



# City of Hutto

## Agenda

### **Diversity, Equity, Inclusion & Belonging Commission Tuesday, June 17, 2025 at 6:00 PM Executive Conference Room**

In accordance with the Texas Open Meetings Act this meeting agenda is posted for public information, continuously, for at least 72 hours prior to the scheduled time of the meeting on the bulletin board located on the exterior wall of the City Hall building at 500 West Live Oak, Hutto, Texas. This meeting agenda is also accessible via the Internet at [huttotx.gov](http://huttotx.gov)

#### **1. CALL SESSION TO ORDER**

#### **2. ROLL CALL**

#### **3. PUBLIC COMMENT**

Any citizen wishing to speak during public comment may do so after completing the required registration form. The purpose of this item is to allow the residents of Hutto and other interested persons an opportunity to address the City Council on agenda issues and on non-agenda issues that are a matter of the jurisdiction of the City Council (i.e., City policy or legislative issues). Non-agenda issues regarding daily operational or administrative matters should be first dealt with at the administrative level by calling City Hall at (512) 759-4839 during business hours. Each person providing public comment will be limited to 3 minutes.

Any citizen wishing to speak during public comment may do so after completing the required registration form. Written comments for this meeting may also be sent to [comments@huttotx.gov](mailto:comments@huttotx.gov) PRIOR to 4:00 pm on June 17, 2025. The email must include name, address, phone #, agenda item and email to be recognized properly. Written comments will be provided to City Council.

*(Note: The Texas Open Meetings Act, Texas Government Code, Chapter 551, prohibits the City Council from fully discussing, debating, or considering subjects for which public notice has not been given on the agenda. Issues that cannot be referred to the City Staff for action may be placed on the agenda of a future City Council Session.)*

#### **4. GENERAL COMMENTS FROM CITY STAFF**

4.1. 150th Celebration Committee

#### **5. GENERAL COMMENTS FROM CITY COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES**

#### **6. GENERAL COMMENTS FROM COMMISSION MEMBERS**

#### **7. OTHER BUSINESS**

7.1. Discussion and possible action on the reappointment of Commissioners Zepeda and Lewis.

7.2. Discussion and possible action on the appointment of a Co-Chair for the DEIB Commission.

7.3. Discussion and possible action on budget requests for Fiscal Year 2026.

7.4. Discussion and possible action in preparation for the July 17, 2025 City Council Worksession to include but not limited to updates to the Strategic Plan.

- 7.5. Consideration and possible action on the approval of the May 20, 2025 meeting minutes.
- 7.6. Discussion and possible action on proclamations for July-September.
- 7.7. Discussion on items for the next meeting (July 15, 2025)

**8. ADJOURNMENT**

**9. CERTIFICATION**

I certify that this notice of the June 17, 2025 Hutto Diversity and Inclusion Commission meeting was posted on the City of Hutto website and the City Hall bulletin board of the City of Hutto on DATE before 5:00 P.M.



Kristi Barnes

The City of Hutto is committed to comply with the Americans Disability Act. The Hutto City Council Chamber is wheelchair accessible. Request for reasonable special accommodations must be made 48 hours prior to the meeting. Please email the City Secretary's office at [City.Secretary@huttox.gov](mailto:City.Secretary@huttox.gov) or call (512) 759-4033 for assistance.

Priority Area 1 – Establish an ongoing sustainable structure for the continued DEIB work				
Work Item	Responsible	Target Date	Metric	Status
1-1 Establish a DEIB execution plan with metrics	DEIB Commission with Stan Kimer	Late June, 2025	Completed Y or N	Work started March 10 and 11 Will review at April 22 Commission meeting
1-2 Establish and train at least 3 focused working groups	Lead – Corina Zepeda (Stan can assist later). Interfaces needed	Decision and agreement March 2025	Completed Y or N	Y – completed Mar 10
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Veterans</li> <li>• Small Business</li> <li>• Senior Citizen</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Corina Zepeda (TBC)</li> <li>• Eric Bell &amp; Cory Denena</li> <li>• Susanne Caulfield</li> </ul>			
a) Define the groups with written goals and guidelines	Corina with Stan assisting	May, 2025	Completed Y or N	Stan researching and creating first pass in late April
b) Have a DEIB Commission liaison committed for each group	DEIB Commission	May 2025	Completed Y or N	
c) Announce groups to solicit volunteers, follow up with previously interested people	Commission chair with Communications	July / August 2025	Completed Y or N	
d) Kick off groups with initial education	DEIB Commission and Stan	September / Oct 2025	Completed Y or N	

1-3 Have at least one DEIB Commission Member attend each City Council meeting.	DEIB Commission	Report out at the end of each fiscal year	Increase year-to-year from 92% to 95%	
1-4 DEIB Forum to meet 2 times per year ...  a) Kickoff: Key staff leaders, Council Interfaces, and the DEIB Commission b) Second meeting – report out on progress	DEIB Commission chair to coordinate, vice-chair to assist	Jan, 2026  July, 2026	Two Forums held per year Y/N	
1-5 DEIB Commission to submit budget request	DEIB Commission chair to coordinate	June, 2025  Early Oct 2025	Was budget request submitted Y/N ?  Percentage of budget granted	
1-6 Work session with City Council	DEIB chair	First meeting July 2025 with the new execution plan and budget request	Meeting occurred Y / N?	
1-7 Public Presentation of DEIB Plan and status at City Council Meeting	DEIB chair	Aug / Sept 2025	Did this happen Y / N?	
1-8 Consider / recommend additional focused working groups	DEIB commission	Date TBD	Did this happen Y / N?	
1-9 Annual report from the DEIB Commission after reviewing progress of 3 initial groups	DEIB chair	January 2026	Did this happen Y / N?	

