



Commonwealth of Massachusetts

**Executive Office of
Health and Human Services**

Governor Healey's Anti-Hunger Task Force Kick-Off Meeting

August 19, 2025





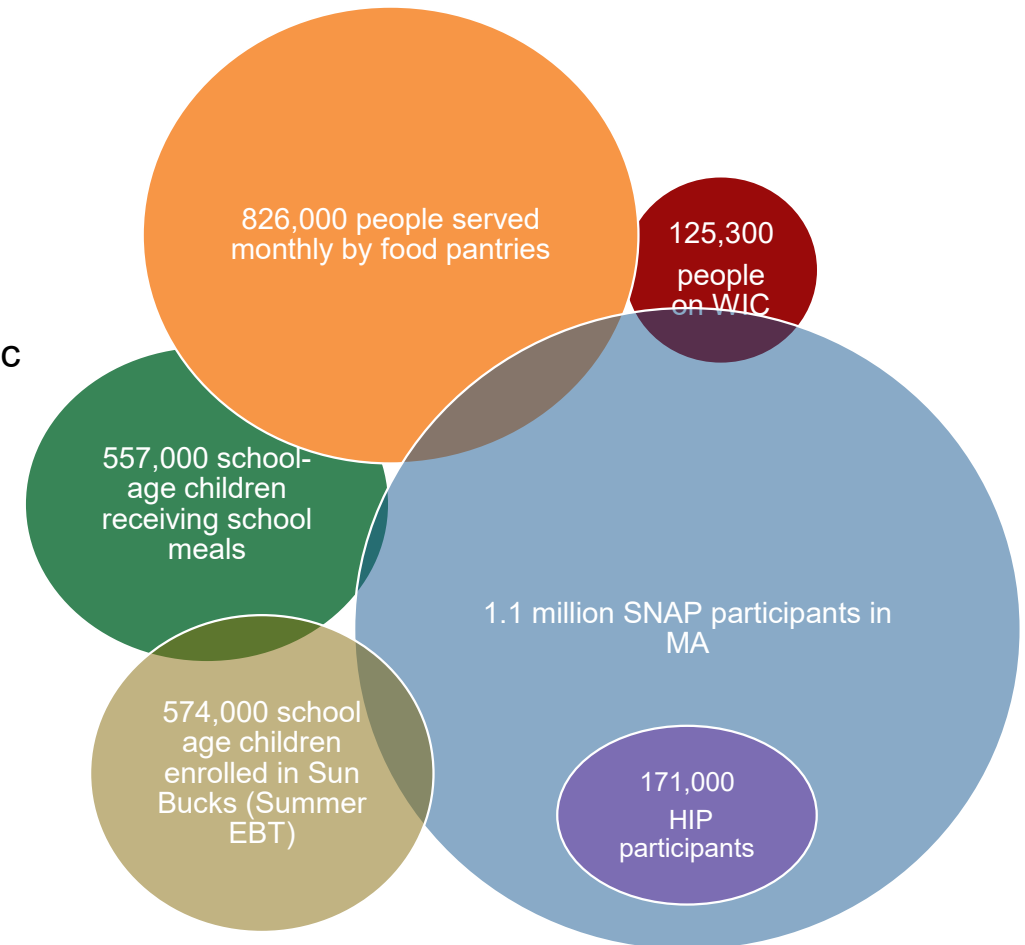
Agenda

- Introductions
- Background: SNAP Cuts and Impact on Massachusetts
- Anti-Hunger Task Force Overview, Structure & Partnership Opportunities
- Working Groups Overview
- Listening Sessions
- Discussion
- Next Steps & Proposed Calendar



Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) at a Glance

- **Federal nutrition program** administered by the Department of Transitional Assistance (DTA) for Massachusetts residents.
- **Largest anti-hunger program in Massachusetts**, serving more than 1 million people (1 in 6 MA residents)
 - 32% of recipients are children (under 18)
 - 24% of recipients are seniors (60 and older)
 - 28% of recipients are people with disabilities
- Brings in **\$2.7 billion federal dollars annually** and SNAP benefits have an **economic multiplier effect** of \$1.54 for every \$1 spent resulting in economic generation in every community across the Commonwealth
 - Average SNAP benefit in MA (as of February 2025)
 - \$327/household/month
 - \$10.70/household/day
 - The **Healthy Incentives Program (HIP)**, a state-funded supplement for purchase of fruits and vegetables at farmer's markets and community supported agriculture (CSA) farm share programs, increases access to healthy foods and provides direct economic benefit to local farmers.
 - SNAP brings nearly **\$3B to over 5500 Massachusetts retailers**
- **Countercyclical** - responsive to recessions when unemployment and poverty increase
- For every 1 meal provided by a food bank, SNAP provides 9 meals.





Background: Cuts to SNAP and impacted communities in MA

In July 2025, Congress passed a reconciliation bill that made the largest cut to SNAP in the program's history. These cuts will have adverse impacts on people and communities across the Commonwealth.

