

WHAT IS THE FOOD STAMP CHALLENGE?

The Food Stamp Challenge highlights just some of the struggles many Marylanders face trying to put adequate food on the table with limited income and supports.

Participants pledge to use the weekly average Food Stamp benefit – just \$33 – as their total budget for groceries for seven days.

The challenge provides an opportunity for participants to get a small glimpse into the reality of how difficult it is for families living on food stamps to simultaneously avoid hunger, afford nutritious foods, and stay healthy on an miniscule budget.



The Food Supplement Program, formerly known as Food Stamps and known nationally as SNAP, is a vital resource, putting healthy food within reach of more than one in eight Marylanders. Taking the Food Stamp Challenge is a platform for empathy, education, and advocacy for this vital program.

MARYLAND HUNGER SOLUTIONS, an initiative of the Food Research and Action Center, is dedicated to ending hunger and promoting well-being among all low-income Marylanders. In 2012, one in six Marylanders reported not having enough money to buy food that they or their family needed at some points during the prior twelve months.*

*Food Hardship in America - Data for the Nation, States, 100 MSAs, and Every Congressional District, 2013 analysis of Gallup data by the Food Research and Action Center

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THANK YOU TO ALL OF OUR PAST PARTICIPANTS!

In particular, Maryland Hunger Solutions would like to recognize:

- **Ted Dallas**, Secretary of the Department of Human Resources
- **Gloria Lawlah**, Secretary of the Department of Aging
- **Rosemary Malone**, Department of Human Resources
- **Anne Sheridan**, Executive Director of the Governor's Office for Children
- **Maryland Senator Jamie Raskin**
- **Maryland Senator Bill Ferguson**
- **Maryland Senator Ana Sol Gutierrez**
- **Maryland Delegate Shane Robinson**
- **Maryland Delegate Mary Washington**
- **Maryland Delegate Nathaniel Oaks**
- **Maryland Delegate Al Carr**
- **Bill McCarthy**, Executive Director of Catholic Charities in Baltimore
- **Hank Greenberg**, AARP State Director for Maryland
- **Billy Shore**, Founder of Share Our Strength
- **And everyone else we have listed on our website** who has participated over the past 4 years.

Thank-you all for your participation, partnership and advocacy in the fight to end hunger in Maryland.

ACCEPT THE CHALLENGE: MARYLAND'S ANNUAL FOOD STAMP CHALLENGE



OCTOBER 6-12 2014



Maryland Hunger Solutions
Ending hunger and promoting well-being

FOOD STAMP CHALLENGE: OCTOBER 6-12

HOW TO TAKE THE CHALLENGE

1. Sign up online and invite others to join.

[WWW.MDHUNGERSOLUTIONS.ORG/
FOODSTAMP_CHALLENGE](http://WWW.MDHUNGERSOLUTIONS.ORG/FOODSTAMP_CHALLENGE)

2. Budget: \$33 per person for food and beverages during the Challenge week.
3. Only eat food that you purchase for the Challenge and be sure to count eating out in your budget. Don't eat food that you already own (excluding spices and condiments).
4. Avoid consuming free food and drinks (excluding water), particularly at public meetings and events.
5. Share your experiences by:
 - Taking and sending pictures to our tumblr blog mdsnapchallenge.tumblr.com
 - Tweeting @MarylandHunger #SNAPchallenge
 - Writing on our Facebook wall



Food purchased for the 2013 Food Stamp Challenge Week by Clarissa Hayes, Maryland Hunger Solutions

WHAT PEOPLE HAVE SAID ABOUT THE CHALLENGE...

Neil Bergsman, Maryland Department of Budget and Management

"If we had to live on \$30 per person per week indefinitely, it would get to be a grind very quickly, and not long after that I feel our health would suffer. Before long, we would start to feel the stress of having to plan and manage so closely. One mishap or unanticipated expense would lead to serious hardship."

Regan Vaughn, Catholic Charities

"Failing the Food Stamp Challenge isn't like cheating on a diet – something everyone does. It's different because there are 47 million people who receive SNAP benefits who don't get to "cheat." Who don't have the extra money in their budget to say – I don't have time to make lunch today, I'm going to splurge and buy prepared food. When they forget their lunch they don't eat lunch."

Sarah Niskanen, Maryland Farmers Market Association

"Throughout the duration of the week, I anticipate that many Challengers will continue to feel like their \$30 weekly food allotment is just not enough. I urge you to embrace that feeling and remember it-for at the end of the week, that "just-not-enough" feeling will go away. For millions of Americans across the county, that feeling remains an all too familiar reality. "

QUICK FACTS ABOUT HUNGER AND POVERTY IN MARYLAND

- More than 1 in 8 Marylanders are food insecure
- 1 in 5 households with children in Maryland reported having a difficult time affording food at some point in the past 12 months
- 1 in 10 people in Maryland live below the poverty line
- 1 in 7 children in Maryland live in below the poverty line

SIGN UP TODAY!

To sign up, visit

[WWW.MDHUNGERSOLUTIONS.ORG/
FOODSTAMP_CHALLENGE](http://WWW.MDHUNGERSOLUTIONS.ORG/FOODSTAMP_CHALLENGE)

or contact Rachel Tucker at
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