1-10 Propose an “ambassador program” as a way to keep former Commission members and interested citizens engaged to assist in initiatives	DEIB Commission Chair	July 2025	Is this approved and established Y/N?	
--	-----------------------	-----------	---------------------------------------	--

Notes about Priority Area 1:

- We need to have DEIB commission members to “sign up” to be a liaison to each of the future working groups.
- In the past, there has been discussion about establishing a Youth focus group to report to the city council, which may or may not be independent from the DEIB commission. We should encourage youth representation in the initial 3 working groups as well as considering establishing a youth working group in the next wave.
- We can set an internal metric of each commission member attending at least 3 City Council meetings each year.

<b>Priority Area 2 – Assure full public engagement with DEIB work</b>				
<b>Work Item</b>	<b>Responsible</b>	<b>Target Date</b>	<b>Metric</b>	<b>Status</b>
2-1 Hold 6 “listening posts” with current formally and informally established groups.	DEIB Commission – 2 members to attend each one	September 2025 - August 2026	Number of listening posts held and documented	
a) Develop listening post questions and a DEIB strategy presentation to share at listening post sessions	DEIB Commission – maybe a working session?	July / August 2025	Questions and Presentation completed Y/N	
2-2 Leverage and utilize next Hutto general citizen survey	Jacqueline with Kristi	Aug – Sept 2025		

a) Review and provide input on questions	Entire DEIB commission	After survey is made available	Did this happen Y / N?	
b) Assist in getting the word out to increase participation and provide assistance			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li># or pct of completed surveys</li> <li>% increase since previous</li> </ul>	
c) Review results and make recommendations and adjustments to DEIB plan	DEIB Commission	2 months after results are published (March – April 2026)	Did we issue something Y / N?	
2-3 Have a written “committed to” DEIB Communications Plan	Commission Chair with City Comms leader	October, 2025	Is the plan done Y / N?	
2-4 Continue with DEIB updates on the city of Hutto website per the communications plan	Commission Chair with City Comms Leader	Review progress against the communications plan twice per year (Feb . Aug)	Report progress Y / N?	

Notes about priority area 2:

- Need to be very defined about the exact questions we will ask at the Listening Posts – more focus on what is needed / what can we do better with solutions so it is not just a “complain and vent” session.
- Possible groups for listening posts include: Black Families of Hutto, Hispanic Group, LGBTQ+, Teens, (White) Men, All people who don’t feel included

Priority Area 3 – Assure DEIB engagement in internal city practices				
Work Item	Responsible	Target Date	Metric	Status
3-1 Have the City Manager report out what they are currently doing DEIB-wise and what they plan to add (yearly)	Commission Chair to coordinate with James Earp	November 2025	Was this done Y / N?	Initial DEIB strategic planning and education session held with senior leadership team 3/10/2025
3-2 Continue to have key functional areas attend DEIB Commission meetings to discuss DEIB progress in their areas	Commission Chair to determine with Kristi and invite areas.	Throughout year – need to determine applicable functional areas	X number of meeting per year with functional areas.  Documentable progress across each area	
3-3 Inclusive Recruiting Training held with Recruiting team and with all hiring managers	Stan Kimer with Irene Talioaga	April / May 2025	Was this done Y / N?  % of hiring managers attending  Satisfaction with training	Recruiting team training held on April 8.  Managers training held on April 21 and May 1 – YES  Session evaluation sent to Irene
3-3.1 Feedback on Recruiting Process	Stan Kimer to provide a statement to	By June 13	Was this done Y/N	

	Commission Chair and cc Irene T.			
--	-------------------------------------	--	--	--

Notes about priority area 3:

- Stan Kimer held a 4-hour workshop with the city senior leadership team on March 10 which ended with participants starting to develop DEIB plans for their functional areas.
- Possible functional areas to invite to a DEIB Commission meeting for review and discussion may include: Communications, Development Services, Economic Dev, HR, Library, Parks and Rec, Projects, Public Safety
- The DEIB Commission has minimal responsibility for this priority, but can make recommendations to city leadership including:
  - Recommending that each function leader include some DEIB information in their annual reports
  - DEIB training for every manager / supervisor
  - DEIB training for all employees
  - City internship program focused on underserved youth
  - Employee mentorship / career & skills development program
  - Multi-cultural focuses recruiting ads
  - Analyze city employee demographic data vis-à-vis resident demographics

<b>Priority Area 4 – Provide a DEIB focus on economic growth and empowerment</b>				
<b>Work Item</b>	<b>Responsible</b>	<b>Target Date</b>	<b>Metric</b>	<b>Status</b>
4-1 Hold initial meeting with Cheney Gamboa to review suggested plan	Corina and Eric Bell with Cheney	July 2025	Mtg held Y/N?  Possible revisions made to plans suggested by Cheney	

