



Beyond the Numbers

The Real Impact in Our Communities

SNAP brings federal resources into local economies—and the impact is visible across households, businesses, jobs, and public services.



Federal dollars come into communities

Millions in SNAP benefits translate into purchasing power that enters the local economy.



Local businesses benefit

Grocery stores and other authorized retailers gain sales, helping support payroll, rent, and suppliers.



Jobs & wages are supported

SNAP spending helps sustain employment and wages throughout the food retail and supply chain.



Local revenue is strengthened

Economic activity contributes to state and local tax revenue that supports public services.



Families gain stability

Food assistance frees limited household resources for other essentials and supports healthier outcomes.

SNAP is more than food assistance—it is an investment in people, places, and shared prosperity.

WHO USES SNAP?

SNAP REACHES PEOPLE OF ALL AGES IN STRUGGLING COMMUNITIES.



SNAP PARTICIPANTS BY AGE/STATUS (Share of Total SNAP Participants, FY 2023)



39%

CHILDREN

Under age 18

More than 1 in 3 SNAP participants are children.



20%

OLDER ADULTS

Age 60 or older

1 in 5 SNAP participants are older adults.



10%

**NONELDERLY PEOPLE
WITH DISABILITIES**

Under age 60

1 in 10 SNAP participants is a nonelderly person with a disability.

SNAP HOUSEHOLDS INCLUDE VULNERABLE MEMBERS (FY 2023)



79%

of SNAP households include a child, an adult age 60+, or a nonelderly person with a disability.



88%

of all SNAP participants live in these households.



83%

of total SNAP benefits go to these households.



**SNAP LIFTS UP CHILDREN, SUPPORTS OLDER ADULTS AND PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES,
AND STRENGTHENS FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES.**

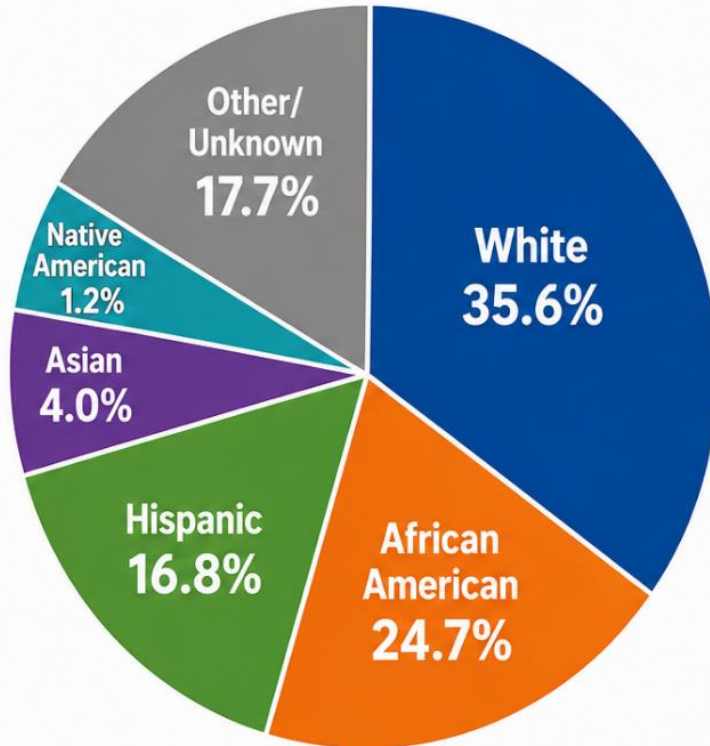
Healthy food. Strong communities. Shared prosperity.



Source: USDA, Food and Nutrition Service. Characteristics of Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Households: Fiscal Year 2023.
<https://www.fns.usda.gov/research/snap/characteristics-fy23>

