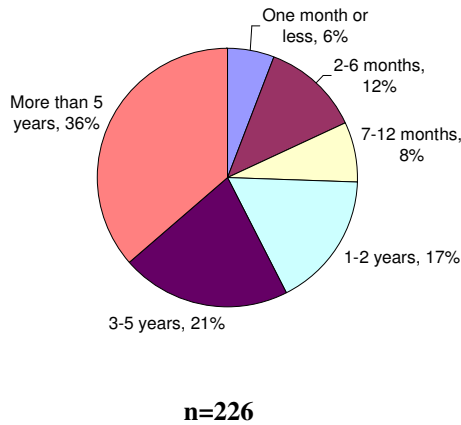
Volunteers were asked questions related to the number of hours they devote to volunteer work every month and the duration of their volunteer experience. Charts 17 and 18 summarize their responses:

**Chart 17: Frequency of Volunteer Activity per Month**



- **More than half of volunteers work 10 or fewer hours per week.**
- **20 percent of volunteers commit more than 20 hours of volunteer service a month.**

**Chart 18: Duration of Volunteer Commitment**



- **36 percent of volunteers have committed more than five years of volunteer service.**

VOLUNTEER DUTIES

Volunteers reported performing multiple duties, including:

- 53 percent—sort/bag food
- 34 percent—clean
- 23 percent—interview clients
- 17 percent—make deliveries
- 16 percent—take inventory

- 11 percent—outreach
- 10 percent—administration
- 8 percent—order food
- 4 percent—drive
- 3 percent—advocacy

Twenty-eight percent reported “other” as a category of duties, most of whom indicated these functions were related to cooking, serving and cleaning up after meals. Some volunteers also reported sorting clothes at sites that provided this service.

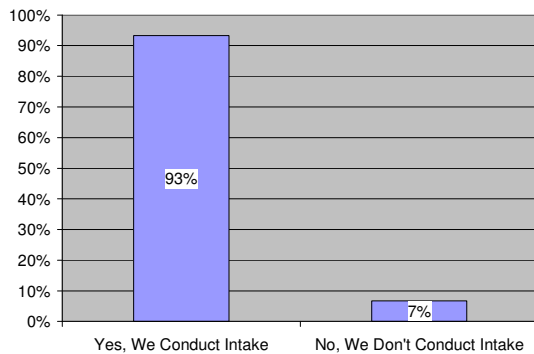
CLIENT INTAKE AND REFERRAL

During the client intake process, volunteers request client information regarding proof of residency and proof of identification for each household member. In addition to household information, some food pantries request information related to participation in federal nutrition programs; however, clients do not have to participate in government programs to receive food from food pantries. Meal sites do not conduct a client intake.

The client intake process operates as the gateway for successful client referrals. Hunger Task Force encourages all food pantries to refer emergency food users to federally funded supplemental food programs, such as the Food Stamp Program, School Lunch and Breakfast programs, Summer Food Service Program and Women Infants and Children (WIC).

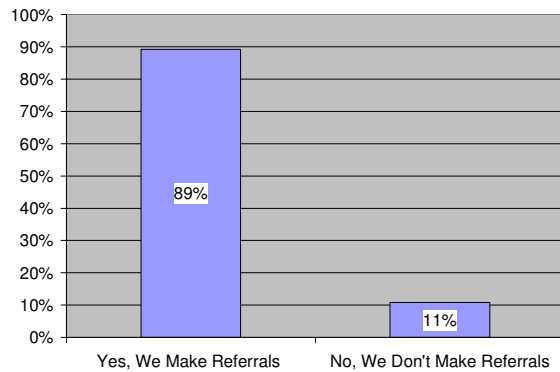
Charts 20 and 21 describe food pantry volunteer participation in client intake and referrals. In those instances where intake or referral participation were not reported, it does not necessarily mean the program does not undertake those functions, but that volunteers do not participate.

**Chart 20: Client Intake Participation**





**Chart 21: Referral Activity**



**n=111**

**Percent of Volunteers Making Referrals by Program**

- 35 percent—Food Stamps
- 30 percent—WIC
- 26 percent—Summer Meals
- 25 percent—National Free and Reduced Price Breakfast and Lunch Programs
- 9 percent—Other

Emergency food program clients are likely to be eligible for other food assistance programs. Because the emergency food program is the least efficient means of providing assistance, efforts should be made to increase referral rates to federal nutrition programs. Given the child poverty rate in Milwaukee, it is especially important that referrals to child nutrition programs occur. For those volunteers who did not participate in referral activities (11 percent), lack of adequate knowledge of government programs and lack of time were the main reasons given for non-participation.

VOLUNTEER MOTIVATION

Volunteers were asked what motivates them to commit to volunteer activity with the emergency food network. Volunteers reported multiple motivations. The most frequent responses were related to giving back to the community, demonstrating a concern for hungry people and expressing their religious faith.

- 69 percent—Opportunity to give back
- 58 percent—Concern about hungry people
- 57 percent—Expression of my faith in action
- 40 percent—I have time available
- 38 percent—Opportunity to be with people
- 22 percent—Opportunity to learn new things
- 8 percent—Other
- 7 percent—I have experienced hunger

## TRENDS IN EMERGENCY FOOD ASSISTANCE

Volunteers were asked a series of questions regarding trends developing within the network in relation to clientele demographics and the demand for emergency food. Thirty-six percent of the total sample of volunteers (N=229) reported a demographic change in clientele in the past year; 29 percent reported a change over the last five years. Volunteers most frequently reported observing more elderly people, single men and larger households comprised of multiple families utilizing their services. In regards to the demand for emergency food, most volunteers reported an increase in the demand for emergency food over the past 1-5 years. The most frequent responses to reasons for the increase were related to increased unemployment, increased poverty levels and broader knowledge of emergency food assistance sites.

Table 5 summarizes volunteer responses to changes in the demand for emergency food during the last year:

<b>Table 5: Volunteer Response to Changes in the Demand for Emergency Food Over the Past Year</b>		
<b>Response</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>Percent</b>
No Changes	20	9%
Increased	126	55%
Decreased	2	1%
Don't Know	56	24%
No Response	25	11%

Table 6 summarizes volunteer responses to changes in the demand for emergency food during the past five years:

<b>Table 6: Changes in the Demand for Emergency Food Over the Last 5 Years</b>		
<b>Response</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>Percent</b>
No Changes	8	3%
Increased	122	53%
Decreased	4	2%
Don't Know	69	30%
No Response	26	11%

## FACTORS RELATED TO HUNGER AND POVERTY

Various social issues are connected to hunger and poverty. In order to better understand the link between social factors and the need for emergency food assistance, respondents were asked questions related to income, employment, education, housing, healthcare, federal nutrition program participation and food insecurity.

### INCOME

Emergency food assistance program clients were found to have low household incomes. During 2004, the U.S. Census reported an annual median household income for the City of Milwaukee of \$31,231. This compares to \$8,400 for food pantry clients and \$8,160 for meal site clients.

	<b>n</b>	<b>Median</b>	<b>Mean</b>
Food Pantry	329	\$700	\$839.10
Meal Site	137	\$680	\$825.61

Food Pantry respondents reported they received income or assistance from the following sources:

- Medicare/Medicaid (23 percent)
- SSI (21 percent)
- Employed (20 percent)
- Social Security (18 percent)
- W-2 (8 percent)
- WIC (6 percent)
- ChildCare (5 percent)
- Rent Assistance (4 percent)
- Earned Income Tax Credit (2 percent)
- Kinship Care (1 percent)

Meal Site respondents reported they received income or assistance from the following sources:

- Employed (22 percent)
- SSI (17 percent)
- Social Security (15 percent)
- Medicare/Medicaid (15 percent)
- W-2 (6 percent)
- WIC (3 percent)
- Rent Assistance (3 percent)
- ChildCare (2 percent)
- Kinship Care (1 percent)
- Earned Income Tax Credit (1 percent)

Twenty percent of both food pantry and meal site respondents are employed. The fact that only a small percentage report receiving the earned income tax credit is cause for concern that this program is not being fully utilized. If utilized, the EIC represents a valuable source of income for low-income households.