4-2 Establish a formal liaison between the DEIB Commission and the Hutto Chamber of Commerce	Corina has volunteered	Aug / Sept 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Liaison established Y/N</li> <li>• # of mtgs per year with Chamber</li> </ul>	
4-3 Help establish a supplier diversity program  a) Initial meeting with procurement to review trends  b) Work to assist in setting a more formal program  c) Workshops on how to do business with Hutto including assistance	TBD – Commission Liaison with Cheney and procurement leader	TBD	Mtg held? Y / N?  Program set up Y/N  # of workshops held  FUTURE – pct of business with diverse suppliers	
4-4 Feature Hutto small businesses on Hutto website	Part of comm plan – Commission Chair with comms mgr	Start after plan established 4Q (Oct – Dec) 2025	# of small business stories per year	
4-5 Hold workshops for small businesses (general how to start and run a business & how to do business with Hutto)	DEIB Commission with Cheney and procurement	TBD – dependent on bandwidth	Number of workshops held  Number of attendees at workshops	

4-6 Revisit how to leverage “Open for All”	Eric and Cory	Oct – Nov 2025	Plan established for this	
4-7 Consider a youth entrepreneur program (check to see if something exists so we can help promote)	TDB	TBD – – dependent on bandwidth	# of youth entrepreneur businesses formed	

Notes about priority area 4:

- Staff liaison will be Cheney Gamboa, Director of Economic Development
- Additional staff liaison – Procurement Manager
- There should be strong linkage with the Small Business Working Group to provide ongoing input to plan
- Consider connecting and leveraging Hutto Community Foundation and other similar groups especially with youth entrepreneurs
- Discuss with Cheney other DEIB focused items that may be required by larger companies looking to relocate or build a plant here

<b>Priority Area 5 – Continue to grow a culture of community inclusion and belonging</b>				
<b>Work Item</b>	<b>Responsible</b>	<b>Target Date</b>	<b>Metric</b>	<b>Status</b>
5-1) Invite citizen groups to attend the annual public presentation of DEIB Plan and status at City Council Meeting (see item 1.7)	All Commission Members	Aug / Sept 2025	Number of citizen group attendees	
5-2) Continue with DEIB focused proclamations throughout the year	All commission members researching	Currently ongoing	Y% of proclamations	

	and working with Kristi and the comms leader on proclamations		recommended by the commission occur	
a) Add feedback link for comments that would go to the DEIB commission.	Commission Chair working with Kristi and/or comms manager to add feedback link	Sept 2025 (after website refresh)	Link added Y/N? # of hits on each proclamation	
5-3) Review internet resources for residents page for completeness and ease of use	Susanne with Kristi	Oct 2025	Review held Y/N Report on review incl recommendations	
5-4) Consider producing a printed resource guide since not everyone has web access	Susanne to take the lead with Kristi	1Q/2026?	Printed resource created and available Y/N	
5-5) re-igniting the “You belong in Hutto” campaign and theme	DEIB commission with Kristi & Comms Mgr	Sept / Oct 2025	Campaign relaunched Y/N Belongingness metric from resident survey	

Notes about priority area 5:

- For 5.1, should we consider having a mechanism to collect feedback on the plan from people who attended?
- Key city liaison will be Kristi Barnes, Community & Culture Officer

- Other items to consider to add to plan are:
  - Tracking language translation progress
  - Resident feedback on the inclusiveness of various Hutto events
  - Having a “We are Hutto” lecture series with diverse speakers



# City of Hutto

## Agenda

### Diversity, Equity, Inclusion & Belonging Commission Tuesday, May 20, 2025 at 6:00 PM Executive Conference Room

In accordance with the Texas Open Meetings Act this meeting agenda is posted for public information, continuously, for at least 72 hours prior to the scheduled time of the meeting on the bulletin board located on the exterior wall of the City Hall building at 500 West Live Oak, Hutto, Texas. This meeting agenda is also accessible via the Internet at [huttotx.gov](http://huttotx.gov)

**1. CALL SESSION TO ORDER: 6:03**

**2. ROLL CALL**

**2.1. Present: Commissioners: Coleman, Caulfield, Spoons**

**2.2. Absent: Bell, Zepeda, Denena, Lewis**

**2.3. Staff present: Kristi Barnes, Kristin Phillips**

**3. PUBLIC COMMENT**

Any citizen wishing to speak during public comment may do so after completing the required registration form. The purpose of this item is to allow the residents of Hutto and other interested persons an opportunity to address the City Council on agenda issues and on non-agenda issues that are a matter of the jurisdiction of the City Council (i.e., City policy or legislative issues). Non-agenda issues regarding daily operational or administrative matters should be first dealt with at the administrative level by calling City Hall at (512) 759-4839 during business hours. Each person providing public comment will be limited to 3 minutes.

Any citizen wishing to speak during public comment may do so after completing the required registration form. Written comments for this meeting may also be sent to [comments@huttotx.gov](mailto:comments@huttotx.gov) PRIOR to 4:00 pm on May 20, 2025. The email must include name, address, phone #, agenda item and email to be recognized properly. Written comments will be provided to City Council.

