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One in Nine Brooklyn Residents are Food Insecure

8.3% of Brooklyn Children Live in Food Insecure Households

Area Hunger Falls Over Last Six Years but Still Far Higher than 2005-07

Advocates Decry Acceptance of Mass Deprivation as “New Normal”

The number of people unable to afford an adequate supply of food decreased in New York City, the New York City Metropolitan region, and New York State over the last six years, but remained higher than before the recession, according to a new report by the nonprofit group, Hunger Free America, based on an analysis of federal data. This is the first time in the last 20 years that food insecurity in the state, city, and region have demonstrated sustained, multi-year reductions, likely because of increases in wages and employment.

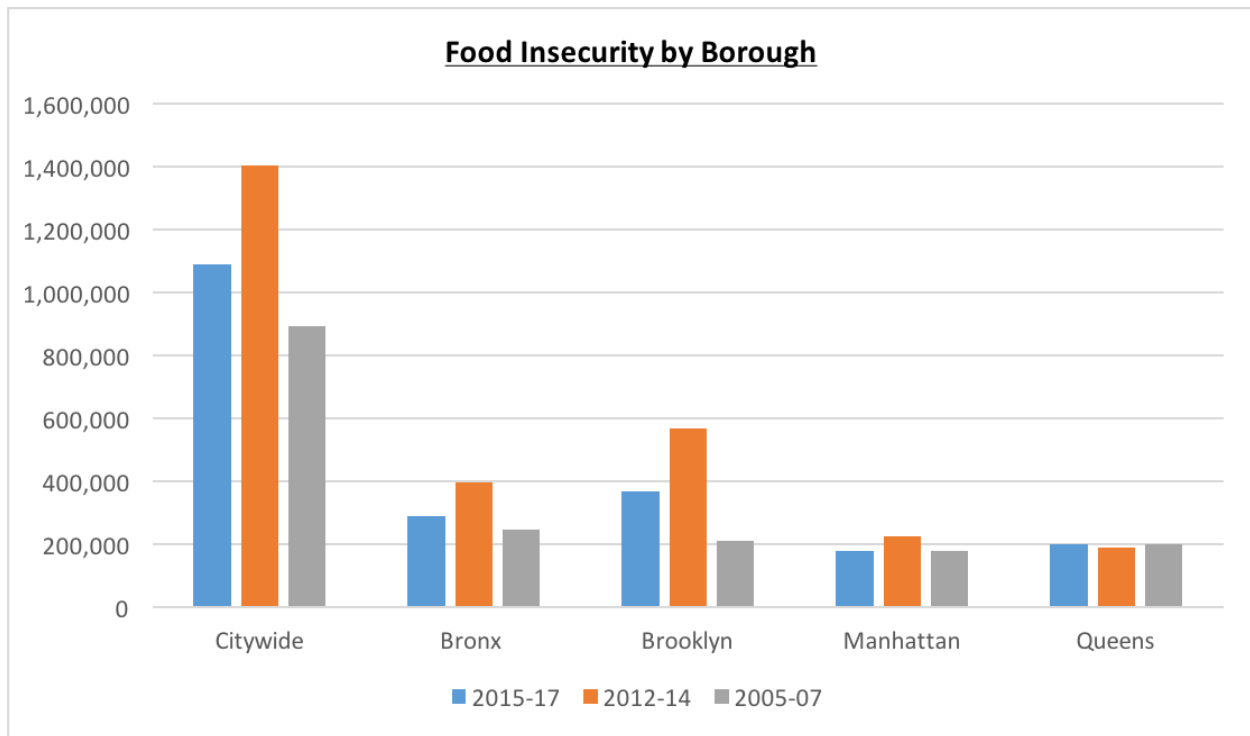
Trends over the last decade for Brooklyn align closely with national trends, with hunger rates falling from the 2012-14 time period but still remaining higher than pre-recession rates.

In 2015-17, 11.5 percent, or one in nine, Brooklyn residents lived in food insecure households. This equates to 368,799 individuals, which is the most of any other borough. This number includes 8.3 percent of children, 7.9 percent of employed adults, and 10.7 percent of seniors in Brooklyn.

“While we are certainly pleased that job creation and wage growth over the last six years contributed to a significant decrease in hunger in and around New York, it is scandalous that the number of hungry residents is still far higher than before the recession,” said Joel Berg, CEO of Hunger Free America. “We simply must not accept mass deprivation as any sort of ‘new normal.’”

Hunger Free America announced the Brooklyn-specific data analysis at Bed-Stuy Campaign Against Hunger, a leading food pantry in New York. Thirty-eight percent of Emergency Food Programs surveyed in Brooklyn indicated they could not meet demand, and more than 86 percent of organizations reported an increase in the number of people served this past year.

The Brooklyn Emergency Food Programs surveyed also reported that they saw a 72-percent increase in the homeless population they served during the past year in addition to a nearly 49-percent increase in employed individuals utilizing their organizations’ services. Twenty-eight percent of Emergency Food Programs in Brooklyn reported having to turn people away due to limited food and resources in 2018.



"No New Yorker should have to go hungry at Thanksgiving or any time of the year," said New York State Assembly Assistant Speaker Felix W. Ortiz, who represents District 51 in Brooklyn. "Yet the Trump Administration and House Republicans are proposing policies that would cut

SNAP and scare people from accessing it. We are fighting those policies that would hurt our coworkers and neighbors."

"While strides have been made in combatting hunger and food insecurity, more than 1 million New Yorkers continue to lack consistent access to healthy food," said Jennifer Jones Austin, CEO and Executive Director of the Federation of Protestant Welfare Agencies. "Hunger is a solvable problem, and it is imperative, now more than ever, to safeguard federal nutrition programs to help achieve this goal. As an organization rooted in equity and dignity for all New Yorkers, FPWA remains steadfast and committed to working with our partners, allies, and elected officials to truly end hunger."

The study, "The Uneaten Big Apple: Hunger's High Cost in NYC," is available on Hunger Free America's website: hungerfreeamerica.org/media-research/research

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