## **1) Public Assistance**

Public assistance benefits function as the primary source of income for food pantry and meal site clients. Fifty-nine percent of food pantry clients and 43 percent of meal site clients reported receiving some form of public assistance. Supplemental Security Income (SSI)<sup>19</sup> was the most frequently reported source of income for food pantry respondents (21 percent) and the second most frequent response among meal site clients (17 percent); social security was the third most frequently reported source of income (18 percent) within food pantries and the third highest response within meal programs (15 percent). Only 8 percent of food pantry respondents participate in Wisconsin Works (W-2).<sup>20</sup>

## **2) Employment**

Twenty percent of food pantry clients and 22 percent of meal site clients reported that they were employed either full or part-time. The median monthly household income among employed meal program clients was \$800; the median hourly wage was \$7.75. The median household income for employed food pantry respondents was \$900; the median hourly wage was \$9. Similar results were found among food pantry households including children; the median monthly income was \$1,000, and the median hourly wage was \$9. Despite low wages reported among food pantry households with children, only 2 percent of all employed food pantry respondents receive the Earned Income Credit (EIC).<sup>21</sup>

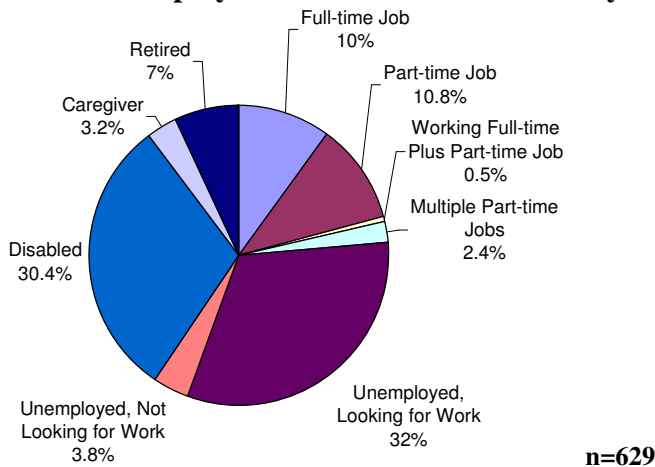
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<sup>19</sup> The Supplemental Security Income (SSI) is a federal income supplement program that provides cash benefits to low-income people who are aged, blind or disabled. <http://www.ssa.gov/notices/supplemental-security-income/>

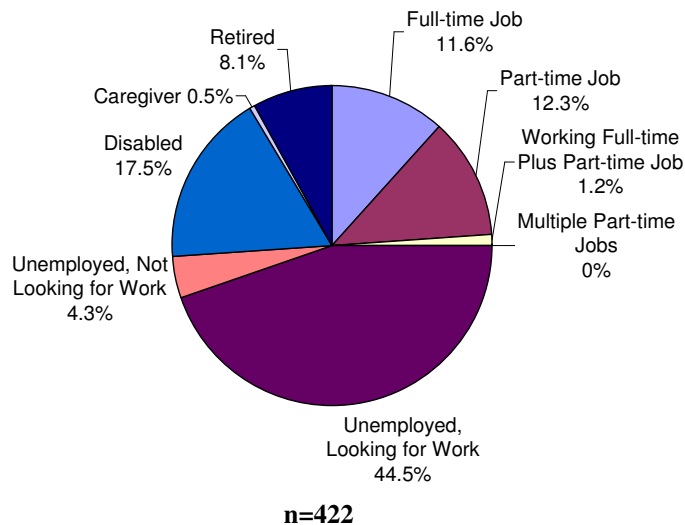
<sup>20</sup> Wisconsin Works operates as Wisconsin's state welfare program. <http://www.dwd.state.wi.us/DWS/W2/default.htm>

<sup>21</sup> The Earned Income Credit (EIC), also referred to as the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC), functions as a refundable federal income tax credit for employed low-income families and individuals. <http://www.irs.gov/individuals/article/0,,id=96406,00.html>

**Chart 26: Employment Status for Food Pantry Respondents**



**Chart 27: Employment Status for Meal Site Respondents**



Many factors impede emergency food clients' ability to find sustainable employment. Such barriers to employment are related but not limited to health, education, and access to reliable means of transportation. The following lists factors that may act as employment challenges for emergency food users:

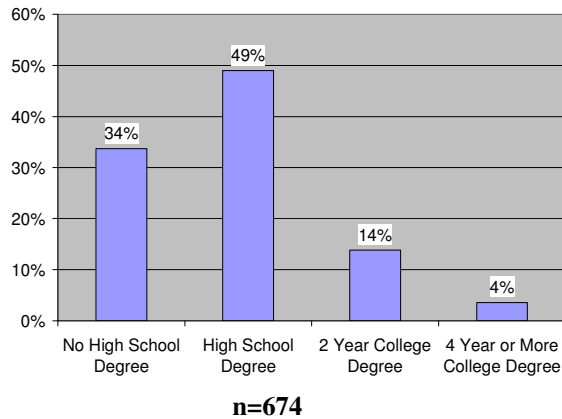
- Only 11 percent of meal site respondents looking for work had a car.
- Only 29 percent of meal site respondents looking for work had a phone.
- 34 percent of food pantry respondents lacked a high school education; 27 percent of meal site respondents lacked a high school education.

## EDUCATION

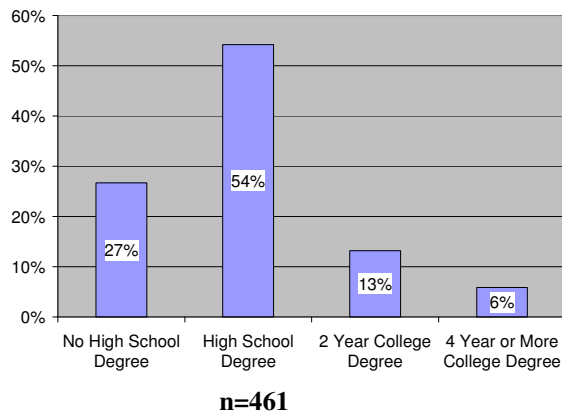
U.S. Census Bureau data shows that higher educational attainment leads to higher earnings and income. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, in 2003, the average earnings for someone

holding a bachelor’s degree was 45 percent higher than someone with only a high school degree or GED. The average earnings for a high school graduate or GED recipient were 33 percent higher than that of someone without a high school degree or GED.<sup>22</sup> Chart 28 illustrates the educational status of food pantry respondents and Chart 29 illustrates the educational status of meal site respondents:

**Chart 28: Food Pantry Education Status**



**Chart 29: Meal Site Education Status**



- **34 percent of food pantry respondents lack a high school degree.**
- **27 percent of meal site respondents lack a high school degree.**

One may infer from this data that a connection may exist between education and emergency food clients’ ability to obtain jobs that provide livable wages and adequate salaries.