*(Note: The Texas Open Meetings Act, Texas Government Code, Chapter 551, prohibits the City Council from fully discussing, debating, or considering subjects for which public notice has not been given on the agenda. Issues that cannot be referred to the City Staff for action may be placed on the agenda of a future City Council Session.)*

**4. GENERAL COMMENTS FROM CITY STAFF:**

**4.1. Reminder about budget items, due July meeting**

**5. GENERAL COMMENTS FROM CITY COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES**

**5.1. N/A**

**6. GENERAL COMMENTS FROM COMMISSION MEMBERS**

**6.1. Tara Spoons will not renew her term expiring June 30, 2025.**

**7. OTHER BUSINESS**

7.1. Update from Hutto Public Library (Kristin Phillips, Director)

- Update ensued

7.2. Consideration and possible action on having a joint meeting with the Library Advisory Board on July 15, 2025.

- Motion: Coleman, second: Caulfield, passes 3-0

7.3. Consideration and possible action on the approval of the April 22, 2025 meeting

minutes.

- Motion: Coleman, Second: Caulfield, Motion passes 3-0

7.4. Consideration and possible action on the approval of proclamations for Juneteenth and Pride month.

- Motion: Coleman, second Spoons, passes 3-0

7.5. Review of updated Strategic Execution Plan

- Review ensued

Review upcoming proclamations for July, August, September 2025

- Commissioner Lewis and Commissioner Zepeda want to reup their term, need an item to vote on June meeting.
- Discussion and possible action on appointing an assistant chair.
- Consideration and possible action on budget requests.
  - Hosting a direct webpage for DEIB
  - Training
  - Education: Booklet of resources/engagement
  - You Belong in Hutto Campaign
  - Events (food drive?)
- Worksession items/prep for July 17<sup>th</sup> meeting (can also leave on for July 15<sup>th</sup>)

Open discussion of items for next meeting.

8. **ADJOURNMENT 7:40pm**

9. **CERTIFICATION**

I certify that this notice of the May 20, 2025 Hutto Diversity and Inclusion Commission meeting was posted on the City of Hutto website and the City Hall bulletin board of the City of Hutto on DATE before 5:00 P.M.



Kristi Barnes

The City of Hutto is committed to comply with the Americans Disability Act. The Hutto City Council Chamber is wheelchair accessible. Request for reasonable special accommodations must be made 48 hours prior to the meeting. Please email the City Secretary's office at [City.Secretary@huttox.gov](mailto:City.Secretary@huttox.gov) or call (512) 759-4033 for assistance.

## Hunger Awareness Month Proclamation

WHEREAS National Hunger Awareness Month encourages Americans to learn about who goes hungry, why they go hungry, and inspire people to get involved in ending hunger in the U.S.

WHEREAS hunger is an ongoing issue affecting millions of people in the U.S., with no single cause, but a combination of factors, including poverty, housing insecurity, environmental challenges, unemployment, economic inequality, and systemic barriers.

WHEREAS in 2022 and 2023, over 12.8% of U.S. households—impacting approximately 47 million people—experienced food insecurity, according to the USDA and Feeding America. This included 1 in 9 working-age veterans, 12.6 million senior citizens over age 50, and nearly 14 million children.

WHEREAS according to Feeding America’s 2023 Map the Meal Gap study, Texas has the highest food insecurity rate in the United States, at 17.6%, which represents around 5.4 million people, 31% of those being children. This has been an increase of 9% since 2022. Of those affected, approximately 60,000 reside in Williamson County, including the city of Hutto. The Texas rate dropped slightly in 2024, but 2025 saw it increase, although some sources now rank it second, next to California.

WHEREAS in 1964 President Lyndon B. Johnson, in his first State of the Union address, declared an “Unconditional War on Poverty,” later signing into law the Food Stamp Act, which established the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) as a permanent federal program, building upon its initial 1939 pilot.

WHEREAS, in 1983, under President Ronald Reagan, the Task Force on Food Assistance formally defined hunger in the U.S. as a social phenomenon in which individuals lack the means to obtain sufficient food.

WHEREAS in 1985 the USDA Economic Research Service began releasing statistics on household food security in the U.S.

WHEREAS in 1996, the United States participated in the World Food Summit which set a goal to reduce global hunger by half, by the year 2015. Economic downturns, policy shifts, and challenges such as poverty, unemployment, and rising food costs hindered significant progress toward this goal in the U.S.

WHEREAS in 2010, under President Barack Obama, the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act was signed into law, which improved child nutrition programs, including school meals, and also strengthened provisions for the Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program (SNAP).

WHEREAS in 2022, under President Joseph Biden, the National Strategy on Hunger, Nutrition, and Health was released, focusing on food access, affordability, and diet related to health issues. Its aim was to end hunger and improve nutrition in the U.S. by 2030.

WHEREAS the Fresh Food Act of 2024 introduced tax incentives and grants to support grocery stores and fresh food retailers in underserved communities, helping to close food access gaps.

WHEREAS addressing hunger requires a united effort from individuals, organizations, and policymakers to ensure equitable access to nutritious food and end food insecurity in our communities.

**NOW, THEREFORE**, we, the City Council of the City of Hutto, do hereby proclaim June 2025 as

### **Hunger Awareness Month**

in the City of Hutto and encourage all citizens to participate in initiatives to end hunger in our community.

**CITY OF HUTTO, TEXAS**

---

Mike Snyder, Mayor

WHEREAS the purpose of

The month of September is recognized by Feeding America and its member food banks, like Inter-Faith Food Shuttle, as Hunger Action Month; an initiative to raise awareness about hunger and inspire action within our communities.