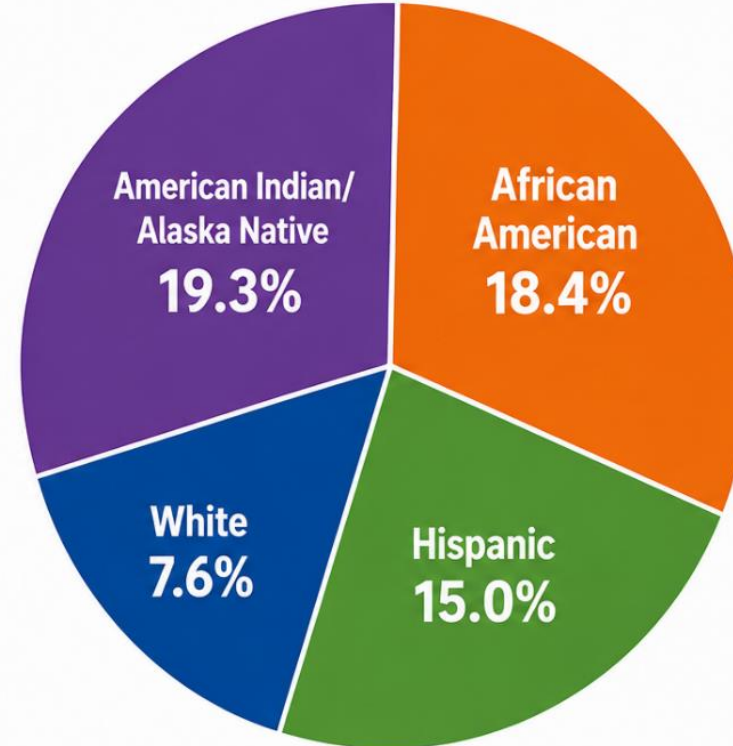
SNAP PARTICIPANTS BY RACE/ETHNICITY

Share of all SNAP recipients



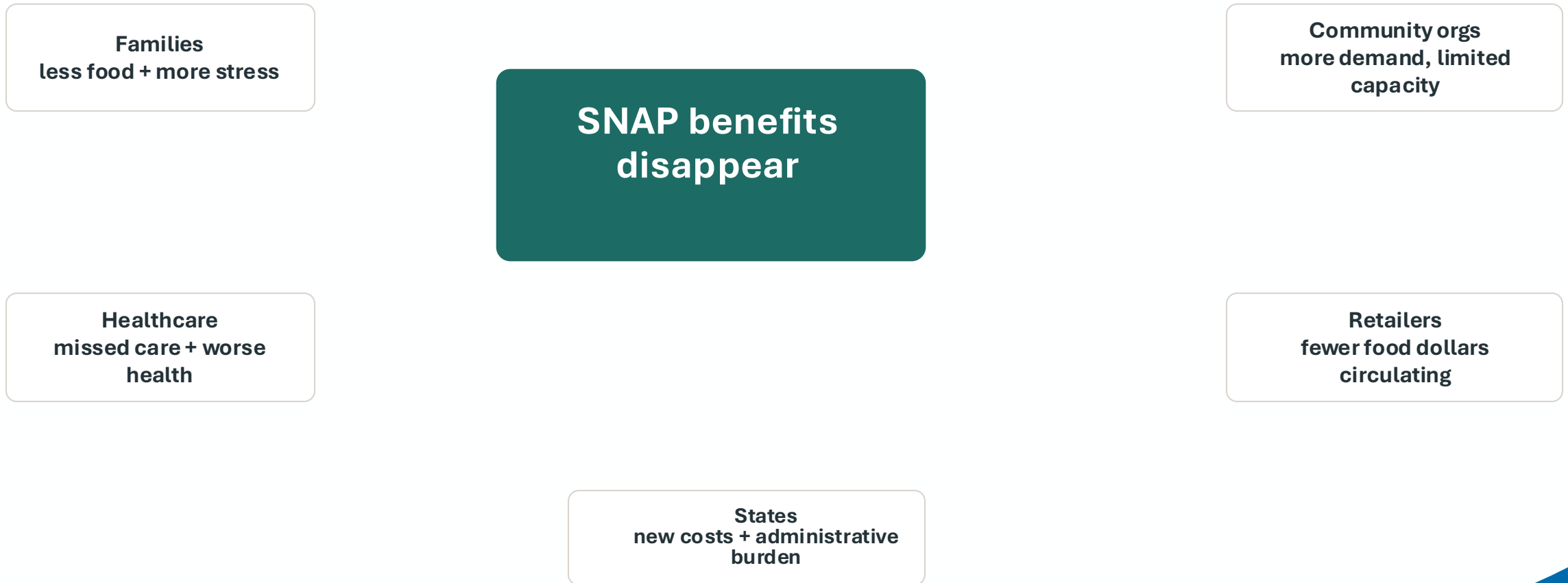
POVERTY RATE BY RACE/ETHNICITY

Poverty rate among individuals in each group



The costs do not disappear — they move

A SNAP loss is not a savings story. It is a cost-shifting story.



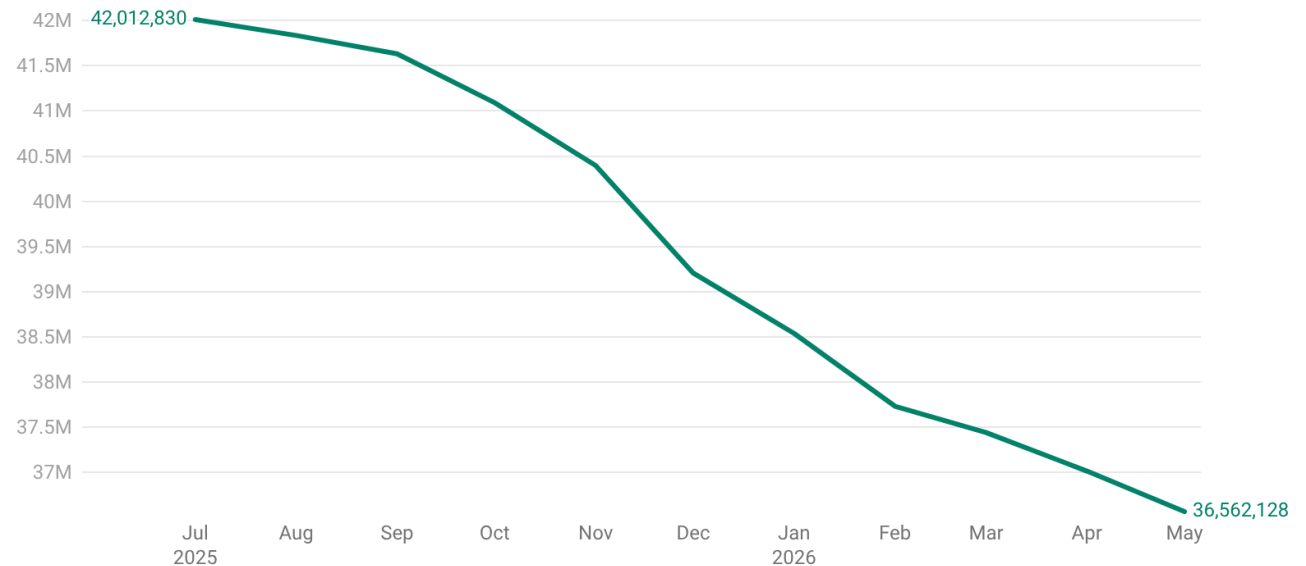
The benefit may be removed from an EBT card, but the need reappears somewhere else.

We don't know who these 5.5 million people are

- Only a handful of states have publicly available information about the makeup of their SNAP caseloads
- USDA publishes a SNAP Characteristics report, but it is based on the SNAP QC sample and only comes out once a year – the most recent uses FY 2024 data.
- States that make data available provide a small window into who is losing SNAP. For instance, we know that Texas has seen a 14% decline in the number of people aged 60-64 since July 2026.