## HOUSING

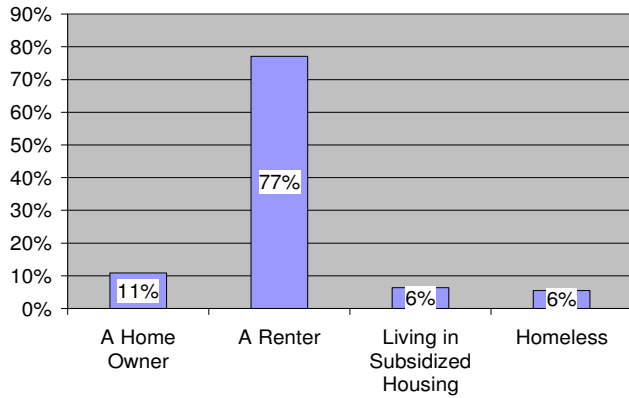
### 1) Housing Status

Most emergency food recipients classified themselves as renters, whereas only a small percentage reported owning a home (6 percent). A substantial portion of meal site respondents classified themselves as homeless (38 percent)—homeless was defined as anyone who lacks a fixed, regular or adequate place to sleep or anyone staying in a shelter, mission, or place not

<sup>22</sup> U.S. Census Bureau. Retrieved from <http://www.census.gov/population/socdemo/education/cps2004/tab09-1.pdf> on January 20, 2006.

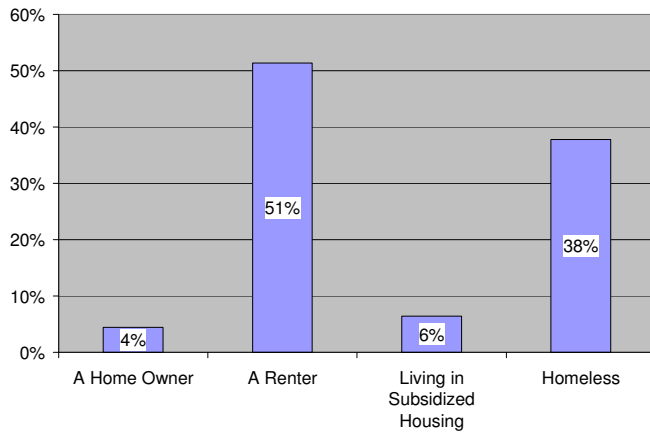
designed for people to sleep.<sup>23</sup> Only six percent of food pantry and meal site respondents live in subsidized housing.

**Chart 30: Food Pantry Respondent Housing Status**



**n=651**

**Chart 31: Meal Site Respondent Housing Status**



**n=405**

## 2) Housing Costs

The cost of housing for the majority of respondents exceeds the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) definition for affordable housing, which HUD defines as rent or mortgage that comprises 30 percent or less of a household’s income.<sup>24</sup>

<sup>23</sup> The definition of homelessness utilized in the food pantry and meal site was derived from the Department of Housing and Urban Development definition of homelessness.

[http://www.hud.gov/offices/cpd/homeless/library/spc/resourcemanual/section2/spcmanual2\\_2.cfm](http://www.hud.gov/offices/cpd/homeless/library/spc/resourcemanual/section2/spcmanual2_2.cfm)

<sup>24</sup> Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Retrieved from <http://www.hud.gov/offices/cpd/affordablehousing/index.cfm> on February 1, 2006.

<b>Table 8: Emergency Food Users Monthly Rent/Mortgage</b>			
	<b>n</b>	<b>Median</b>	<b>Mean</b>
Food Pantry	375	\$450	\$453.24
Meal Site	139	\$390	\$389

The following outcomes demonstrate the lack of affordable housing existing among Hunger Task Force emergency food recipients:

- 57 percent of food pantry respondents spend over half of their monthly household income on housing costs; 46 percent of meal site respondents spend over half of their monthly household income on housing costs.
- 23 percent of food pantry respondents spend over three-quarters of their monthly household income on housing costs; 19 percent of meal site respondents spend over three-quarters of their monthly household income on housing costs.

## HEALTH

### 1) Medicare/Medicaid

Medicare and Medicaid function as the two largest national health care programs in the United States, providing health coverage to millions of disabled and low-income seniors, adults and children.<sup>25</sup> These health insurance programs serve to provide the most vulnerable populations with access to affordable medical care. While these programs function as a major financial source for medical services for poor, disabled and elderly populations, many beneficiaries find themselves postponing medical attention due to the inability to afford services not included in their coverage. Gaps in coverage can create severe health consequences for beneficiaries who lack adequate funds to pay for additional necessary health services.

Table 9 identifies food pantry and meal site respondent participation in the Medicare or Medicaid Program:

<b>Table 9: Reported Medicare/Medicaid Participation</b>			
	<b>Total Clients Surveyed</b>	<b>Medicare/Medicaid Participation</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Food Pantry	760	173	<b>23%</b>
Meal Site	525	81	<b>15%</b>

<sup>25</sup> U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Retrieved from <http://www.hhs.gov/medicaid/> and <http://www.medicare.gov/MedicareEligibility/home.asp?version=default&browser=IE%7C6%7CWinXP&language=English> on February 1, 2006.



Table 10 identifies food pantry and meal site respondents participating in the Medicare or Medicaid Program that reported postponing medical or dental care due to lack of funds:

<b>Table 10: Medicare/Medicaid Clients Postponing Medical/Dental Due to Insufficient Funds</b>			
<b>Emergency Food Program</b>	<b>Medicare/Medicaid Participants</b>	<b>Postponed Medical or Dental Care</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Food Pantry	173	63	<b>36%</b>
Meal Site	81	30	<b>37%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>254</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>37%</b>

- Over one-third of food pantry and meal site respondents participating in the Medicare or Medicaid program reported putting off medical or dental care because they could not afford it.

## FEDERAL NUTRITION PROGRAMS

### 1.) Food Stamp Participation

The Food Stamp Program serves as the largest food and nutrition assistance program in the United States, providing over 11 million low-income households with access to nutritious food.<sup>26</sup> According to the Department of Health and Family Services, Wisconsin's Food Stamp Program, FoodShare, served a monthly average of 352,725 people during the 2005 calendar year; Milwaukee County comprised 40.1 percent of the total state caseload.<sup>27</sup>

The Food Stamp Program participation rate estimates participation based on a comparison of the number of eligible individuals to the number of actual program participants. Participation rates help assess the extent to which the Food Stamp Program reaches eligible individuals. A November 2005 report from the U.S. Department of Agriculture identified Wisconsin as having a 55-percent participation rate in fiscal 2003, which was almost equal to the national participation rate of 56 percent.<sup>28</sup> According to a report released by the Food Research and Action Center in September 2005, 92 percent of eligible residents in Milwaukee County were receiving food stamps in 2003.<sup>29</sup>

While the participation rate in Wisconsin and, more specifically, Milwaukee County, may indicate Food Stamp Program success in reaching eligible low-income households, a substantial portion of hungry people in the Hunger Task Force network are not benefiting from the program.

<sup>26</sup> USDA Food and Nutrition Service, FY 2004; [www.fns.usda.gov/pd/fsfyhh.htm](http://www.fns.usda.gov/pd/fsfyhh.htm)

<sup>27</sup> Department of Health and Family Services, Calendar YTD. Retrieved from <http://dhfs.wisconsin.gov/em/rsdata/recipientsbycy/fs-recipients-cy05.xls> on Jan. 27, 2006.

<sup>28</sup> USDA Food and Nutrition Service, November 2005. Retrieved from <http://www.fns.usda.gov/oane/MENU/Published/FSP/FILES/Participation/Reaching2003.pdf> on Jan. 25, 2006.

<sup>29</sup> September 2005, *Food Stamp Access in Urban America: A City-by-City Snapshot*, Food Research and Action Center, Washington, D.C.

More than half of food pantry respondents do not receive food stamps; over three-fifths of meal site respondents do not participate in the program. The most frequent reason given for not participating in the Food Stamp Program were claims of ineligibility and reports of having food stamp benefits cut off.