June

June is National Hunger Awareness Month, which aims to address the struggle children face during the summer without school-provided meals. It encourages Americans to get educated about and involved in ending hunger in the US. As part of this awareness, more than 8,000 students across the country will participate in World Vision's 30 Hour Famine, experiencing hunger while raising funds to care for children who face this stark reality every day.

*National Hunger Awareness Month* is recognized in June. Its goal is to inspire individuals to participate in the fight against hunger. It also aims to teach people about who goes hungry and why. Hunger impacts more than eight hundred million people, according to the United Nation's [World Food Programme](#). Since 2020, the number of individuals considered severely food insecure has risen from 135 million across 53 countries, to 345 million people in 82 countries. Those who are food insecure lack access to enough nutritious food. This dramatic increase in the number of people who are food insecure has heightened the need for more discussions and education on hunger and what can be done to curtail the problem.

## Lyndon Johnson Declares an “Unconditional War on Poverty” (1964)

2022

1 in 9 working-age veterans are food insecure.

24% of active-duty service members were food insecure in 2020.

1.2 million low-income veterans use SNAP (formerly known as food stamps).

12.6 million people (10.4 percent) ages 50+ were food insecure in 2023, an uptick from 2022. Rates vary significantly from state to state and by demographics.

### Williamson County food insecurity by the numbers

- Insecurity rate: 10.1%
- Insecure population: 59,840 people
- Cost per meal: \$3.64
- Annual food budget shortfall: \$38,490,000

### Texas food insecurity by the numbers

- Insecurity rate: 13.7%
- Insecure population: 4,057,910 people
- Cost per meal: \$3.11
- Annual food budget shortfall: \$2,230,427,000

### Texas food insecure feeding america research

[The research conducted by Feeding America's Map the Meal Gap study reveals a significant food insecurity crisis in Texas. The study estimates that 5,366,440 Texans are facing food insecurity, with 1,673,600 of them being children. The average cost of a meal in Texas is \\$3.11, and the state is estimated to need \\$3,159,485,000 more per year to meet the food needs of those facing hunger. The North Texas Food Bank, for instance, reports a food insecurity rate of 14.2% in its service area, with a child food insecurity rate of 20.8%. The study emphasizes the urgent need for action to address the food insecurity crisis in Texas and beyond.](#)

WHEREAS hunger remains a persistent issue affecting millions across our nation, including vulnerable children, families, and seniors; and

WHEREAS food insecurity can have devastating impacts on health, education, and overall well-being, making it imperative that communities join together to address the root causes and find sustainable solutions; and

WHEREAS local organizations, food banks, and volunteers tirelessly work to combat hunger by providing essential resources, raising awareness, and advocating for policies that ensure equitable access to nutritious food; and

WHEREAS Hunger Awareness Month serves as a vital opportunity to educate, inspire action, and empower individuals to support initiatives that alleviate hunger and strengthen food security;

NOW, THEREFORE, I [Your Name or Official Title], do hereby proclaim [Month] as Hunger Awareness Month and call upon all residents to recognize the significance of this issue, support hunger relief efforts, and work toward a future where no one goes without nourishment and the dignity of a full meal.

Approximately 47 million people

[In 2023, approximately 47 million people in the United States lived in food insecure households, which includes nearly 14 million children. This represents an increase from previous years, highlighting a significant issue of food insecurity in the country.](#)

Absolutely! There are several major initiatives tackling hunger in the U.S. and Texas.

#### National Initiatives

- Feeding America: The largest hunger-relief organization in the U.S., partnering with food banks, pantries, and local programs to distribute food and advocate for policies that address food insecurity.
- U.S. Hunger: Focuses on meal packing events, food delivery, and data-driven approaches to address the root causes of hunger.
- WhyHunger: Works with grassroots organizations to build sustainable food systems and ensure access to nutritious food.

#### Texas-Specific Initiatives

- North Texas Food Bank (NTFB): Recently launched the *Fulfilling Futures* initiative, a five-year plan to address hunger at its roots through food distribution, healthcare partnerships, and wrap-around services.
- THRIVE Market in Fort Worth: A local initiative providing free food and hygiene products to students and families in need, particularly in food desert areas.
- Baylor Collaborative on Hunger and Poverty: A research-driven organization working to develop scalable solutions for hunger relief in Texas.

Texas has one of the highest rates of food insecurity in the country, with over 1.3 million people in North Texas alone experiencing hunger. Many of these initiatives aim to provide immediate relief while also addressing systemic issues like rising food costs and economic instability.

Would you like me to highlight any of these in your proclamation?

Great question, Sue! Here are the latest food insecurity rates:

- Texas: The food insecurity rate is 17.6%, affecting 5.4 million people. Texas has the highest food insecurity rate in the nation, with over 1.3 million people in the Dallas-Fort Worth area alone experiencing hunger.
- United States: The national food insecurity rate is 14.3%, meaning 47.4 million people face hunger. This is the highest rate in over a decade.

You can find these figures from organizations like Feeding America, which publishes the *Map the Meal Gap* study annually. The USDA Economic Research Service also tracks food security trends. If you need more details, I can help you navigate their reports!

#### [Food Security in the U.S. - Key Statistics & Graphics | Economic Research Service](#)

Food insecure—At times during the year, these households were uncertain of having or unable to acquire enough food to meet the needs of all their members because they had insufficient money or other resources for food. Food-insecure households include those with low food security and very low food security.

- 13.5 percent (18.0 million) of U.S. households were food insecure at some time during 2023.

