

# A SURVEY OF HUNGER IN COLORADO

## ECONOMIC INSECURITY, HUNGER AND THE PANDEMIC

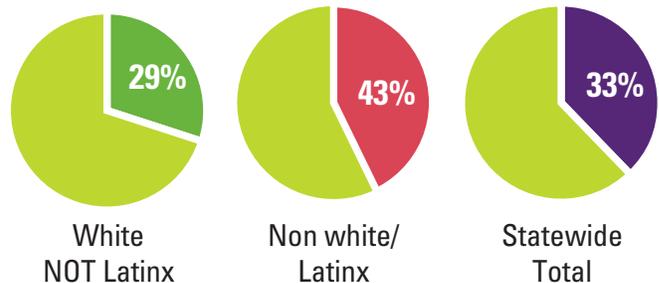
The COVID-19 pandemic has disrupted many aspects of Colorado life, most prominently jobs and our economy, leading to historic unemployment and hunger. Hunger Free Colorado's quarterly survey tracks the impact of COVID-19 on **hunger, officially known as food insecurity or lack of consistent, reliable access to nutritious, culturally relevant food**. These findings come from an April 2021 survey of more than 530 Coloradans. The overall sample has a margin of error of +/- 4.2 percentage points at a 95% confidence level.

### 1 IN 3 COLORADANS (33%) ARE STRUGGLING WITH HUNGER

Though this rate is down from the December survey, this is still a historical high for Colorado. Even more startling is the clear inequities along racial and demographic lines when examining hunger and income loss.

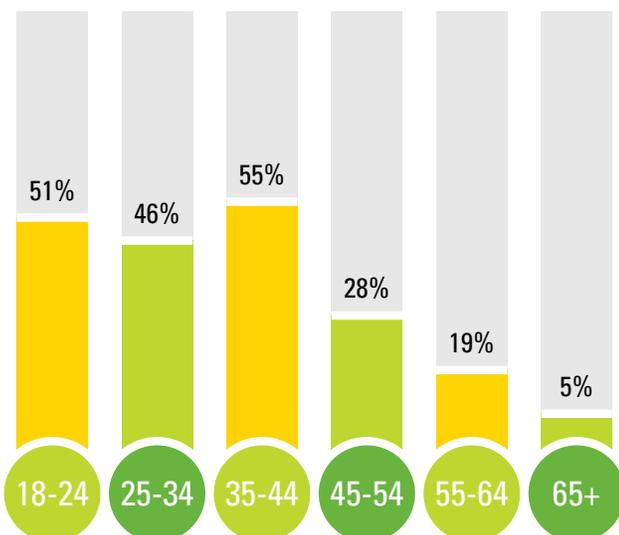
Among working age adults, more than 50% of those 44 years old and younger reported struggling to maintain regular access to food, with those 35 to 44 years old hit the hardest.

### FOOD INSECURITY BY RACE/ETHNICITY



Percentage of respondents who were food insecure Jan. – April 2021, based on the USDA 6-question food insecurity survey. Source: Hunger Free Colorado COVID Food Insecurity Survey, April 2021

### FOOD INSECURITY BY AGE



Percentage of respondents who were food insecure Jan. – April 2021, based on the USDA 6-question food insecurity survey. Source: Hunger Free Colorado COVID Food Insecurity Survey, April 2021

### MORE THAN 2 IN 5 (43%) OF INDIVIDUALS OF COLOR ARE NOW STRUGGLING TO REGULARLY ACCESS QUALITY NUTRITIOUS FOOD

Long-standing disparities in access to healthy food have grown dramatically due to the pandemic and 43% of non-white and Latinx Coloradans are now struggling to put food on the table, compared to 29% of white Coloradans.



## 1 IN 6 CHILDREN (16%) ARE NOT GETTING ADEQUATE NUTRITION

Households with children also remain at the forefront of Colorado's hunger crisis, with 44% unable to consistently put healthy food on the table, posing risks to the long-term health and well-being of hundreds of thousands of children across the state. Among households with children, 30% of adults reported having to regularly cut back or skip meals because there wasn't enough money to buy food.

## FOOD INSECURITY BEFORE AND DURING COVID-19

COVID-19 has had a dramatic impact on our communities' health, economy, and food security. Below are common measures of food security over time – immediately after the great recession, immediately before the pandemic and at various points until April 2021.

We need a response commensurate to the scale of the crisis we are facing, including an investment in long-term solutions for strengthening nutrition programs and other economic supports. Without a comprehensive and urgent response to address the hunger and economic crisis created by COVID-19, Colorado will be left feeling the aftereffects for years to come.

### FOOD INSECURE

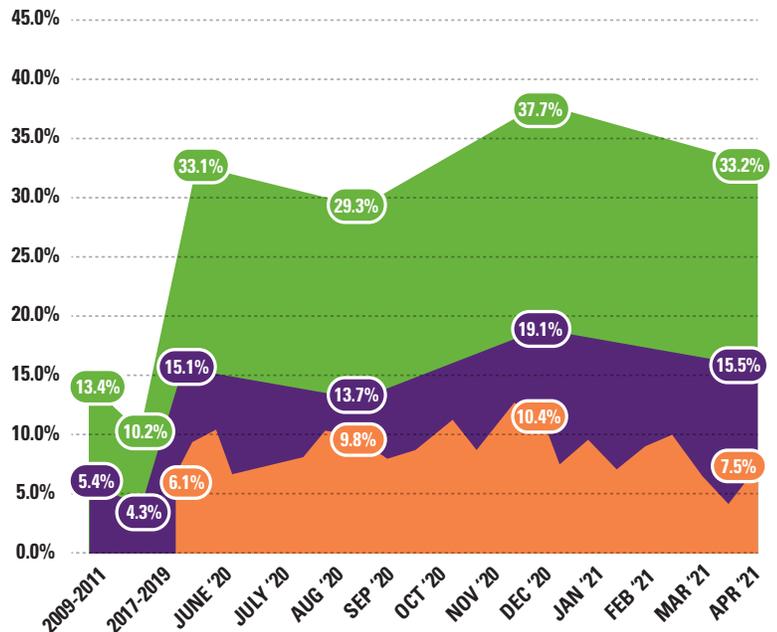
Households classified as "food insecure" had **limited or uncertain access to adequate nutritious food over the last three months**. This includes those who **reduced the quality, variety, or desirability of their diet with little indication of reduced food intake AND** those experiencing **VERY LOW FOOD SECURITY** and **ACUTE FOOD SCARCITY** (SEE RIGHT).

### VERY LOW FOOD SECURITY

Households having "very low food security" were food insecure to the extent that **eating patterns of one or more household members were disrupted** and their **food intake reduced**, at least some time **during the last three months**, because they could not afford enough food.

### ACUTE FOOD SCARCITY

Households experiencing food scarcity indicated they **did not have enough to eat in the last 7 days**.



# HUNGER FREE COLORADO



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Hunger Free Colorado connects people to food resources to meet existing needs and drives policy, systems and social change to end hunger.

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