SNAP Decline Since July 2025

5.5 million people have lost SNAP between July 2025 and May 2026



New SNAP Cuts

SNAP-Ed Defunding	FY 2026 (Oct. 1, 2025)
Expanded Time Limits	July 4, 2025
Internet Cost Exclusion	July 4, 2025
Utility Deduction Limits	July 4, 2025
Noncitizen Eligibility Cuts	July 4, 2025
Thrifty Food Plan Limits	July 4, 2025
Administrative Cost-Sharing	Starting FY 2027 (Oct. 1, 2026)
Cost-Sharing Shift	Effective Date: FY 2028 (Oct. 1, 2027)

Increases
administrative costs
=



Funding: More funds required



Time: Greater staff time



Staff: Increased staffing needs time, more need for funds

SNAP Participation Has Fallen Sharply Since H.R. 1

May 2026 participation data show a nationwide contraction in SNAP enrollment since July 2025.

MAY 2026

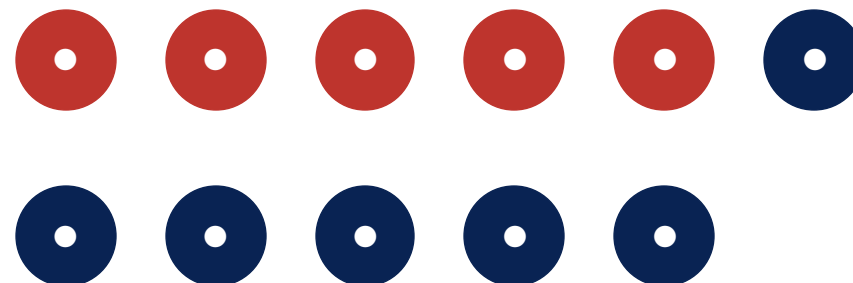
36,562,128

SNAP participants nationwide

≈ 5.5 MILLION FEWER

people participating since H.R. 1 was enacted

WHAT THE NUMBER MEANS



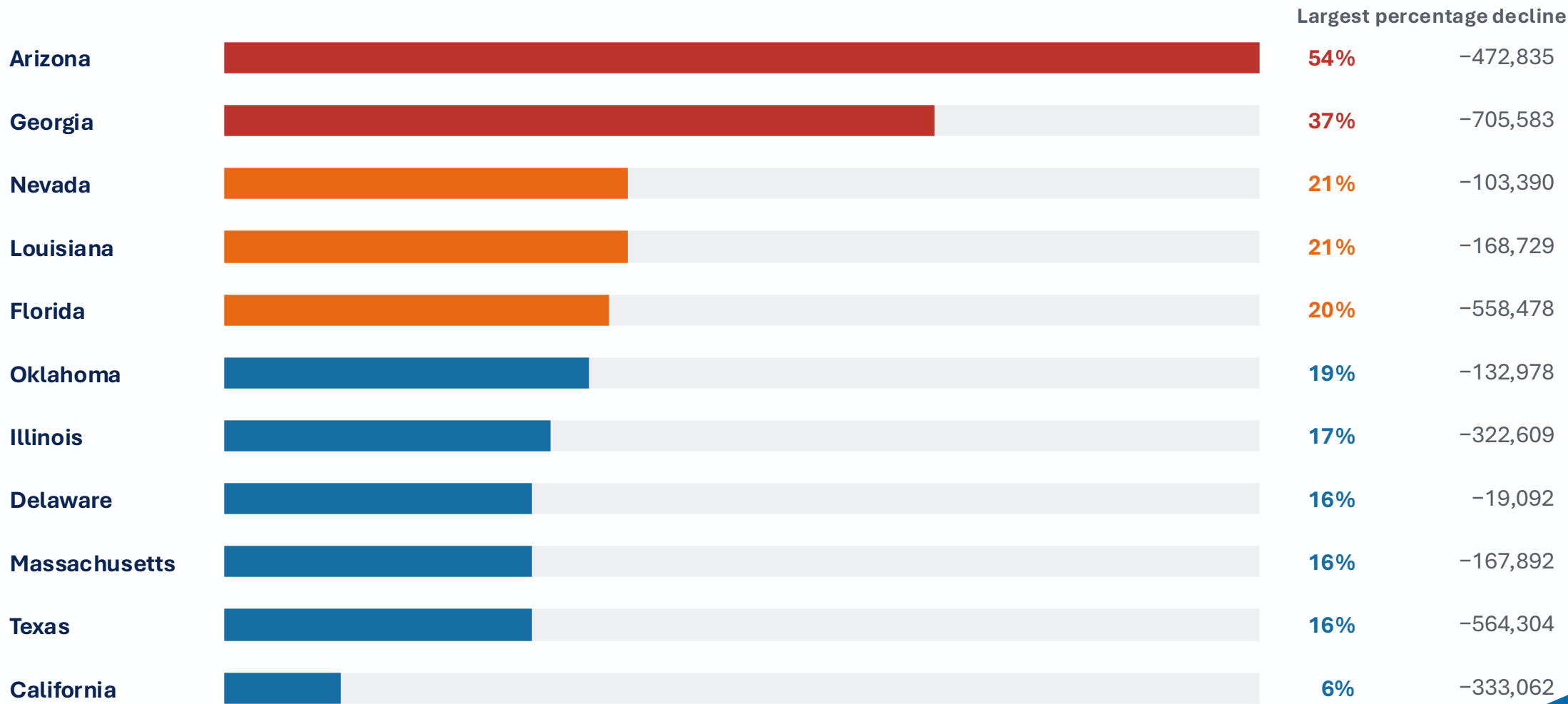
**A loss measured in millions of people—
not simply cases or administrative
records.**

Behind the aggregate are families losing monthly purchasing power for food and communities losing federal dollars that previously circulated locally.

Where SNAP Caseloads Have Fallen the Fastest

Percentage change in SNAP participation from July 2025 to May 2026.

