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One in Twelve Queens Adults Are Working But Hungry

Hunger Dips in NY City & State, But Still Higher Than Pre-Recession;

Senior Hunger Increases Despite Overall Hunger Decrease

Advocates Say G.O.P. Tax, Health Care, and Spending Bills Would Increase Hunger

A new study by Hunger Free Hunger America, based on an analysis of federal data, found that in the years 2014-2016, fully 234,023 adults in Queens, including one out of 12 working adults in the borough, lived in households that couldn't afford enough food. These are slight reductions from last year, likely because of the increase in the minimum wage in the city.

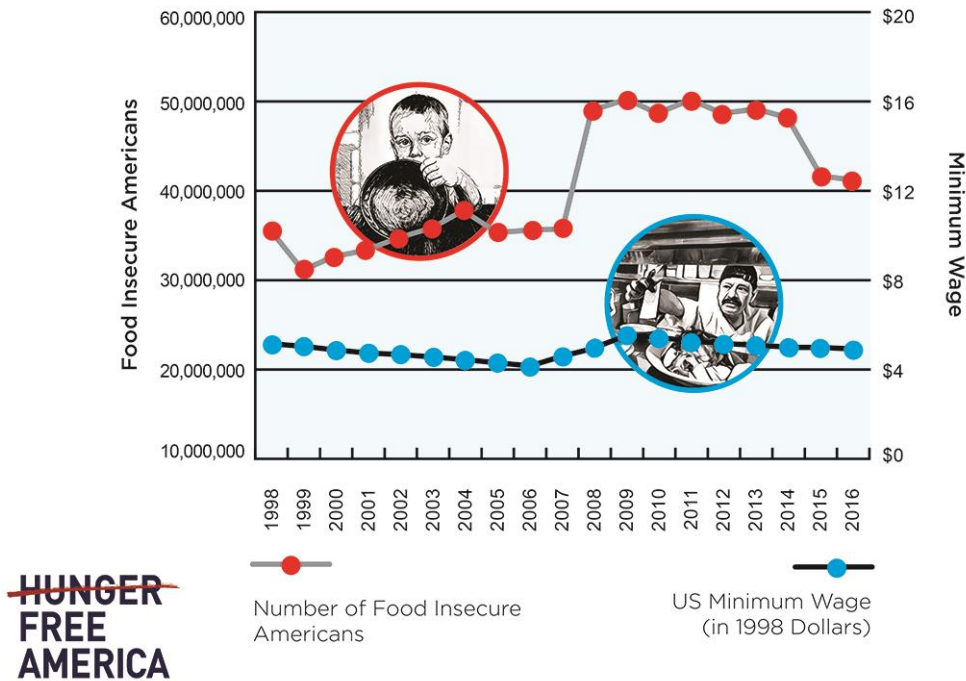
While hunger throughout New York City and State dropped significantly over the last three years due to increasing wages, the number of city and state residents unable to afford an adequate supply of food is still greater than a decade ago, before the start of the recession, according to a new report by Hunger Free America.

Citywide, the number of New Yorkers struggling against hunger dropped by 15 percent over the past three years, but was still 15 percent higher than a decade ago. In 2014-2016, 1.2 million New Yorkers (one in seven of the city's population) lived in food insecure homes, compared to 1.4 million in 2011-2013 and 1.0 million in 2004-2006.

Said, Joel Berg, CEO of Hunger Free America, "While unemployment decreased and wages rose during the last few years of the Obama Administration, it is shameful that America, New York State, and New York City all *still* have higher levels of hunger than before the great recession. We still face a nation, state, and local epidemic of the 'working hungry.' Nationwide, the abysmally low minimum wage clearly is a chief cause of hunger. Yet, just at a time when the nation needs even more jobs, even higher wages, and even more robust anti-hunger safety net programs, Republicans in Washington are scheming to cut the safety net and eviscerate health care – which would clearly make hunger soar – just to fund even more tax cuts for the mega-wealthy."

Hunger Free America, formerly called the New York City Coalition Against Hunger, announced the Queens-specific data analysis at Public Health Solutions, a leading food agency, flanked by governmental and nonprofit leaders and community activists. 34.6 percent of the Emergency Food Providers surveyed in Brooklyn indicated they could not meet demand, and 75.9 percent indicated they were seeing more clients utilizing their soup kitchen and/or food pantry.

