



National Indian Health Board NATIONAL TRIBAL COVID-19 RESPONSE

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Food Security and Nutrition

As the coronavirus pandemic continues across the globe, normal food distribution patterns may be disrupted. While no national food shortage is expected, Tribal members may experience decreased food security during this time. This fact sheet includes resources that Tribes may utilize to meet the need for food and nutrition services.

[Click here](#) for the 2015-2020 Dietary Guidelines developed by Departments of Health & Human Services (HHS) and Agriculture (USDA). The recommendations are not specific to American Indians/Alaska Natives.

School Meal Substitutes

As COVID-19 has led to the closure of most schools and Head Start programs, many students are losing out on at least one guaranteed hot meal throughout the day. Many families rely on this meal for their students and they have had to scramble to provide a substitution. Additionally, the 48,000 students attending Bureau of Indian Education schools that have closed may require support to ensure adequate nutrition and food security.

Many public school districts are offering pick-up or delivery options for families to get meals to students. **Check with the school district in which your child is enrolled to see what options are available. Families should also check with your Tribe or [state food assistance program](#) to see what options are available in your area.**

Normally, the USDA supports public schools in low income areas to provide nutrition to students during summer months with its Summer Food Service Program. USDA is allowing states to use these funds to supply meals to students during the pandemic. **The USDA recommends calling the National Hunger Hotline at 1-866-348-6479 for food distribution sites in your area.**

Grocery Stores

Many grocery stores on and off reservations have made accommodations during the pandemic. This may include an Elders Shopping Hour, where elders can shop with fewer people in the store. **Check with your local grocery store to see what options are available, and be sure to wash your hands before and after visiting the store.**

SNAP and FDPIR

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and the Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR) are two vital programs that help ensure Indian Country's food security. FDPIR received an emergency appropriation of \$100 million to purchase food and upgrade facilities as a result of increased demand during the pandemic. **Check with the office you applied for benefits with for updates.** Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing, or have speech disabilities can contact USDA with a text phone through the Federal Relay Service at **(800) 877-8339**.

Disclaimer:
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