Key SNAP Changes:

1. Expansion of strict work requirements to include older adults and parents of children over age 14 as well removing options waivers options for geographies with high unemployment or few jobs, significantly increasing the number of households at risk of losing benefits.
2. Elimination of eligibility for certain immigrants including refugees and asylees.
3. Limitation on utility allowances which will reduce benefits for certain households
5. Implementation of a benefit cost-share with states tied to payment accuracy measures starting in FFY28, which could result in up to \$394M in benefit costs for MA.
6. Increase in administrative cost share for states for 50% administrative costs to 75% administrative costs starting in FFY27 resulting in \$53M in additional costs to MA.
7. Limitation on increases in the Thrifty Food Plan calculation, the cost basis for SNAP, which will erode the value SNAP benefits over time
8. Elimination of \$9.1M in nutrition education grants.



Data estimates on impact and implementation timeline

Populations, communities, and sectors facing highest potential impacts from cuts to SNAP:

- Households newly subject to strict work requirements:
 - Adults 55-65
 - Households with children over 14
- Communities losing geographic waivers exempting households from strict work requirements, including but not limited to:
 - Western MA
 - Central MA
 - Southeastern MA
 - Cape Cod & Islands
 - Merrimack Valley - Lowell, Lawrence
 - North Shore – Revere, Saugus, Lynn, Salem, Gloucester
- Immigrants, their families, and communities
- Local food economies – farmers, producers, retailers
- Emergency food systems (food banks & pantries, grassroots food access organizations, congregate meal sites)

Quantifying the impacts:

99,000

People newly subject to strict work requirements

9,500

Immigrants at risk of losing eligibility

\$447M

Potential costs shifted to Massachusetts for SNAP benefits and administrative costs

Governor Healey launched Anti-Hunger Task Force to address harmful SNAP cuts



Governor Healey issued an [Executive Order](#) in July, forming the Anti-Hunger Task Force to respond to federal cuts and their impact on residents of Massachusetts.

Task Force Objectives:

- Provide recommendations for mitigating the direct and indirect impacts of federal SNAP cuts and program changes to Massachusetts;
- Initiate and deepen collaboration among public, private, and nonprofit sectors for alleviating hunger and food insecurity, with a specific focus on those communities and populations most impacted by federal action;
- Explore opportunities for partnership and collaboration across northeastern states, including New England and New York;
- Provide recommendations for long-term, sustainable solutions for mitigating hunger and food insecurity, preserving food systems, and bolstering local economies through cross-cutting initiatives, including public-private partnerships, coordinated state responses, and data-driven reforms to policies and practices.



Building on a strong foundation: A snapshot of some of the Massachusetts anti-hunger initiatives



SNAP Healthy Incentives Program

Statewide supplement to SNAP EBT purchases for fruits and vegetables purchased at farmers' markets generating revenue for local farmers and bolstering health among residents.

Universal Free School Meals

Statewide funding to provide free breakfast and lunch to every K-12 student in the Commonwealth to reduce food insecurity among families with children and improve childhood outcomes.

Food Security Infrastructure Grants

Grant program that supports projects that improve local food distribution, strengthen the food supply chain, expand food access, and support emergency preparedness

Make Hunger History Campaign

Groundbreaking initiative to end hunger in Massachusetts through cross-sector collaborative of over 300 organizations statewide.

Food banks and food pantries

Place-based resources supporting neighbors in every community with emergency resources through state investment in the Massachusetts Emergency Food Assistance Program.

Working Groups



Working groups provide opportunities for Task Force members and other experts to develop recommendations focused on specific areas impacted by federal SNAP cuts and present to the larger Task Force for consideration.



Increasing access to food assistance for directly impacted populations

Goal: Provide recommendations for initiatives, including but not limited to, supporting residents at risk of losing SNAP with connections to nutrition assistance programs and access to food through partnerships with local food banks, pantries, and food access organizations.

Sub-work groups: Families with children, older adults, people with disabilities



Building rural resiliency and sustaining local food systems

Goal: Provide recommendations that address challenges in rural communities disproportionately impacted by SNAP cuts and identify opportunities to support local food systems.



Funding opportunities & scaling solutions: Philanthropy & advocacy

Goal: Provide recommendations to maximize funding opportunities and support sustainable solutions for ongoing challenges created by SNAP cuts.