**AS PURCHASING POWER OF MINIMUM WAGE SINKS,
US HUNGER STAYS SKY HIGH**



Other findings of the study:

- 63,798 (10.3 percent) of the children in Queens lived in food insecure homes in 2014-2016.
- One out of every eleven seniors (8.8%) in Queens is food insecure.
- 34.6 percent of the city’s pantries and kitchens indicated they were not distributing enough food to meet demand, and 38.9 percent indicated they had to turn people away, reduce the amount of food, or limit their hours of operation.
- Nearly a third of the emergency food providers across New York City indicated that they do not engage their clients, staff, volunteers, or board members in advocacy (32.3 percent for clients; 29.4 percent for staff, volunteers, and board members).
- President Trump has proposed slashing the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) - formerly called the Food Stamp Program – by \$192 billion, and House Republicans have also proposed major cuts to the program. Yet 93 percent of the people who run food pantries and soup kitchens in New York City said such cuts would cause their clients to struggle even more.

CHILD HUNGER STILL SKY HIGH

NUMBER OF NEW YORK CITY CHILDREN LIVING IN FOOD INSECURE HOMES

Statewide, in 2014-2016, nearly three-quarters of a million children, about one in six, lived in food insecure homes. Citywide during that time period, about 341,266 – or one in five – of the city's children struggled against hunger.



FROM 2014-2016, 1 IN 5 NYC CHILDREN LIVED IN FOOD INSECURE HOMES.

USDA DATA ANALYZED BY HUNGER FREE AMERICA © NOVEMBER 2017

Lisa David, CEO and President of Public Health Solutions said, “Far too many New Yorkers, many of them families with young children, face hunger and food insecurity. The consequences of not having enough nutritious food to eat can be devastating - especially on children. Public Health Solutions’ WIC and SNAP programs help ensure tens of thousands of families throughout the city receive food assistance. We are proud to partner with Hunger Free America to raise public awareness about the need, and those who are potentially eligible for food benefits.”

“As we prepare to celebrate Thanksgiving, we must not forget that too many families worry about where their next meal will come from,” said **U.S. Senator Kirsten Gillibrand**. “Food insecurity affects more than two million New Yorkers. There is no excuse for this – no American should know hunger. I am thankful for Hunger Free America’s innovative work to end hunger, and I will continue to support their efforts to help the most vulnerable families in our communities.”

“Far too many New Yorkers lack access to adequate quality food,” said **Council Member Barry S. Grodenchik (D-Oakland Gardens)**. “Choosing between paying bills and purchasing nutritious food is a constant struggle for so many of our neighbors. No one should ever go hungry in our great city. I applaud Hunger Free America for shining the light on this persistent problem.”

“It is unconscionable that, in the richest city in the history of the world,” continued **Hunger Free America’s Berg**, “one in five children still can’t always count on enough food. It is equally unacceptable that a third of our food pantries and soup kitchens lack the resources to meet the growing need. The sky-high hunger level of New York and America harms health, hampers education, traps families in poverty, fuels obesity, eviscerates hope, and thus drags down our entire economy and places our national security

at risk. Hunger harms us all. In contrast, ending hunger lifts us all. We must build the movement needed and force our political system to enact the economic policies and social programs necessary to end U.S. hunger once and for all.”

Otto Starzmann, the Chief Production Officer, RIVER FUND, which serves Brooklyn and Queens, said “The problem of Hunger is simply a symptom of the real issue: Income inequality. The failure to sacrifice minimum-wage growth in furtherance of greater corporate profit is a direct driver of the widespread increase in overall poverty that our economy has experienced. We need to fix this fast: The anger level among the general population of "working poor" families who have been living in multigenerational poverty is rapidly becoming uncontrollable. We see it every day.”

Danette Rivera, Executive Director, J.I.T.A Community Outreach Center - Queens said, “Corporations need to help. People need to work together. Government should help the poor. Agencies should not be caring entire burden. Would be about true unity. Government cutting people's benefits is going to be affecting the people.”

Said Nat Liengsiriwat, Director, AIDS Center of Queens County - Queens: “There should be no reason for people in the US to face hunger because there are so many resources available for them but believe it or not people don't know where to go.”

Tanisha Williams, Volunteer, Bethel Gospel Tabernacle – Queens said, “Hunger in NYC, through all seasons has become an expensive service. How can we give if we are limited?”

The study, “Working New York Still Hungry: New York City and State Hunger Report,” is available on Hunger Free America’s website, <http://www.hungerfreeamerica.org/media-research/research>. The public can donate to, or volunteer with, Hunger Free America at www.hungerfreeamerica.org.

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