- The 2023 prevalence of food insecurity was statistically significantly higher than the 12.8 percent (17.0 million) in 2022.

Low food security—These food-insecure households obtained enough food to avoid substantially disrupting their eating patterns or reducing food intake by using a variety of coping strategies, such as eating less varied diets, participating in Federal food assistance programs, or getting food from community food pantries.

- 8.4 percent (11.2 million) of U.S. households had low food security in 2023.
- The 2023 prevalence of low food security was statistically significantly higher than 7.7 percent (10.2 million) in 2022.

Very low food security—In these food-insecure households, normal eating patterns of one or more household members were disrupted and food intake was reduced at times during the year because they had insufficient money or other resources for food.

- 5.1 percent (6.8 million) of U.S. households had very low food security at some time during 2023.
- The 2023 prevalence of very low food security was unchanged from the 5.1 percent (6.8 million) in 2022.

#### Food Security Status of U.S. Households with Children in 2023

Among U.S. households with children under age 18:

- 82.1 percent (29.7 million) of households with children were food secure in 2023.
- Household food insecurity affected 17.9 percent (6.5 million) of households with children in 2023. In some of these food-insecure households only adults were food insecure, while in other households children also experienced food insecurity.
- In 9.0 percent (3.3 million) of households with children, only adults were food insecure.
- Both children and adults were food insecure in 8.9 percent of households with children (3.2 million households).
- Children are usually protected from substantial reductions in food intake even in households with very low food security. Nevertheless, in about 1.0 percent of households with children (374,000 households), one or more child also experienced reduced food intake and disrupted eating patterns at some time during the year.

## How Many People Lived in Food-insecure Households?

In 2023:

- 47.4 million people lived in food-insecure households.
- 12.2 million adults lived in households with very low food security.
- 7.2 million children lived in food-insecure households in which children, along with adults, were food insecure.
- 841,000 children (1.2 percent of the Nation's children) lived in households in which one or more child experienced very low food security.

### Trends in Prevalence Rates

The 2023 prevalence of food insecurity (13.5 percent) was statistically significantly higher than the 2022 prevalence of 12.8 percent and significantly higher than the food insecurity prevalence observed from 2015 through 2022 and statistically lower than the levels observed from 2010 through 2014. Regarding earlier annual trends, a statistically significant decline in the prevalence of food insecurity from 11.1 percent in 2018 to 10.5 percent occurred in 2019 and food insecurity was unchanged at 10.5 percent in 2020. For the first time, in 2019, food insecurity was statistically significantly below the 11.1 percent pre-recession level of 2007. Year-to-year declines in food insecurity from 2014–15, 2016–17, and 2017–18 were also statistically significant. Some year-to-year changes were not statistically significant; that is, there was no real change, or the changes were within the range that could occur from sampling variation. The cumulative decline from 2011 (14.9 percent) to 2014 (14.0 percent) was statistically significant. In the previous decade, food insecurity increased from 10.7 percent in 2001 to 11.9 percent in 2004, declined to about 11 percent in 2005–07, then increased significantly in 2008 (to 14.6 percent), and remained essentially unchanged (that is, the difference was not statistically significant) at that level in 2009 and 2010.

The prevalence of very low food security in 2023 (5.1 percent) was statistically unchanged from the prevalence in 2022 (5.1 percent) but was statistically significantly higher than the annual prevalence from 2017 through 2021. The prevalence of very low food security in 2023 was not statistically significantly different from that observed in 2015–16 but was statistically significantly lower than that observed in 2011–2014. Statistically significant year-to-year declines in very low food security occurred from 2014–15 and 2016–17. The prevalence of very low food security was essentially unchanged from 2011 (5.7 percent) through 2014. The prevalence of very low food security was also 5.7 percent in 2008 and

2009. Before 2008, the prevalence of very low food security increased from 3.3 percent in 2001 to 3.9 percent in 2004 and remained essentially unchanged through 2007 (4.1 percent).

TX	11,306,000	4,776	16.9	*	0.93	6.4
----	------------	-------	------	---	------	-----

## Hunger and Food Insecurity in the US: History, Correlates and Dynamics

[The history of hunger in the US over the last century is marked by significant changes in understanding and addressing the issue. From the Great Depression to the post-World War II boom, the perception of food security changed. The 1969 White House Conference on Food, Nutrition and Health highlighted the need for a national hunger emergency, leading to the establishment of programs to combat food insecurity. Despite improvements, the U.S. faced a food crisis in the mid-1970s, driven by rising food prices. The 2010s saw a resurgence in food insecurity, particularly among students and during the COVID-19 pandemic. Public and private interventions, such as agricultural policy changes and community support, have been crucial in addressing hunger and food insecurity. The U.S. remains a leader in food affordability but faces challenges in reducing hunger and malnutrition.](#)

## [USDA+2](#)

### Causes

[\[edit\]](#)

Hunger and food insecurity in the United States is both a symptom and consequence of a complex combination of factors, including but not limited to [poverty](#), [housing insecurity](#), [environmental justice](#), [unemployment](#), [economic inequality](#), [systemic racism](#), and national policies and protections.<sup>[24]</sup> There is not a single cause attributed to hunger and there is much debate over who or what is responsible for the prevalence of hunger in the United States.