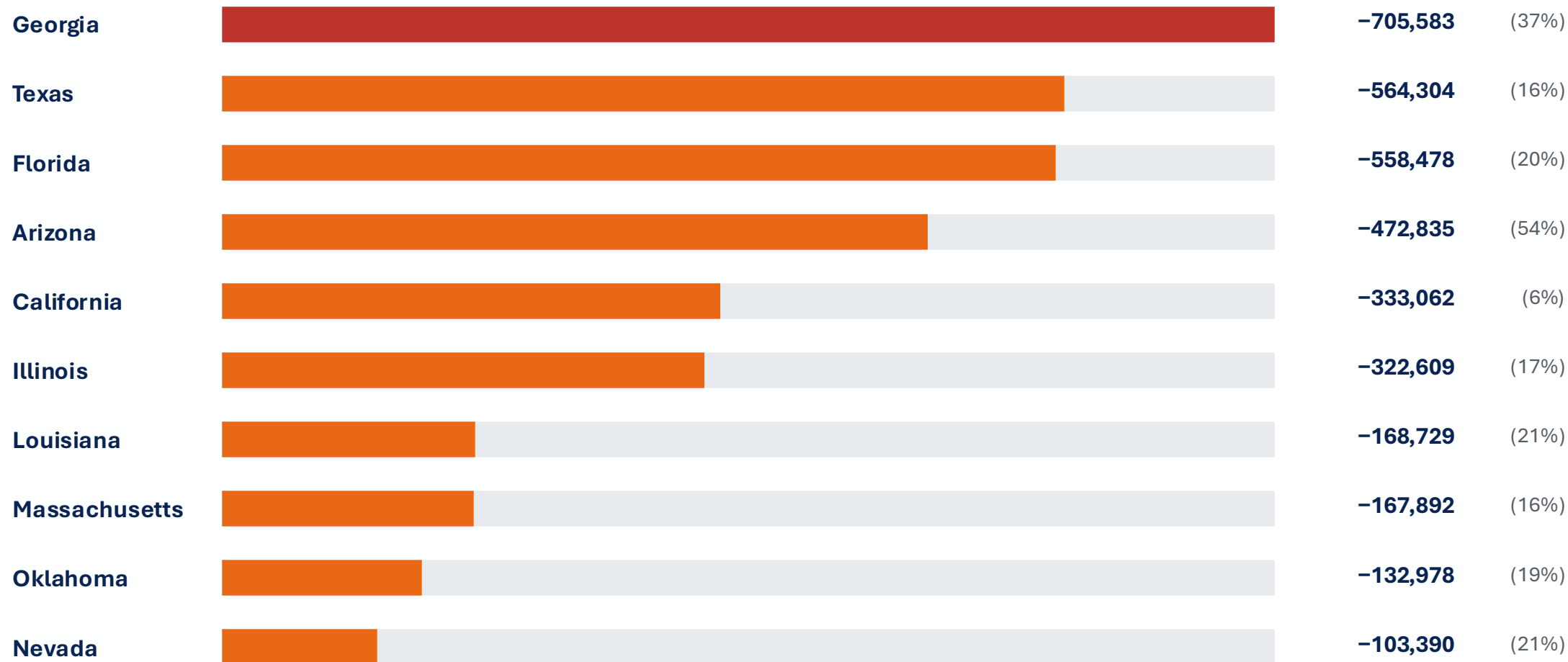
ARIZONA
-54%



Caseload decline

The Largest Losses Represent Hundreds of Thousands of People

Georgia has experienced the largest absolute decline; several large states have each lost more than 300,000 SNAP participants.



These declines are large enough to reshape household food budgets and local food economies.

State Spotlights: The Scale and Speed of the Decline

The May data show both sustained losses since July 2025 and significant month-to-month movement.

ARIZONA

-472,835

people

-54% since July 2025

+8,943 from April to May

Largest percentage decline

GEORGIA

-705,583

people

-37% since July 2025

-156,857 from April to May

Largest absolute decline

FLORIDA

-558,478

people

-20% since July 2025

Large sustained decline

Third major state loss

North Carolina note: the May release revised April 2026 participation upward by 57,500.

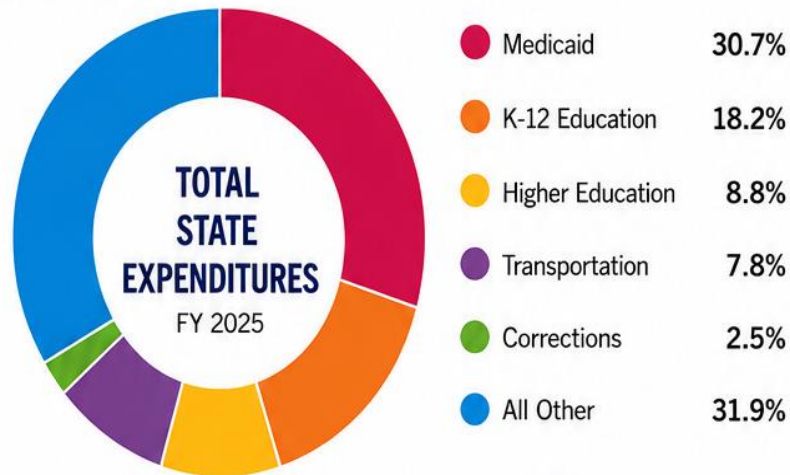
MOST STATES: STATE BUDGETS THEN AND NOW

SNAP is now a state cost. Starting in FY 2028, most states must pay a share of SNAP benefit costs.

FY 2025

TYPICAL STATE BUDGET (THEN)

What state budgets typically look like.



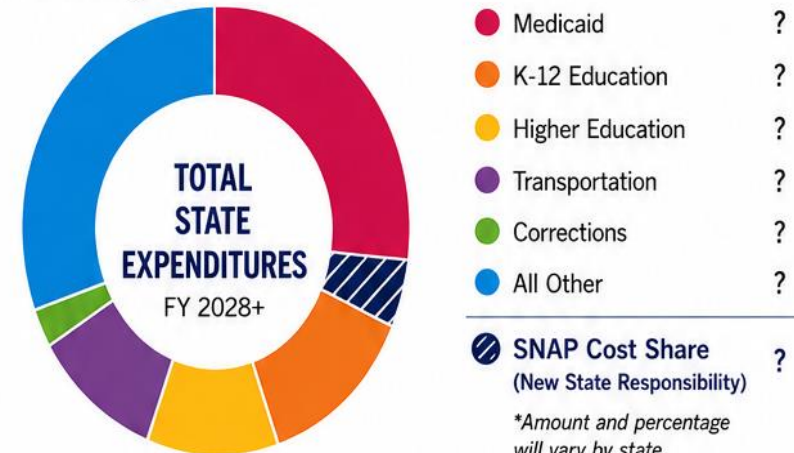
In FY 2025, SNAP is 100% federally funded.