<b>Table 11: Emergency Food User Food Stamp Participation</b>			
<b>Emergency Food Program</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>Reports of FoodShare Nonparticipation</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Food Pantry	627	342	<b>55%</b>
Meal Site	408	270	<b>66%</b>

- Over half of food pantry respondents DO NOT participate in the Food Stamp Program
- Over 66 percent of meal site respondents DO NOT participate in the Food Stamp Program.
- Only eight percent of food pantry respondents reported that their monthly Food Stamp allotment lasts an entire month.

**Reasons Food Pantry Users Do Not Participate in the Food Stamp Program**

- 30 percent—Do not qualify
- 27 percent—Was cut off from benefits
- 10 percent—Benefits are too low
- 9 percent—Other
- 7 percent—Do not have transportation
- 6 percent—Process is too complicated
- 5 percent—Afraid
- 2 percent—Limited Office Hours

**Reasons Meal Site Users Do Not Participate in the Food Stamp Program**

- 24 percent—Do not qualify
- 19 percent—Was cut off from benefits
- 15 percent—Other
- 10 percent—Benefits are too low
- 6 percent—Process is too complicated
- 6 percent—Do not have transportation
- 4 percent—Afraid
- 2 percent—Limited Office Hours

One inference that may be drawn from these results relates to Food Stamp Program income limits. While some clients may only assume that they do not qualify, others may actually fall outside of food stamp income eligibility requirements. For instance, over one-fourth of meal site respondents not participating in the Food Stamp Program were living alone. The average monthly income for this group was \$1,318.69, which exceeds the Food Stamp Program gross monthly income limits for a single person household by \$281.69 and the net monthly income

limits by \$520.69.<sup>30</sup> Consequently, many people, particularly those living alone, lacking access to the Food Stamp Program due to income limits may find themselves turning to food pantries and community meal programs to feed themselves and their families.

<b>Table 12: Monthly Household Income for Food Stamp Non-participants Who Reported Ineligibility</b>				
	<b>n</b>	<b>Percent Living Alone</b>	<b>Mean Monthly Household Income</b>	<b>Median Monthly Household Income</b>
Food Pantry	98	9%	\$1,109.84	\$1,000
Meal Site	61	28%	\$1,318.69	\$950.50

**Table 13: Food Stamp Program Income Limits<sup>31</sup>**

<b>People in Household</b>	<b>Gross Monthly Income Limits</b>	<b>Net Monthly Income Limits</b>
1	\$1,037	\$798
2	1,390	1,070
3	1,744	1,341
4	2,097	1,613
5	2,450	1,885
6	2,803	2,156
7	3,156	2,428
8	3,509	2,700
Each additional person	354	272

Lack of familiarity with the rights of homeless people under the Food Stamp Program may create a barrier to food stamp access for many homeless emergency food assistance users. Homeless people possess the same Food Stamp Program rights as any other person does, in addition to special rights.<sup>32</sup> However, many myths exist related to food stamp benefits and homelessness, which may discourage eligible homeless people from applying for benefits.<sup>33</sup> Chart 34 identifies participation in the Food Stamp Program for homeless food pantry and meal site clients.

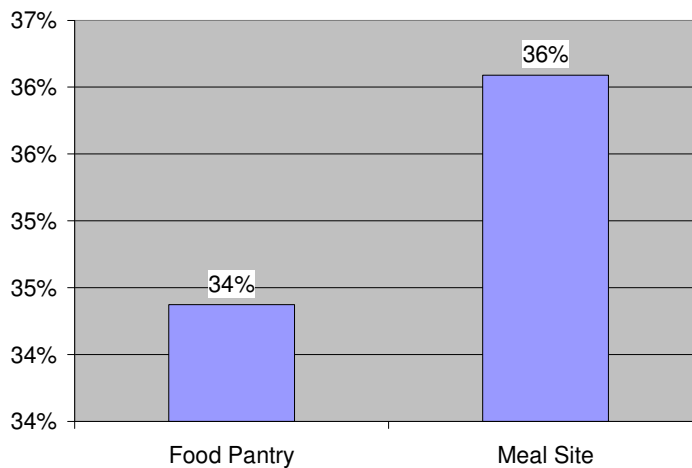
<sup>30</sup>USDA Food and Nutrition Service. Retrieved from [http://www.fns.usda.gov/fsp/applicant\\_recipients/fs\\_Res\\_Ben\\_Elig.htm](http://www.fns.usda.gov/fsp/applicant_recipients/fs_Res_Ben_Elig.htm) on January 25, 2006. Respondents who reported monthly income that exceeded the Food Stamp Program income limits may qualify for food stamp benefits after allowable deductions are considered.

<sup>31</sup> USDA Food and Nutrition Service. Retrieved from [http://www.fns.usda.gov/fsp/applicant\\_recipients/fs\\_Res\\_Ben\\_Elig.htm](http://www.fns.usda.gov/fsp/applicant_recipients/fs_Res_Ben_Elig.htm) on Jan. 25, 2006

<sup>32</sup>Food Research and Action Center. Retrieved from [http://www.frac.org/html/federal\\_food\\_programs/FSP/Homeless\\_Rights\\_Under\\_FSP.html](http://www.frac.org/html/federal_food_programs/FSP/Homeless_Rights_Under_FSP.html) on Jan. 26, 2006.

<sup>33</sup> USDA Food and Nutrition Service. 10 Myths and Facts about Food Stamp Benefits and the Homeless. Retrieved from <http://www.fns.usda.gov/fsp/outreach/pdfs/myths-homeless.pdf> on Jan. 26, 2006.

**Chart 34: Percent of Homeless Food Pantry and Meal Site Clients**



n=165

**About 1 in 3 homeless food pantry and meal site clients participate in the Food Stamp Program.**

Often, elderly and disabled people are apprehensive about applying for food stamps because they believe they will not qualify if they receive other forms of government assistance or they will only qualify for the minimum allotment of \$10 per month. However, USDA figures show that in 2003, elderly people living alone received \$53 a month on average; elderly people living with others, \$123 a month; and households with a disabled person, \$126 a month. Additionally, medical expenses that exceed \$35 a month and are paid by the beneficiary or someone within the household qualify as an allowable deduction from income when applying for food stamps.<sup>34</sup> Unfortunately, many elderly and disabled people are unaware of these facts about food stamps and fail to apply for the program.

Low benefit allotments may also contribute to nonparticipation in the Food Stamp Program. Ten percent of food pantry respondents and 11 percent of meal site respondents reported that food stamp benefits were not worth the time and effort. Among former food stamp participants only eligible for the minimum allotment of \$10, many feel that the benefit level is not worth reapplying.

## **2.) School Meals Participation**

The National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and School Breakfast Program (SBP) provide nutritious, affordable or free meals to millions of children every year. These federally assisted programs function in public and non-profit private schools and residential childcare establishments. The USDA provides participating institutions with financial assistance and donated commodities for meals served. NSLP operates in almost 100,000 schools and institutions, providing over 28 million children with healthy lunches everyday; SBP provides breakfast to children in almost 80,000 schools and institutions.<sup>35</sup>

<sup>34</sup> USDA Food and Nutrition Service. Retrieved from <http://www.fns.usda.gov/fsp/outreach/pdfs/myths-elderly.pdf> and <http://www.fns.usda.gov/fsp/outreach/pdfs/myths-disabled.pdf> on Feb. 1, 2006.

<sup>35</sup> USDA Food and Nutrition Service. Retrieved from <http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/lunch/AboutLunch/NSLPFactSheet.pdf> and <http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/breakfast/AboutBFAST/FactSheet.pdf> on Jan. 27, 2006.