The USDA Economic Research Service began releasing statistics on household food security in the U.S. in 1985.<sup>[171]</sup>

In the 1980s under Reagan's administration, the Task Force on Food Assistance formally defined hunger in the US for the first time, stating it was a social phenomenon where one does not have the means to obtain sufficient food.<sup>[172]</sup> This differentiated it from the

medical definition of hunger, and meant that people could be considered hungry even with no physical conditions. Starting in 1995, a Food Security Supplement was added to the census to gather data on how many Americans struggle to acquire food, a survey that remains in place to this day. In 2006, a review of USDA hunger measurements led to the separate definitions of "food insecure" and "hungry", and created different levels of food insecurity based on data measurements.<sup>[172]</sup>

In 1996, the Welfare Reform Act was passed, making EBT the mode of delivering benefits to participants in the Food Stamp Program. This act also gave states more control over administering the program, and added limitations to who was eligible for benefits.<sup>[173]</sup>

What Is Child Food Insecurity?

Child food insecurity occurs when children lack the resources needed to enable dependable access to enough food for a healthy, active lifestyle. Food-insecure families are often unable to afford nutritious foods in sufficient quantity for all family members.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) [identifies four general levels of food security](#) from high to very low. Children in households with very low food security may have to skip meals or go a whole day without eating due to limited money or resources. Conversely, everyone in a food secure household has consistent access to healthy meals and no one worries about affording groceries or running out of food.

While most American households (87%) are food secure, child food insecurity continues to be a major concern in the United States. In 2022, 17% of all households with children — representing 13.4 million kids — were grappling with food insecurity, [according to the USDA](#). In some of these households, only adults were food insecure. In other households, children were directly impacted.

The USDA estimates that 44.2 million people lived in food insecure households nationwide in 2022. Since these estimates do not include homeless families, the actual number of children impacted by food insecurity is even larger.

Food insecurity has far reaching implications for children, families and society as a whole. Families who have difficulties buying adequate food also struggle to pay for housing, child care, health care and other basic needs. These families sometimes have to make difficult choices between buying food, making rent or paying for medical bills, for example. Food insecurity is a reflection of larger economic and societal inequities, with families of color disproportionately affected. Food insecurity in children warrants particular attention as it is linked to numerous adverse outcomes that can have lasting effects, including developmental disruptions, school problems and physical and mental health issues. Fortunately,

family food insecurity can be reduced by [strengthening safety net programs](#), improving household financial stability and addressing systemic inequities.

### Causes of Child Hunger in America

While many factors contribute to child hunger and food insecurity, [Feeding America](#) — a nonprofit network of 200 food banks nationwide — identifies common causes as:

- Poverty, unemployment and low wages, which affect the ability to pay for food and other basic living expenses. Even if parents are working full-time, they may not earn enough to afford adequate food. Unsurprisingly, individuals living in poverty have the highest rates of food insecurity. In 2022, [37% of households living below the federal poverty level were also food insecure](#), compared to only 7% of those earning 185% or more of the poverty level (which was \$29,678 for a family of two adults and two children in 2022), according to the USDA.
- A lack of affordable housing, which causes families to pay higher housing costs and leaves fewer funds available for food and other needs.
- Systemic racism and discrimination, which are root causes of economic disadvantages for people of color. For decades, American Indian or Alaska Native, Black, Latino and multiracial households have been [more likely to live in poverty and experience food insecurity](#).

USDA's Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) works to end hunger and obesity through the administration of 15 federal nutrition assistance programs including WIC, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), and school meals.

What are the causes?

There is no one root cause of food insecurity. Many contributing factors can be attributed to the growing wealth gap, including unemployment, a lack of affordable housing, and varying income levels. In addition, some households lack adequate transportation, or they may have a disability that limits mobility, both of which can make accessing nutritious food more difficult.

Is food insecurity a problem?

For households experiencing food insecurity, they often spend upwards of 27% of their income on food. Worrying about where their next meal will come from adds pressure and anxiety to households who are already struggling to budget and prioritize their monthly expenses. For example, in [2021](#), 8.1% of Coloradans reported not eating as much as they thought they should because they could not afford food.

At Archway, we recognize that food insecurity affects thousands of Coloradans, including our residents. Through our second annual Community Needs Assessment, 47.9% of respondents reported that they are on food stamps, while 28.4% reported that they are in need of food assistance. This year, our Community Needs Assessment reflects 68% of our total residents.

Food insecurity has changed dramatically over the past century, shaped by economic shifts, government policies, and social movements.

#### 1920s vs. Today

- 1920s: Food insecurity was largely tied to economic instability, particularly in rural areas. Many families relied on subsistence farming, and food shortages were common during economic downturns. There were few formal government programs to address hunger, and private charities like soup kitchens played a major role in relief efforts.
- Today: Food insecurity is more widespread and complex, affecting urban and rural populations alike. While government programs like SNAP (formerly food stamps) and food banks provide assistance, rising costs of living, wage stagnation, and supply chain disruptions have contributed to higher rates of hunger.

#### Key Differences

- Government Involvement: In the 1920s, food relief was largely handled by private charities. Today, federal programs like SNAP, WIC, and school meal programs play a significant role in addressing food insecurity.
- Economic Factors: The Great Depression (1929) led to extreme food shortages, but today, inflation and wage disparities are major contributors to food insecurity.
- Food Distribution: Advances in transportation and food production have improved access to food, but disparities remain, especially in food deserts where fresh produce is scarce.