It is not a line item in the state budget.

FY 2028 AND BEYOND

STATE BUDGET WITH SNAP COST SHARE (NOW)

Starting in FY 2028, most states must pay a share of SNAP benefit costs. This new cost must be added to state budgets.



*Amount and percentage will vary by state.



SNAP is now part of the state budget.

States will pay a share of SNAP benefit costs on top of existing priorities.

Beyond the Numbers: The Human and Economic Impact of H.R. 1's SNAP Cuts

Children & Caregivers: What Happens When Food Resources Disappear

Richard Sheward, MPP

Director of System Implementation Strategies, Children's HealthWatch

Assistant Professor of Pediatrics, Boston University Chobanian & Avedisian School of Medicine

About Children's HealthWatch

Children's HealthWatch is a nonpartisan network of pediatricians, public health researchers, and children's health and policy experts. Our network is committed to improving children's health in America. We do that by first collecting real-time data in urban hospitals across the country on infants and toddlers from families facing economic hardship. We then analyze and share our findings with researchers, legislators, and the public.

Since 1998

Continuous data collection across four administrations and every major safety-net policy change

80,000+

Caregivers of young children interviewed in clinical settings

4 cities

Boston · Minneapolis
Little Rock · Philadelphia

We see federal policy arrive in the exam room before it shows up in national statistics.

All of our research is available at: childrenshealthwatch.org/peer-reviewed-publications



SNAP protects health for a lifetime

Compared with likely-eligible children whose families were not enrolled, children in SNAP households had **LOWER** odds of:

- Fair or poor health status
- Developmental risk
- Household and child food insecurity
- Sacrificing health care to pay other bills

Adjusted for covariates including local food prices.



Ettinger de Cuba S, Bovell-Ammon A, Cook JT, ... Sheward R, Frank DA. [SNAP, young children's health, and family food security and healthcare access](#). *Am J Prev Med*. 2019;57(4):525-532.

How food insecurity affects children's health

***“You cannot see this
on a growth chart.”***



1 Physical health

Household food insecurity is a risk factor for iron-deficiency anemia in infants and toddlers — carrying its own developmental consequences.

2 Mental and emotional health

Food insecurity — even at marginal levels — is associated with behavioral, emotional, and academic problems from infancy through adolescence, after controlling for confounders.

Drennen CR, Coleman SM, Ettinger de Cuba S, et al. **Food insecurity, health, and development in children under age four years.** *Pediatrics*. 2019;144(4):e20190824.

Park K, Kersey M, Geppert J, Story M, Cutts D, Himes JH. [Household food insecurity is a risk factor for iron-deficiency anaemia in infants and toddlers](#). *Public Health Nutr.* 2009;12(11):2120-2128.

Shankar P, Chung R, Frank DA. [Association of food insecurity with children's behavioral, emotional, and academic outcomes: a systematic review.](#) *J Dev Behav Pediatr.* 2017;38(2):135-150.

Parents absorb the shock, then it reaches the child

1 The trade-offs parents are forced to make

“Do you wanna breathe or eat?”

- A mother describing the choice between an inhaler and groceries.
- In interviews with 51 parents of young children, caregivers described how these trade-offs affect their own mental health and the emotional climate of the home.

2 What if families were hardship-free?

Across 16,320 families, compared with households carrying two or more hardships, hardship-free households showed:

- Children: lower odds of lifetime hospitalizations, fair/poor health, fair/poor oral health, developmental risk
- Caregivers: lower odds of fair/poor health and of depressive symptoms

Knowles M, Rabinowich J, Ettinger de Cuba S, Cutts DB, Chilton M. [“Do you wanna breathe or eat?”: parent perspectives on food insecurity, trade-offs, and toxic stress.](#) *Matern Child Health J.* 2016;20(1):25-32.

Sheward R, Ettinger de Cuba S, Cutts DB, et al. [Hardship-free households are associated with optimal caregiver and child health.](#) *AJPM Focus.* 2025.

How will H.R. 1 cuts affect children's health?

**Journal of
Health Politics,
Policy
and Law**

Administrative burdens = SNAP cuts

H.R. 1 cuts largely by making the program harder to use via expanded work reporting for previously exempt populations and error-rate penalties that push states toward defensive layers of documentation.

Does it matter that SNAP still exists on paper, if a working parent can't get through the door?

New research: across 39,321 caregivers, enrollment gaps were significantly higher among those reporting learning and compliance costs (the work of finding the rules and proving you meet them). More generous state policy environments had significantly lower odds of gaps.

Gago C, Ettinger de Cuba S, Sheward R, et al. [Co-enrollment in safety-net programs among families with young children: a multistate analysis of enrollment gaps, design and implementation.](#) 2026