Severe disparities exist between participation in the NSLP and the SBP on the state level and county level in Wisconsin. As of December 2005, the USDA Food and Nutrition Service reported a monthly average of 582,100 children participating in the NSLP during the 2005 fiscal year in Wisconsin; however, only 80,976 children participated in the SBP on a monthly basis.<sup>36</sup> According to a report released by the Food Research and Action Center in December 2005, only 26.5 percent of schoolchildren eligible for free and reduced-price lunch participated in the SBP in Wisconsin, compared to the national average of 43.9 percent; Wisconsin ranked last nationally for SBP participation.<sup>37</sup> Comparable participation exists at the local level as well. In Milwaukee Public Schools, on a daily average, 60 percent of eligible students attending Milwaukee Public Schools participated in free school lunch during the 2004-2005 school year; 52 percent of eligible students participated in reduced-price lunch. Conversely, only 15 percent of eligible students participated in free school breakfast; 6 percent participated in reduced-price school breakfast.<sup>38</sup>

Despite low SBP participation at the state and local levels, the following outcomes demonstrate high SBP and NSLP participation in the free and reduced-price meals programs, particularly among children of food pantry clients:

<b>Table 14: Child Participation in Free or Reduced-Price Lunch at School</b>			
	Total Responses	Total Affirmative Responses	Percent
Food Pantry	392	296	<b>76%</b>
Meal Site	153	75	<b>49%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>545</b>	<b>371</b>	<b>68%</b>

<b>Table 15: Child Participation in Free or Reduced-Price Breakfast at School</b>			
	Total Responses	Total Affirmative Responses	Percent
Food Pantry	382	251	<b>66%</b>
Meal Site	145	72	<b>50%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>527</b>	<b>323</b>	<b>61%</b>

<sup>36</sup> USDA Food and Nutrition Service. Retrieved from <http://www.fns.usda.gov/pd/slfypart.htm> and <http://www.fns.usda.gov/pd/sbfypart.htm>

<sup>37</sup> Food Research and Action Center (FRAC); December 2005.

<sup>38</sup> Milwaukee Public School District. Child Nutrition Program Report, July 1, 2004-June 30, 2005.

The following table summarizes money parents save through the reduced-price school meals program:

<b>Table 16: Savings from Free and Reduced-Price School Breakfast and Lunch in Milwaukee Public Schools<sup>39</sup></b>						
	<b>Elementary</b>		<b>Secondary</b>		<b>Total Savings</b>	
	<b>Paid Price</b>	<b>Reduced Price</b>	<b>Paid Price</b>	<b>Reduced Price</b>	<b>Elementary</b>	<b>Secondary</b>
<b>School Breakfast</b>	\$0.70	\$0.30	\$0.80	\$0.30	\$0.40	\$0.50
<b>School Lunch</b>	\$1.50	\$0.40	\$1.75	\$0.40	\$1.10	\$1.35

- Parents whose children receive free meals in Milwaukee public elementary schools save \$2.20 per day on breakfast and lunch; parents with children in Milwaukee public secondary schools save \$2.55 per day.

## FOOD INSECURITY

According to the USDA’s annual domestic food security report, 38.2 million people, 13.9 million children included, experienced food insecurity at some point during the 2004 calendar year.<sup>40</sup> Food insecurity is defined as “limited or uncertain availability of nutritionally adequate and safe foods or limited or uncertain ability to acquire acceptable foods in socially acceptable ways.”<sup>41</sup> Regular monitoring of food security is necessary to assess the effectiveness of USDA food assistance programs in increasing food security and reducing hunger in the United States.

In order to assess food insecurity within the Hunger Task Force emergency food network, questions from the Food Security Core-Module Questionnaire, a food security measure designed by the USDA, were utilized.<sup>42</sup> The following outlines the results of questions answered related to food insecurity:

<b>Table 17: Food Pantry Respondent Reports of Cutting Meals in the Past Year</b>		
	<b>n</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Yes, For Myself	385	58%
Yes, For My Children	104	16%
No	174	26%

<sup>39</sup> Milwaukee Public Schools Nutrition Services

<sup>40</sup> USDA. Household Food Security in the United States, 2004. <http://www.ers.usda.gov/publications/err11/err11.pdf>

<sup>41</sup> Life Sciences Research Office, S.A. Andersen, ed., “Core Indicators of Nutritional State for Difficult to Sample Populations,” *The Journal of Nutrition*, Vol. 120, 1990, 1557S-1600S.

<sup>42</sup> USDA. Household Food Security in the United States, 2004. <http://www.ers.usda.gov/publications/err11/err11.pdf>

<b>Table 18: Food Pantry Respondent Frequency of Cutting the Size of Meals in the Past Year</b>				
	<b>Respondent</b>		<b>Children in Household</b>	
	<b>n</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Every Month	172	47%	48	49%
Some Months	148	41%	35	36%
1-2 Months	45	12%	14	14%

- 58 percent of food pantry respondents reported cutting the size of meals in the past year; 16 percent reported cutting the size of meals for children in the household.
- Almost 1 in 2 food pantry clients who reported cutting the size of meals cut meals on a monthly basis for themselves and children in the household.

<b>Table 19: Food Pantry Respondent Reports of Skipping Meals in the Past Year</b>		
	<b>n</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Yes, For Myself	278	51%
Yes, For My Children	46	8%
No	218	40%

<b>Table 20: Food Pantry Respondent Reports of Frequency of Skipping Meals in the Past Year</b>				
	<b>Respondent</b>		<b>Children in Household</b>	
	<b>n</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Every Month	121	45%	16	35%
Some Months	106	40%	23	50%
1-2 Months	40	15%	7	15%

- 51 percent of food pantry respondents reported skipping meals in the past year.
- 45 percent of food pantry respondents who reported skipping meals skip meals every month; 35 percent reported children skipping meals monthly.

<b>Table 21: Meal Site Respondent Reports of Cutting Meals in the Past Year</b>		
	<b>N</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Yes, For Myself	267	62%
Yes, For My Children	29	7%
No	134	31%

<b>Table 22: Meal Site Respondent Reports of Frequency of Cutting the Size of Meals in the Past Year</b>				
	<b>Respondent</b>		<b>Children in Household</b>	
	<b>n</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Every Month	131	52%	7	24%
Some Months	70	28%	15	52%
1-2 Months	49	20%	7	24%

- 62 percent of meal site respondents reported cutting the size of meals.
- More than half of meal site respondents who reported cutting meals cut meals on a monthly basis; 24 percent reported children cutting meals.

<b>Table 23: Meal Site Respondent Reports of Skipping Meals in the Past Year</b>		
	<b>n</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Yes, For Myself	223	57%
Yes, For My Children	24	6%
No	145	37%

<b>Table 24: Meal Site Respondent Reports of Frequency of Skipping Meals in the Past Year</b>				
	<b>Respondent</b>		<b>Children in Household</b>	
	<b>n</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Every Month	124	57%	7	12%
Some Months	60	27%	9	15%
1-2 Months	35	16%	44	73%



- 57 percent of meal site respondents reported skipping meals
- 57 percent of meal site respondents who reported skipping meals skip meals on a monthly basis; 12 percent reported children skipping meals every month.

## CONCLUSIONS

The results from this study provide critical information necessary for understanding and serving emergency food users. These findings highlight the underlying problems that cause people to seek emergency food assistance.

