



Eastern Illinois
Foodbank



Key Findings of the Hunger Study 2014

One in five individuals across eastern Illinois turn to the Eastern Illinois Foodbank.

The Eastern Illinois Foodbank, through its network of 220 agencies and programs provides food assistance to neighbors in our community.

116,800 individuals in eastern Illinois, including 38,544 children and 12,848 seniors.

- Every week, the Eastern Illinois Foodbank member network serves 12,700 individuals.
- Thirty-three percent of client households have a child under age 18.
- Among individuals served, 12 percent are black, 10 percent are Latino, and 70 percent are white.

Low wages, underemployment and unemployment may drive need for food assistance.

- More than half of client households (54%) report at least one employed person at some point in the past year.
- Among households with an employed person, the individual with the longest employment duration is more likely to be employed part-time (59%) than full-time (41%).
- Nearly three-quarters of Eastern Illinois Foodbank households (72%) live at or below the poverty line.

Many individuals served by the Eastern Illinois Foodbank care educated beyond high school while many adult clients are currently enrolled in school.

- Seventy-nine percent of households have a member with more than a high school education.
- One in three adult clients have more than a high school education.

For the first time, the Hunger in America study asked about U.S military service.

- Nearly one in five (17%) of households served by the Eastern Illinois Foodbank network has at least one member *that has ever served* in the military.
- 5.6% percent of households served by the Eastern Illinois Foodbank network have at least one member *who is currently serving* in the U.S. military Active Duty, Reserves or National Guard.

Feeding America's client population faces significant health challenges, including diabetes and high blood pressure.

- Half (50 percent) of client households with seniors have a member(s) with high blood pressure, and nearly one-third (29 percent) have a member(s) with diabetes.
- 82 percent of client households report purchasing the cheapest food available, even if they knew it wasn't the healthiest option, in an effort to provide enough food for their household.

Eastern Illinois Foodbank client households frequently face difficult decisions in an effort to ensure they have sufficient food.

- Client households often survive on limited budgets and are confronted with choices between paying for food and paying for other essentials. These dilemmas can put households in the position of choosing between competing necessities.
- In addition to charitable nutrition assistance programs and making spending tradeoffs, many households also engage in a number of other coping strategies in order to feed their families.
 - Consuming food beyond its expiration date (56%)
 - Purchasing food in dented or damaged packages (52%)
 - Watering down food or drink (42%)
 - Almost half of all client households (48%) receive help from family and friends
 - More than one in three households (40%) reports selling personal property in order to obtain enough food for their household.
 - While growing food in a home or community garden is the least common coping strategy it remains a strategy employed by more than one in three households (34%)

About Eastern Illinois Foodbank member agencies and programs

- 57.8 percent of the Eastern Illinois Foodbank's member agencies employ no paid staff/are operated exclusively by volunteers.
- Across the 220 member agencies and programs, a median of 5 volunteers provided a median of 22 volunteer hours per week. This equates to a median of 1,200 hours annually per program.

A full executive summary of the findings is available at on the Eastern Illinois Foodbank's [website](#). The full national report is available on Feeding America's website at [Hunger in America 2014](#).

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Eastern Illinois Foodbank works to alleviate hunger in eastern Illinois through cooperation with a network of food pantries, agencies and other programs. The Foodbank distributes donated and discounted food throughout a 14-county service area in cooperation with 220 member agencies and programs. Through these agencies, the Foodbank provides meals to more than 57,000 men, women and children each month. The Eastern Illinois Foodbank is a member of Feeding America, Feeding Illinois and the United Way of Champaign County. Visit www.eifoodbank.org

Eastern Illinois Foodbank is a nationwide network of 200 food banks that leads the fight against hunger in the United States. Together, we provide food to more than 46 million people through food pantries and meal programs in communities throughout America. Eastern Illinois Foodbank also supports programs that improve food security among the people we serve; educates the public about the problem of hunger; and advocates for legislation that protects people from going hungry. Individuals, charities, businesses and government all have a role in ending hunger. Donate. Volunteer. Advocate. Educate. Together we can solve hunger. Visit <http://www.feedingamerica.org/>. Find us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/FeedingAmerica or follow us on Twitter at www.twitter.com/FeedingAmerica.