

Cuts in SNAP benefits exacerbate the food crisis

Today, 47 million Americans will feel a reduction in their Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP, or food stamps) benefits. Considered a first line of defense against hunger, the program will be cut by a total of \$5 billion. With the expiration of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 on October 31st, which allowed for a temporary boost to SNAP, all recipients will receive a cut. Based on the maximum allotments, the cuts are approximately 5.5 %. For a household of 4 people, this will translate to a loss of \$36 per month. Reductions will depend on size of household and whether the minimum or maximum amounts are received.

Locally, this loss will be felt by 2 million NYC residents – an estimated loss of 76 million meals. According to the Food Bank for New York City's recent study, *Hunger's New Normal: Redefining Emergency in Post-Recession New York City*, 40% of SNAP recipients also access food pantries and soup kitchens just to obtain enough food. Clearly insufficient before the cuts, a reduced SNAP program severely exacerbates the food crisis in NYC.

More and more people will access other food programs such as God's Love We Deliver, continuing an upward trend in the request for services. We are now serving 10% more clients than we did at this time in 2012 and we have grown by more than 60% in the past 5 years. For those who are ill and unable to shop and cook for themselves, God's Love will continue to provide meals and nutrition services free of charge. We will also continue to advocate for adequate and fair resources to alleviate hunger and malnutrition.

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