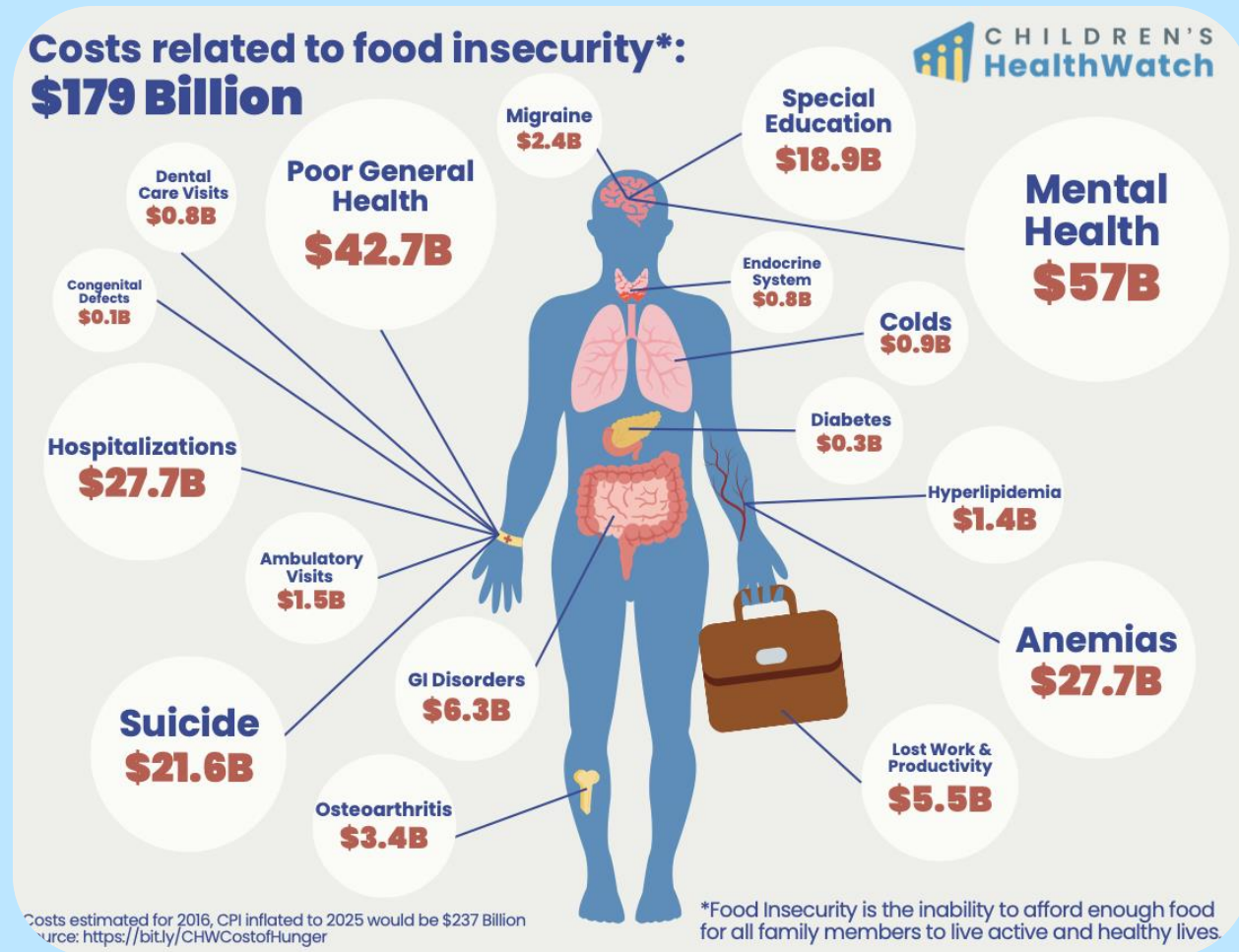
Gago CM, Sheward R, Ettinger de Cuba S. [Efficiency reimaged: designing public programs that work for families and government.](#) *Am J Public Health.* 2026.

Ettinger de Cuba S, Chilton M, Bovell-Ammon A, et al. [Loss of SNAP is associated with food insecurity and poor health in working families with young children.](#) *Health Aff.* 2019;38(5):765-773.

The costs don't disappear; they move

~\$2,000

higher average annual inpatient charges per infant in a food-insecure household (inflation-adjusted)



Ettinger de Cuba S, Casey PH, Cutts D, et al. Household food insecurity positively associated with increased hospital charges for infants. *J Appl Res Child*. 2019;9(1):8.

The Health and Educational Costs Related to Food Insecurity. Children's HealthWatch. June 26, 2025.

Three takeaways

1

Losing SNAP is a family health event, not just an income event.

It deserves the seriousness we would give a child losing a medication.

2

Administrative burdens are SNAP cuts in disguise.

Increasingly the mechanism isn't a cut at all, it's paperwork. Ask who can still get the food, not who is still technically eligible.

3

Deferred spending, not saved spending.