The outcomes of this study highlight the following key factors affecting emergency food use within the Hunger Task Force emergency food network:

- **Government Assistance:** Elderly, disabled, homeless and low-income families and individuals need access to sustainable government assistance benefits. Study outcomes show:
  - **Inadequate Benefit Allotments:** Food Stamp Program, Social Security, and inadequate SSI benefit allotments are associated with regular, monthly emergency food use. Additionally, a significant portion of Medicare and Medicaid recipients reported inadequate benefits.
  - **Inadequate Outreach:** The majority of Hunger Task Force emergency food users believe they are ineligible for the Food Stamp Program. The low level of respondents reporting Medicare and Medicaid participation may indicate the need for increased awareness related to program eligibility.
- **Employment:** Emergency food users need access to stable employment. A substantial portion of emergency food users reported using the Hunger Task Force network because they lacked a job.
- **Education:** Research shows that people with higher educational attainment tend to earn higher pay.<sup>43</sup> A significant portion of emergency food users lacked the education necessary to obtain employment that provides adequate earnings.
- **Livable Wages:** According to the Vermont Livable Wage Campaign,<sup>44</sup> a livable wage can be defined as an hourly wage or annual income that adequately meets a family's basic needs and applicable federal and state taxes. Report findings demonstrate that employed emergency food users lack jobs that pay wages sufficient to meet their basic household needs.
- **Affordable Housing:** A substantial portion of Hunger Task Force emergency food users spend a disproportionate amount of their income on housing costs, leaving little or no income to spend on food.

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<sup>43</sup> U.S. Census Bureau. Retrieved from <http://www.census.gov/population/socdemo/education/cps2004/tab09-1.pdf> on Jan. 20, 2006.

<sup>44</sup> The Vermont Livable Wage Campaign operates as a coalition of local living wage groups committed to ensuring that Vermont residents have access to livable wages. <http://www.vtlivablewage.org/2005%20livable%20wage%20figures.htm>

The following summarizes findings related to client satisfaction with emergency food services and volunteer activity.

- **Client Satisfaction with Services:** Clients reported an overall satisfaction with the quality of food distributed, facility management and customer service. However, clients may have abstained from providing negative feedback due to the fear that such comments might hinder the continuation of services within food pantry and meal programs.
- **Volunteer Activity:** Hunger Task Force food pantry and meal sites are almost entirely volunteer run. While most volunteers are retired elders, a significant portion of volunteers are employed. In general, volunteers reported observing an increase in the demand for emergency food over the last 1-5 years.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Many of the underlying problems contributing to emergency food use are not directly tied to food and nutrition. However, as an anti-hunger organization, Hunger Task Force's efforts are limited to food and nutrition issues. By expanding advocacy efforts and embracing collaboration with other organizations, Hunger Task Force can address the root causes of hunger and accomplish its mission of establishing a hunger-free community in Milwaukee.

### Plan of Action

#### **1) Conduct FoodShare outreach within Hunger Task Force emergency food network targeting elderly and homeless populations.**

- Establish a Voices Against Hunger<sup>45</sup> subcommittee to carry out FoodShare outreach activities.
- Conduct FoodShare presentations and distribute FoodShare educational materials and applications at senior centers and senior subsidized housing complexes.
- Distribute Foodshare outreach materials geared towards homeless populations within Hunger Task Force meal sites.
- Monitor senior and homeless food stamp participation.

#### **2) Advocate for a 2007 Farm Bill that increases the minimum FoodShare benefit allotment from \$10 to \$25 a month.**

- Recruit FoodShare participants to speak at Farm Bill hearings.
- Collect FoodShare participant testimonials for Farm Bill hearings.

#### **3) Increase referral activity within Hunger Task Force network of food pantries.**

- Create a referral pamphlet to be distributed to emergency food users during the food pantry intake process.

#### **4) Hunger Task Force should develop a long-term plan to address the age and service capacity of volunteers within its emergency food network.**

- 60 percent of emergency food volunteers are age 60 and older.

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<sup>45</sup> Voices Against Hunger is Hunger Task Force's grassroots organizing group dedicated to fighting hunger and acting for change.

## Appendix I: Additional Volunteer Data

<b>Table 1: What hours work best for you?</b>		
	<b>N</b>	<b>Percent</b>
8:00a.m.-10:00a.m.	82	36%
10:00a.m.-12:00p.m.	117	51%
12:00p.m.-2:00p.m.	71	31%
2:00p.m.-4:00p.m.	30	13%
4:00p.m.-6:00p.m.	52	23%
6:00p.m.-8:00p.m.	25	11%

<b>Table2: What days work best for you?</b>		
	<b>n</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Monday	69	30%
Tuesday	74	32%
Wednesday	83	36%
Thursday	70	30%
Friday	57	25%
Saturday	67	29%
Sunday	21	9%

<b>Table 3: How did you learn about this volunteer opportunity?</b>		
	<b>n</b>	<b>Percent</b>
I received food here.	16	7%
A Friend	68	30%
A Church	114	50%
Hunger Task Force	10	4%
Other	45	20%

<b>Table 4: What kind of formal training did you receive when you started?</b>		
	<b>n</b>	<b>Percent</b>
No Formal Training	160	70%
Handling and Storing Food	60	26%
Sanitation and Cleaning	47	20%
Safety	36	16%
Customer Service	56	24%
Social Services Available for Clients	26	11%
Other	17	7%

<b>Table 5: What would improve your volunteer experience?</b>		
	<b>n</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Nothing	172	74.8%
More Training	1	0.4%
More Information About Impact of Program	14	6.0%
More Opportunity to Make Suggestions	10	4.3%
More Information on How to Advocate	24	10.4%
Other	13	5.6%

<b>Table 6: What Other Places Do You Volunteer?</b>		
	<b>n</b>	<b>Percent</b>
I only volunteer here	17	7%
I volunteer at other organizations	98	43%

<b>Table 7: Have you received food from this program?</b>		
	<b>n</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Yes, within the last two months	36	15.6%
Yes, but not recently	12	5.2%
No	173	75.2%

<b>Table 8: Would you like more information about Hunger Task Force advocacy opportunities?</b>		
	<b>n</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Yes	131	57%
No Response	98	43%

## Appendix II: Food Pantry Survey



### 2005 Food Pantry Survey— CONFIDENTIAL

*All pantry customers are being asked to complete this survey.*

**We want you to tell us how we are doing and to share how you are doing.**

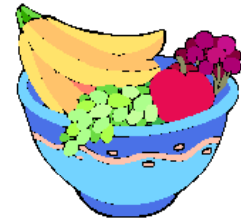
- You do not have to do the survey to receive food.
- Everything in the survey is confidential.
- Please DO NOT write your name on this survey.

#### PART I: How Are We Doing?

1. Based on your family size, how many *days* does your food pantry bag last:  
 1-2 days     2-3 days     3-4 days     4-5 days     5-6 days     6 or more days

2. Please rate the food you receive from this program:

	YES	NO
Fresh	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Nutritious	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Appropriate for your culture or religion	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Things You Like	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
High Quality	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Meets medical needs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



3. What other kinds of foods would you like to receive from the pantry:

4. How did you find out about this pantry?

211     Church     Family/Friends     Self     Social Service Organization     Other \_\_\_\_\_

5. Which of these changes would make it easier for you to get emergency food?

- Check all that apply.**
- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Evening pantry hours            | <input type="checkbox"/> Weekend pantry hours              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> More weekday pantry hours       | <input type="checkbox"/> A pantry closer to where you live |
| <input type="checkbox"/> A handicapped-accessible pantry |  |

6. Is this pantry:

	YES	NO
Clean	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Safe	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Staffed with enough people	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Pantry Name \_\_\_\_\_

7. When you come to this pantry, are you:

	YES	NO
Treated with respect	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Informed of other community services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Made to feel welcome	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



**PART II: How Are YOU Doing?**

8. Please tell us about you:

**Sex**  Male  Female      **Age** \_\_\_\_\_      **Zip Code** \_\_\_\_\_

**Race** (If mixed race, please check all that apply.)

African American/Black     Asian     American Indian     Hispanic     White

**Education**

No high school degree       2 year college degree  
 High school degree       4 year or more college degree

**Public Assistance** (Please check ALL that you receive.)

Childcare       Kinship care       EIC tax credit       MEDICARE /MEDICAID  
 Rent assistance     Social Security     SSI       W2       WIC

**Housing Status**



A Home Owner  
 A Renter  
 Living in subsidized housing  
 Homeless (Anyone who lacks a fixed, regular or adequate place to sleep OR anyone staying in a shelter, mission, or a place not designed for people to sleep).

