**SUMMARY: The Need for Food Assistance in San Diego Remains High**

Similar to slight decreases across California and the nation, San Diego County’s food insecurity rate fell from 15% of the population in 2016 (an estimated 486,000 people) to 14% in 2017 (an estimated 443,000 people). While food security in San Diego County continues to improve, the overall rate remains high, with 1 in 7 people facing hunger in 2017.

**Why is this?** San Diegans’ ability to purchase enough food has improved very little over time. This is a result of limited wage growth since the 2008 recession and the rapidly rising cost of living in our region. More than half (55%) of adults experiencing food insecurity are employed, but 32% of San Diegans currently make less than $14.35/hour ($29,848/year)\(^1\).

Until wages catch up to the cost of living in San Diego County, people will need food assistance to prevent the detrimental, long-term effects of hunger and malnutrition. That is why San Diego Hunger Coalition and our partners are committed to a Hunger Free San Diego where anyone facing hunger can readily access food assistance sufficient to see them safely through their time of need.

### San Diego County 2017 Food Insecurity Rate

**1 in 7 San Diegans**

Don’t always have enough to eat.

443,000 people in San Diego experienced food insecurity in 2017. This represents 302,000 adults and 141,000 children who did not always have enough to eat.

#### Who Makes Up 1 in 7?

- **1 in 5 Children** (19%)
- **1 in 8 Adults** (12%)
- **1 in 10 Seniors** (10%)

### Who is Food Insecure in San Diego?

- More than half (55%) of adults experiencing food insecurity are employed and 43% are working full-time.
- 50% of adults experiencing food insecurity are living with a disability.
- 41% of low-income adults and 43% of low-income children are living in a food insecure household.
- Nearly half (46%) of low-income single parent households are food insecure.
- More than half (55%) of food insecure adults are Latino; 29% are White; 7% are Asian; and 5% are Black.

### What defines a “Food Insecure” Household?

Because of lack of money and resources:

- Eating patterns change. (Meager or skipped meals.)
- The quality of food decreases. (More cheap, processed foods.)
- There isn’t always enough to eat for a healthy and active lifestyle.
- The household struggles to avoid hunger at some point during the year.
**The Impacts of Hunger on Health**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expense</th>
<th>Monthly Cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Housing</td>
<td>$1,816</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child Care</td>
<td>$1,886</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health Care</td>
<td>$460</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food</td>
<td>$871</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation</td>
<td>$533</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miscellaneous</td>
<td>$557</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taxes</td>
<td>$763</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Monthly Income Needed</strong></td>
<td><strong>$6,886/mo</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Hourly Wage (per adult)</strong></td>
<td><strong>$19.56/hr</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Annual Income Needed</strong></td>
<td><strong>$82,620/yr</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**REFERENCES**

1 Determined by the U.C. Berkeley Labor Center using data from the Current Population Survey conducted by the United States Census Bureau, July 2019

2 Based on the California Family Needs Calculator (formerly the Self-Sufficiency Standard) developed by Dr. Diana Pearce with the University of Washington for the Insight Center. Retrieved July 2019 from: https://insightcedc.org/