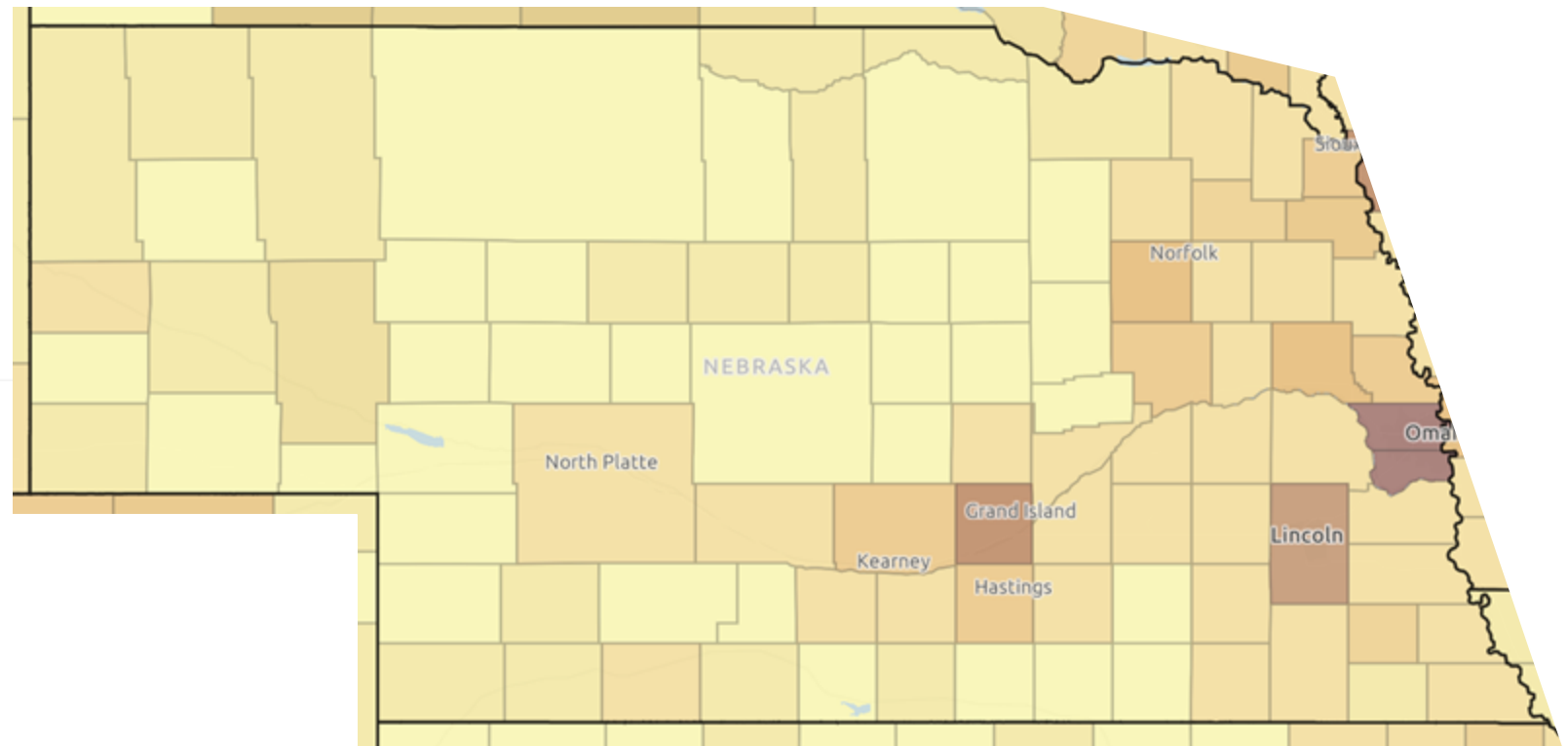
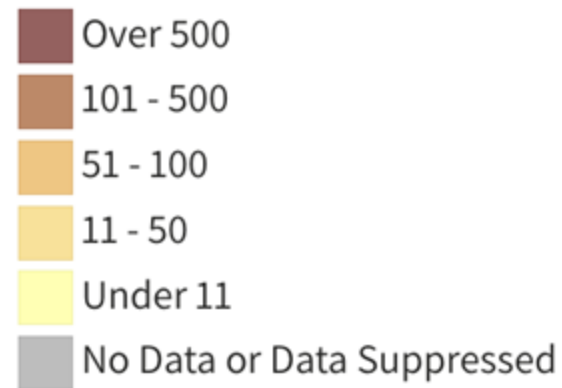
Food insecurity-related costs show up in emergency departments, inpatient charges, special education, and the long-run cost of a less healthy generation.

The question isn't whether we pay. It's whether we pay for groceries now or hospitalizations later — and whether we're honest with the public about which one we've chosen.