**Hourly Wage**       \$ \_\_\_\_\_/hour     NONE

**Monthly Household Income**     \$ \_\_\_\_\_     NONE

**Monthly Rent/Mortgage**      \$ \_\_\_\_\_

9. Please inform us of your EMPLOYMENT status:

EMPLOYED

Full-time job  
 Part-time job  
 Working full-time PLUS part-time job  
 Multiple part-time jobs

UNEMPLOYED

Unemployed, looking for work  
 Unemployed, not looking for work  
 Disabled  
 Caregiver (caring for children or disabled/ill relative)  
 Retired



Total hours worked per week= \_\_\_\_\_



10. List the ages of all people living in your home (Do **NOT** include yourself):

\_\_\_\_\_

11. Which of the following describes your household. **Check only ONE answer.**

NO CHILDREN

- Living alone
- Two or more adults

HAVE CHILDREN

- Single parent
- Two parents with children
- Grandparent(s) caring for grandkid(s)
- Multi-generational family

12. Does your household have the following? **Check ALL that apply.**

- a phone
- a car
- cooking appliances
- a refrigerator



13. Why are you here today? **Check ALL that apply.**

Benefits

- Food stamps ran out
- Food stamps cut off
- W2 check is not enough
- Loss of W2
- Unemployment benefits ran out

High Costs

- Medical
- Childcare
- Utility
- Rent/Mortgage

Personal Factors

- Recent divorce/separation
- Not receiving child support
- Low wages
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

14. How often do you WORRY about where your next meal is coming from:

- Never
- Rarely
- Sometimes
- Often
- Always

15. A. In the last 12 months, have you ever CUT THE SIZE OF A MEAL because there was not enough money for food? **Check all that apply.**

- Yes, **for MYSELF**
- Yes, **for my CHILDREN**
- No

B. **IF YES**, how often did this happen?

- Every month
- Some months
- Only 1-2 months

C. In the last 12 months, have you or your children ever SKIPPED MEALS because there was not enough money for food? **Check all that apply.**

- Yes, **for MYSELF**
- Yes, **for my CHILDREN**
- No

D. **IF YES**, how often did this happen?

- Every month
- Some months
- Only 1-2 months



Food Pantry Survey 2005

16. Are you or any household member putting off medical or dental care because you cannot afford it?  YES  NO

17. A. How many times *a year* do you visit a PANTRY:  
 1  2  3  4  5  6 or more

B. Have there been times this year when you needed to visit a pantry *more than once a month*?  YES  NO

18. Check **ALL** of the FOOD SOURCES that provided you or a household member with food in the last year *at a time when you did not have enough*:

- Senior Meals  Friends or relatives  Soup kitchen or hot meal site  
 Home or community garden  Other \_\_\_\_\_

19. A. Do children in your household get free or reduced price LUNCH at school?  
 YES  NO  No Kids

B. Do children in your household get free or reduced price BREAKFAST at school?  
 YES  NO  No Kids



20. A. Does your household currently receive FOOD STAMPS?  
 YES  NO

B. **IF YES**, how long do food stamps usually last your household?  
 All month  3 weeks  2 weeks  Less than 2 weeks

C. **IF NO**, why do you not receive food stamps?  
 Do not qualify  Benefits are not worth the time and effort  
 Cut off from benefits  Limited office hours  
 Process too complicated  Do not have transportation to go apply  
 I am afraid to apply  Other \_\_\_\_\_

21. If you could talk to the mayor, a legislator, or the Governor, **what would you tell them about poverty and hunger?**

22. What **other things** would you like us to know about?

*Hunger Task Force is a non-profit agency working to prevent hunger and malnutrition by providing food to people in need today and by promoting social policies to achieve food security tomorrow. If you have any questions about this survey, please contact Aiyeshia Hudson at 414-777-0483.*

## Appendix III: Meal Site Survey



### 2005 Meal Site Survey—CONFIDENTIAL

*All meal site customers are being asked to complete this survey.*

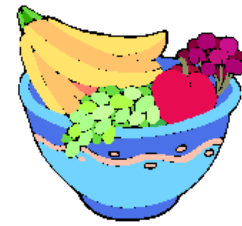
**We want you to tell us how we are doing and to share how you are doing.**

- You do not have to do the survey to receive food.
- Everything in the survey is confidential.
- Please DO NOT write your name on this survey.

#### PART I: How Are We Doing?

1. Please rate the food you receive from this program:

	YES	NO
Fresh	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Nutritious	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Appropriate for your culture or religion	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Things You Like	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
High Quality	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Meets medical needs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



2. What other kinds of foods would you like to see more of at this meal site:

3. How did you find out about this meal site?

- 211  
  Church  
  Family/Friends  
  Self  
  Social Service Organization  
  Other \_\_\_\_\_

4. Is this meal site:

	YES	NO
Clean	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Safe	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Staffed with enough people	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Meal Site Name \_\_\_\_\_

5. When you come to this meal site, are you:

	YES	NO
Treated with respect	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Informed of other community services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Made to feel welcome	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



### PART II: How Are YOU Doing?

6. Please tell us about you:

**Sex**    Male    Female      **Age** \_\_\_\_\_      **Zip Code** \_\_\_\_\_

**Race** (If mixed race, please check all that apply.)

African American/Black    Asian    American Indian    Hispanic    White

**Education**

No high school degree       2 year college degree  
 High school degree       4 year or more college degree

**Public Assistance** (Please check ALL that you receive.)

Childcare       Kinship care       EIC tax credit       MEDICARE /MEDICAID  
 Rent assistance    Social Security    SSI       W2       WIC



**Housing Status**

A Home Owner  
 A Renter  
 Living in subsidized housing  
 Homeless (Anyone who lacks a fixed, regular or adequate place to sleep OR anyone staying in a shelter, mission, or a place not designed for people to sleep).

**Hourly Wage**       \$ \_\_\_\_\_/hour       NONE

**Monthly Household Income**    \$ \_\_\_\_\_       NONE

**Monthly Rent/Mortgage**      \$ \_\_\_\_\_

7. Please inform us of your EMPLOYMENT status:

**EMPLOYED**

- Full-time job
- Part-time job
- Working full-time PLUS part-time job
- Multiple part-time jobs

**UNEMPLOYED**

- Unemployed, looking for work
- Unemployed, not looking for work
- Disabled
- Caregiver (caring for children or disabled/ill relative)
- Retired



Total hours worked per week= \_\_\_\_\_

8. List the ages of all people living in your home (*Do **NOT** include yourself*):

\_\_\_\_\_

9. Which of the following describes your household. **Check only ONE answer.**

NO CHILDREN

- Living alone
- Two or more adults

HAVE CHILDREN

- Single parent
- Two parents with children
- Grandparent(s) caring for grandkid(s)
- Multi-generational family

10. Does your household have the following? **Check ALL that apply.**

- a phone
- a car
- cooking appliances
- a refrigerator



11. Why are you here today? **Check ALL that apply.**

Benefits

- Food stamps ran out
- Food stamps cut off
- W2 check is not enough
- Loss of W2
- Unemployment benefits ran out

High Costs

- Medical
- Childcare
- Utility
- Rent/Mortgage

Personal Factors

- Recent divorce/separation
- Not receiving child support
- Low wages
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

12. How often do you WORRY about where your next meal is coming from:

- Never
- Rarely
- Sometimes
- Often
- Always

13. A. In the last 12 months, have you ever CUT THE SIZE OF A MEAL because there was not enough money for food? **Check all that apply.**