That contradiction is striking, isn't it? Texas is an economic powerhouse, leading in industries like energy, technology, and agriculture—yet food insecurity remains alarmingly high. The reasons behind this disparity are complex, but here are a few key factors:

#### Why Texas Has High Food Insecurity Despite Its Wealth

- Income Inequality: Texas has a high concentration of wealth, but a significant percentage of the population earns low wages. Many workers—especially in service industries—struggle to afford essentials like housing, healthcare, and food.

- **Cost of Living & Inflation:** Rising costs, particularly in housing and food, have outpaced wage growth. Families often have to make tough choices between paying rent or buying groceries.
- **Rural & Urban Food Deserts:** Many areas in Texas—both urban and rural—lack access to affordable, nutritious food. Grocery stores are scarce, and convenience stores often stock mostly processed items with little fresh produce.
- **Limited Social Safety Nets:** While Texas has programs like SNAP and food banks, there are gaps in coverage. Many eligible families don't receive benefits due to bureaucratic barriers or stigma around seeking assistance.
- **Immigration & Demographics:** Texas has a large immigrant population, many of whom work in low-wage jobs with little financial security. Undocumented individuals often have limited access to aid programs.
- **Disaster Impact:** Natural disasters like hurricanes and extreme heat events disproportionately affect low-income communities, creating cycles of economic hardship that exacerbate food insecurity.

Texas' food insecurity rate isn't just a statistic—it's a reflection of broader systemic issues. Your proclamation can emphasize how addressing hunger means tackling root causes like wage disparities, housing instability, and food accessibility.

Do you want to incorporate a call to action for Texas lawmakers or communities in the proclamation? That might give it even more impact.

Hunger Action Month was established by Feeding America in 2008. Feeding America is a nonprofit organization dedicated to fighting hunger across the United States. It was originally founded as America's Second Harvest in 1979 by John van Hengel, a pioneer in food banking.

Would you like to learn more about how Feeding America has impacted hunger relief efforts? I can share some interesting insights!

Absolutely! Feeding America has made a significant impact on hunger relief efforts in the U.S. Here are a few key insights:

- **Map the Meal Gap Study:** Feeding America conducts an annual study that provides local-level estimates of food insecurity. The latest report highlights that nearly 20% of children across the country experience food insecurity, with some rural counties reaching 50%.

- **Texas Leads in Hunger:** According to Feeding America's research, Texas has surpassed California as the state with the highest hunger rates. The Dallas-Fort Worth area ranks third among U.S. metro regions for food insecurity, affecting 1.3 million people.
- **Strategic Hunger Relief Plans:** The North Texas Food Bank, a Feeding America partner, has launched a five-year strategic plan to meet at least 80% of food needs in every ZIP code it serves.

Feeding America continues to advocate for policies that support food assistance programs and works with local food banks to distribute meals efficiently. Would you like to explore ways to contribute to hunger relief efforts? I'd be happy to help!

This week, both the North Texas Food Bank and the Tarrant Area Food Bank have shone a spotlight on a troubling Texas trend of food insecurity and hunger.

A newly released study from Feeding America's [\*Map the Meal Gap\*](#) shows that Texas leads the country in hunger, having surpassed California.

And the DFW area is the third-highest metro region in the country when it comes to hunger.

Around 1.3 million people in North Texas are hungry, which is up 12% from last year.

More than 60% of our local hunger is in two counties – Dallas and Tarrant counties. One-third of those experiencing food insecurity are children locally.

“It costs more money to buy food, and we’re seeing people – children, families, seniors coming to us for the first time because of the rising food cost,” Martha Sotello with the Tarrant Area Food Bank said.

Food banks are also watching a congressional proposal that could cut the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) by \$290 billion. It's estimated that SNAP helps around 42 million Americans purchase produce and groceries.

SNAP is federally funded and administered by states. Some members of Congress say the changes would force states to shoulder more of the costs. But some anti-hunger advocates fear the funding will just be lost, and families will suffer.

Yes, Texas has the highest number of food-insecure households in the U.S., with 13.7% of households experiencing food insecurity.

California and New York also have significant food insecurity rates:

- California: 9.6% of households face food insecurity.
- New York: 10.3% of households experience food insecurity.

While Texas leads in total numbers, states like Arkansas (15%) and Mississippi (15.3%) have even higher percentages of food-insecure households. Rising costs and economic challenges continue to impact food access across the country.

Texas is one of the wealthiest states in the U.S., but it's not the richest. California holds the top spot with a GDP of \$4.1 trillion, followed by Texas at \$2.7 trillion and New York at \$2.3 trillion. However, if you're looking at GDP per capita, Texas ranks lower, with states like New York, Massachusetts, and Washington having higher GDP per capita figures.

Texas still has a massive economy, driven by industries like energy, technology, and manufacturing. It's a powerhouse, just not the absolute richest. What made you curious about this?

📄 Feeding America leads the movement to end hunger by providing meals, advocating for stronger food assistance programs, and conducting research on food insecurity.

- The Fresh Food Act of 2024 introduces tax incentives and grants to encourage grocery stores and fresh food retailers to serve underserved communities, helping to close food access gaps.
- The Biden-Harris Administration's National Strategy on Hunger, Nutrition, and Health aims to end hunger and reduce diet-related diseases by 2030 through improved food access, affordability, and nutrition education.