Nebraska population density

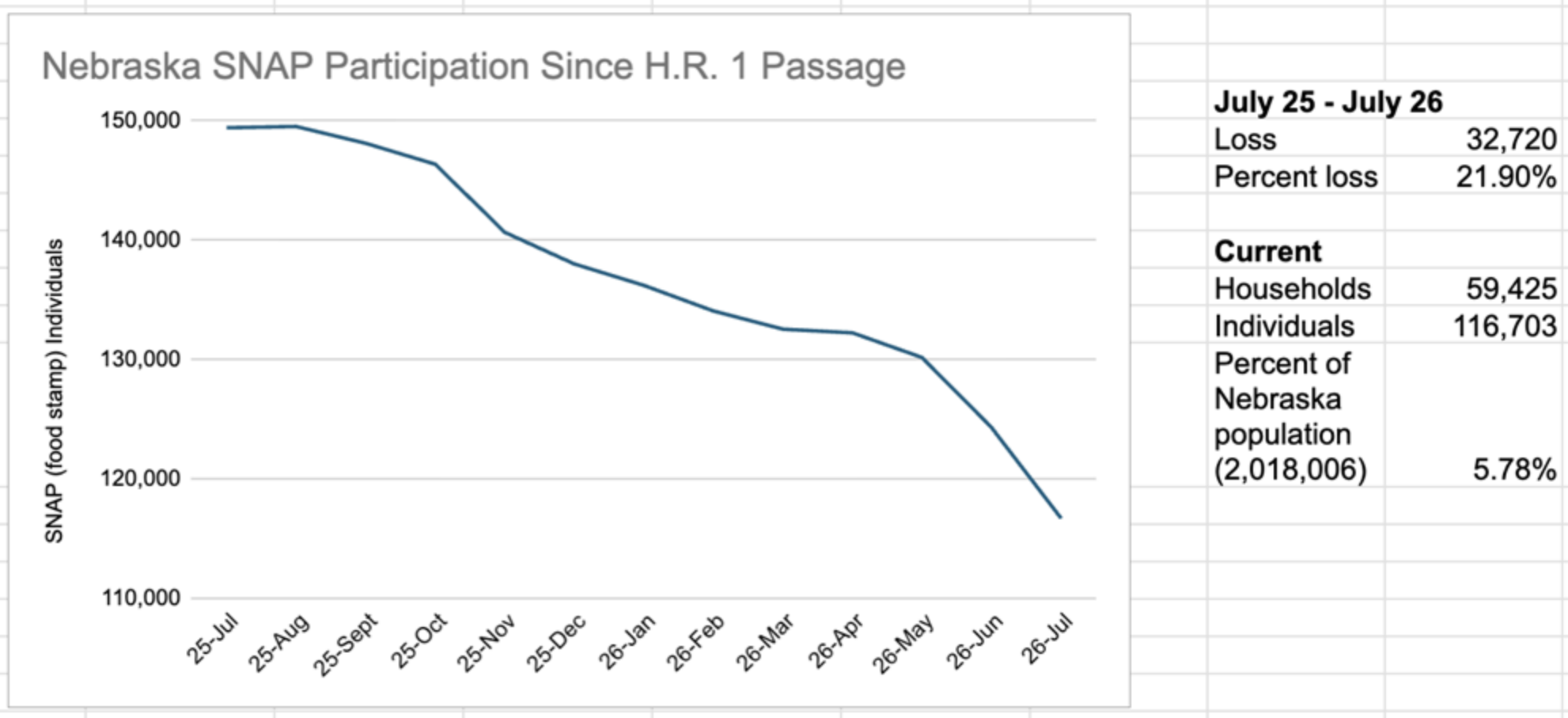


Population, Density (Persons per Sq Mile) by
County, ACS 2020-24



Around 2M people statewide, about 1.3M in Omaha and Lincoln

SNAP Participation



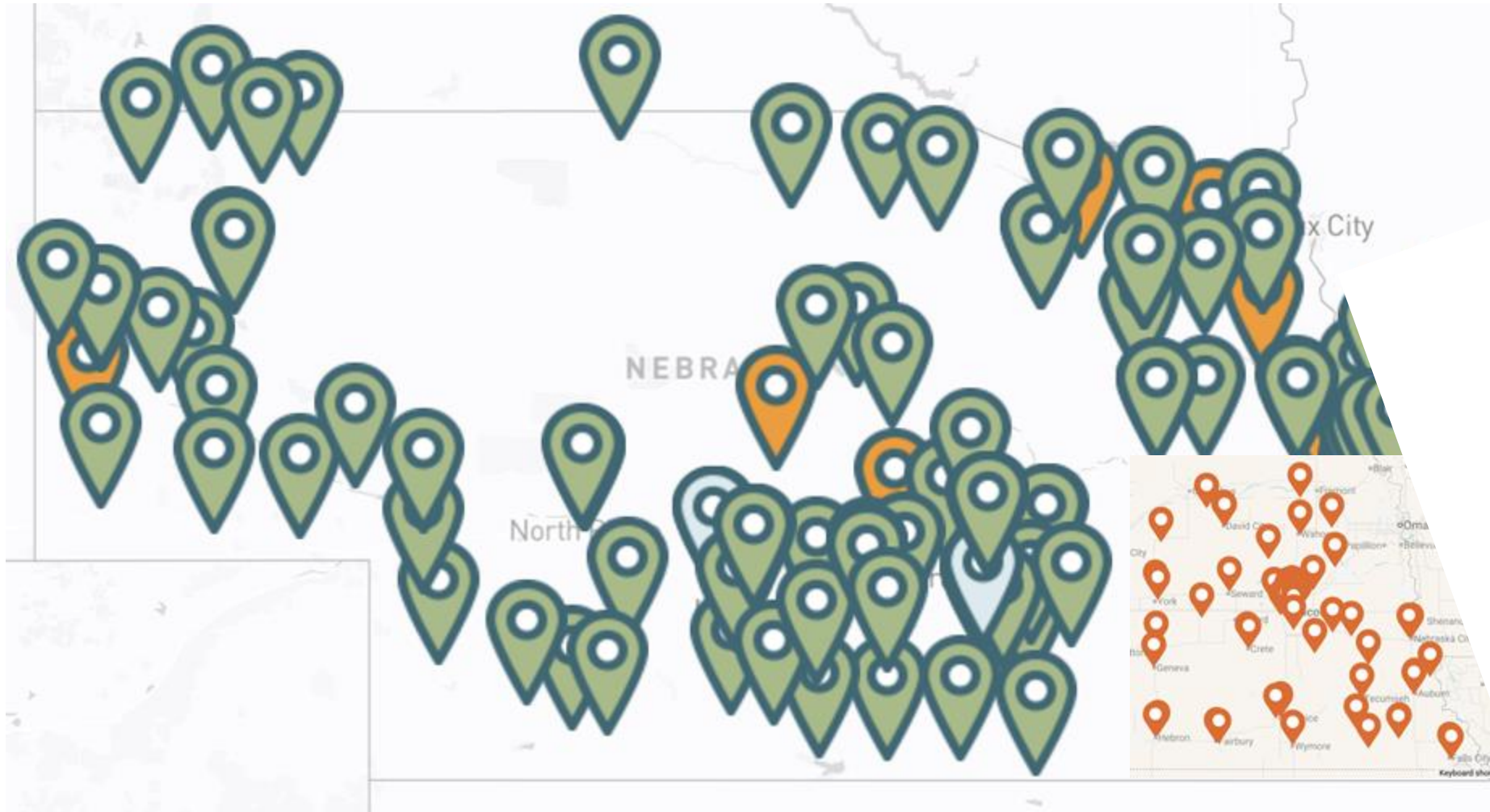
Source: Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services ACCESS Nebraska Dashboard July 2026, <https://dhhs.ne.gov/Pages/ACCESSNebraska-Performance-Measures.aspx#docaccess-9ba52330197fd447e75fba0e4da18c38>

Rural state with fewer services

- Long distances
- No public transit, no Uber or Lyft
- High fuel costs
- Pantry volunteers are neighbors, church members, clients
- Stigma and shame
- Fewer pantries, nonprofits, service providers
- Fewer SNAP retailers, grocers, more convenience stores with fewer healthy options and higher prices

“There are a lot of resources in Omaha, in Lincoln, in the Metro area and even some of the bigger sized cities in Nebraska. But I come from rural and there’s not a lot of resources.” - Joan

Food Bank Distributions



Source: Food Bank for the Heartland, <https://foodbankheartland.org/food-resources/find-food/> / Food Bank of Lincoln, <https://www.lincolnfoodbank.org/get-food/food-finder/>

Food Banks and social service orgs

- Need is growing throughout the state.
- Wait times are increasing.
- People need to show up very early to receive distributions.
- Grocery stores, that are losing revenue from SNAP cuts are also being asked to support food drives and give charity.

While Matt Talbot Kitchen & Outreach Center sees 96% increase in visitors, immediate need of canned goods arise

August 13, 2026 3:59 pm by Noelle Adams

“Just getting to the food banks can be a challenge if you are struggling with transportation or the funds that it takes.” - Joan

Economic impacts

Downstream impacts:

- Grocers
- Truckers
- Agriculture
- Ranchers



IN NEBRASKA:
SNAP benefits removed from the economy with 32K fewer people on SNAP = \$6 million less per month.

Worried for Nebraska, worried for us all

- Eligible people are losing benefits, not just newly ineligible from H.R. 1
- States are focusing on reducing error rates to avoid a benefits cost share and doing it to the detriment of everything else
- “Program access has been deemphasized by everyone” - *USDA leader last week*