Listening Sessions



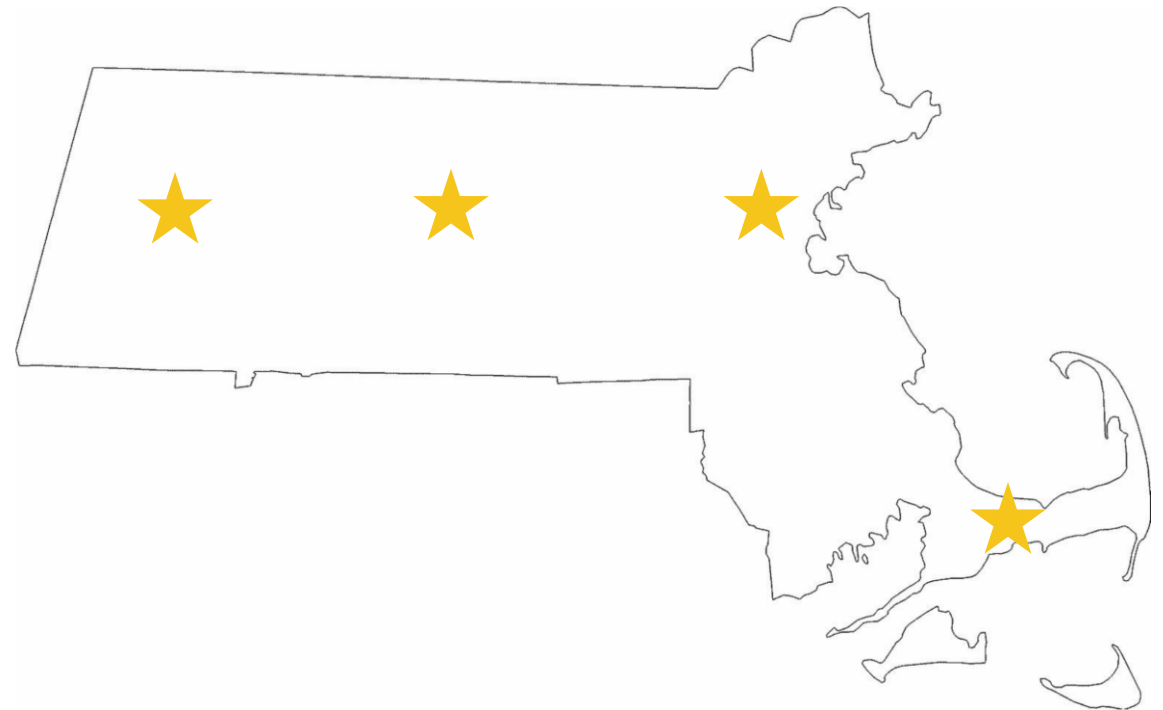
Listening sessions across the Commonwealth will provide Task Force and working group members the opportunity to hear from people with lived expertise as well as local organizations and leaders to inform recommendations.

Exact dates and locations to be determined.

In-person listening sessions will focus on the following regions:

- Western MA
- Central MA
- Greater Boston
- Cape and the Islands

A virtual listening session will be open to participants from any region of the Commonwealth.





Potential areas of focus for listening sessions:

Impact of cuts:	Strategies to address:	Resources to explore:
Access to benefits/benefit navigation	Cliff effects	Collaboration and engagement opportunities across providers
Impacted populations (seniors, working families, immigrants, low-income residents, children)	Client communications	Community solutions & alternatives for people losing SNAP (mutual aid, pay-what-you-can, alternative economies)
Emergency food assistance systems	Barriers to SNAP access	Successful food access partnerships, practical supports & innovative models
Local food businesses, food system, farms	Stabilization of emergency food system	Regional coalitions w/ other states
Schools	Impact on immigrant communities	Incentives and resources for residents to grow their own food
Financial impact on resident budgets/ trade-offs	Navigation to available resources	Infrastructure grants for local food
Long-term effects on education, employment, health, and overall well-being	Connecting dots in the food system	Leveraging and increasing HIP accessibility
Residents losing both SNAP and Medicaid	Measuring impact	Creative local solutions to supplement SNAP like food rescue & bulk procurement
Loss of nutrition education	Impact on communities in Western MA	Frontline org capacity to provide edu on SNAP cuts
Private fundraising	Connecting people to state & fed benefits	Food system education
Access to fresh food, esp in summer months	Engaging farmers	Alternative federal nutrition programs filling gaps
Capacity of frontline organizations	Retaining SNAP customers	
Western MA, rural, and “gateway” cities	Resources for reducing payment error rates	
Gig and hourly workforce & economy	Best practices for working with community leaders and people impacted by cuts	



What we have heard from you and working group members thus far:

- Importance of grounding this work in data on need, impact, and outcomes on effective ways to reduce food insecurity and identifying new ways to collect and share data including opportunities for frontline service providers
- Food is a basic human right
- Task Force can play a role in addressing fragmentation of food security sector
- Need for a paradigm shift in how we think about the social safety net
- Task Force can be a model for bold, inclusive solutions to end hunger
- Recommendation to include nutrition security in the discussion
- Recommendation to expand rural resiliency focus to include urban, suburban, and per-urban resiliency to focus on food producers across all sizes, scale, and connections
- Concerning trends in food insecurity in older adult population and inadequacy of funds



Next Steps and Proposed Calendar

- August – Task Force kick-off meeting to initiate work, align on goals, discuss timeline, etc.
- September – Working Group meetings
- October – Full Task Force meeting to share updates, discuss listening sessions, etc.
- November – Working Group meetings
- December – Task Force meeting to review draft recommendations and report
- January – Submission of report and recommendations to the Governor

* Note: All dates TBD