- Yes, **for MYSELF**
- Yes, **for my CHILDREN**
- No

B. **IF YES**, how often did this happen?

- Every month
- Some months
- Only 1-2 months

C. In the last 12 months, have you or your children ever SKIPPED MEALS because there was not enough money for food? **Check all that apply.**

- Yes, **for MYSELF**
- Yes, **for my CHILDREN**
- No

D. **IF YES**, how often did this happen?

- Every month
- Some months
- Only 1-2 months



---

14. Are you or any household member putting off medical or dental care because you cannot afford it?     YES     NO

---

15. A. How many times *a month* do you visit a Meal Site:  
 1     2     3     4     5 or more

---

16. Check **ALL** of the FOOD SOURCES that provided you or a household member with food in the last year *at a time when you did not have enough*:

- Senior Meals     Friends or relatives     Food Pantry  
 Home or community garden     Other \_\_\_\_\_
- 

17. A. Do children in your household get free or reduced price LUNCH at school?  
 YES     NO     No Kids

B. Do children in your household get free or reduced price BREAKFAST at school?

- YES     NO     No Kids
- 



18. A. Does your household currently receive FOOD STAMPS?  
 YES     NO

B. **IF YES**, how long do food stamps usually last your household?  
 All month     3 weeks     2 weeks     Less than 2 weeks

C. **IF NO**, why do you not receive food stamps?

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Do not qualify          | <input type="checkbox"/> Benefits are not worth the time and effort |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cut off from benefits   | <input type="checkbox"/> Limited office hours                       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Process too complicated | <input type="checkbox"/> Do not have transportation to go apply     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I am afraid to apply    | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____                                |
- 

19. If you could talk to the mayor, a legislator, or the Governor, **what would you tell them about poverty and hunger?**

20. What **other things** would you like us to know about?

*Hunger Task Force is a non-profit agency working to prevent hunger and malnutrition by providing food to people in need today and by promoting social policies to achieve food security tomorrow. If you have any questions about this survey, please contact Aiyeshia Hudson at 414-777-0483.*



## Appendix IV: Volunteer Survey

### EFO Volunteer Questionnaire (*Confidential*)

#### I. General Information

Program

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Program Street Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_

Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

#### II. Demographic Information

1. Please identify your age group:

- 18 and Under       19-22       23-29       30-39  
 40-49       50-59       60-69       70 and older

2. Race (*If you are of mixed race, check all that apply.*)

- African American/Black       American Indian       Asian       Hispanic  
 White       Other \_\_\_\_\_

3. Sex

- Male       Female

4. Employment Status

- Full-Time       Part-Time       Looking for Work       Retired  
 Student       Not Employed--Not Looking       Other \_\_\_\_\_

#### III. Volunteer Information

5. What **days** work best for you as a volunteer? (*Check all that apply.*)

- Monday       Tuesday       Wednesday       Thursday       Friday  
 Saturday       Sunday

6. What **hours** work best for you as a volunteer? (*Check all that apply.*)

- 8-10 a.m.       10 a.m.-noon       Noon-2 p.m.  
 2-4 p.m.       4-6 p.m.       6-8 p.m.

7. How many **hours per month** do you volunteer at this site?

- 1-5       5-10       10-15       15-20       More than 20

8. For how long have you been a volunteer at this site?

- One month or less     2-6 months     7-12 months     1-2 Years  
 3-5 years     More than 5 years

9. What motivates you to be a volunteer? (*Check all that apply.*)

- The opportunity to give back     It's an expression of my faith-in-action  
 The opportunity to be with other people     I have time available  
 The opportunity to learn new things     Concern about hungry people  
 I have experienced hunger personally     Other \_\_\_\_\_

10. How did you learn about this volunteer opportunity? (*Check all that apply.*)

- I received food here     A friend     A church  
 Hunger Task Force     Other \_\_\_\_\_

11. Prior to beginning your volunteer role, did you:

- Receive enough information about how this program is operated?     Yes     No  
Receive enough information about what was expected of you as a volunteer?  
 Yes     No

12. What kind of formal training did you receive when you started? (*Check all that apply.*)

- No formal training—I learned on-the-job  
 Training in handling and storing food  
 Training in sanitation or how to keep the site clean  
 Training in safety  
 Training in how to work with the clients  
 Training about other social services that are available to our clients  
 Other \_\_\_\_\_

13. What would improve your volunteer experience? (*Check all that apply.*)

- Nothing, it's rewarding and enjoyable  
 More training on: \_\_\_\_\_  
 More information about this program's impact  
 More opportunity to make suggestions and implement my own ideas  
 More information on how to advocate for the clients we serve  
 Other \_\_\_\_\_

14. At what other places do you volunteer?

- I only volunteer here  
 I also volunteer at \_\_\_\_\_



15. Have you received food from this program?

- Yes, within the last two months       Yes, but not recently       No

16. Would you like your pantry to receive information about hunger advocacy opportunities organized by the Hunger Task Force?

- Yes       No

### Program Operations

17. What types of duties do you perform as a volunteer at this pantry? (*Check all that apply.*)

- |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Order Food           | <input type="checkbox"/> Food Sorting/Bagging | <input type="checkbox"/> Interviewing Clients |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cleaning/Maintenance | <input type="checkbox"/> Food Deliveries      | <input type="checkbox"/> Driving              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Inventory            | <input type="checkbox"/> Administration       | <input type="checkbox"/> Advocacy             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Outreach             |   |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____         |   |   |

18. Does this pantry conduct client intakes?

- Yes we do client intakes

If yes, during client intakes, to what programs do you make referrals? (*Check all that apply.*)

- Food Stamps  
 WIC  
 Free and Reduced School Meals  
 Summer Meals  
 Other \_\_\_\_\_  
 None, we do not make referrals because (*Check all that apply*)  
 We don't have sufficient knowledge about other programs  
 Benefits from programs like Food Stamps are too small  
 The Government should not be involved in providing food benefits  
 We don't have time  
 Other \_\_\_\_\_

- No, we do not do client intakes

19. Has demand for emergency food changed **over the last year**?

- Stayed the same  
 Increased Why? \_\_\_\_\_  
 Decreased Why? \_\_\_\_\_  
 Don't Know

20. Has demand for emergency food changed **over the last five years**?

- Stayed the same
- Increased Why? \_\_\_\_\_
- Decreased Why? \_\_\_\_\_
- Don't Know

21. Have you noticed any changes in the clientele visiting your pantry **over the last year** (i.e. more single mothers, elderly people, different cultural groups, etc.)?

- No
- Yes Describe: \_\_\_\_\_

22. Have you noticed any changes in the clientele visiting your pantry **over the last five years** (i.e. more single mothers, elderly people, different cultural groups, etc.)?

- No
- Yes Describe: \_\_\_\_\_

23. Have you turned away clients because the pantry ran out of food **over the past year**?

- No
- Yes Please Explain: \_\_\_\_\_

24. Based on your work here, how would you rate this program on each of the following:

	Poor 1	Fair 2	Good 3	Very Good 4	Excellent 5	Does not Apply 6
1. Quality of Food						
2. Amount of Food Given						
3. Variety of Food						
4. Nutritious Value of Food						
5. Food for different cultures/religions						
6. Hours that meet client needs						
7. Help for clients to get other services						
8. Treatment of Clients						
9. Cleanliness						
10. Proper food handling						
11. Proper food storage						
12. Safety						
13. Treatment of Volunteers						

**V. General Comments** *(Please use attached page if necessary)*

25. What do you like most about volunteering at this site?

26. If this food program was given a check for \$5,000, how would you spend it?

27. If you could influence key decision-makers in your state about hunger relief, what would you want them to know or to do?

Date and Time of Interview

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Interviewed By

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9/6/05