



## Highlights from 2022

In 2022, we saw huge gains in the fight against hunger in New Jersey, including the passage of a comprehensive package of anti-hunger bills, making thousands more NJ children eligible for free meals at school, increasing SNAP outreach throughout the state and providing a state SNAP supplement that ensures a higher minimum benefit amount for seniors and people with disabilities. This package of bills was largely informed by recommendations made in HFNJ's 2021 SNAP report, [\*Boosting SNAP: Eliminating Barriers to Participation\*](#).

### Legislative highlights

- Creation of a state SNAP supplement, increasing the minimum benefit to \$50 per month, giving households more purchasing power to buy healthy, nutritious food.
- The Working-Class Families' Anti-Hunger Act, which gives about 25,000 more New Jersey children access to free school meals, ensuring more students are fed, focused and ready to learn.
- Legislation expanded the Department of Human Services' SNAP Navigator Program, adding SNAP navigators from eight new agencies to assist in SNAP outreach in underserved communities across the state, with another agency beginning service in January 2023.

### Other State Advocacy

- HFNJ was selected to participate in Assembly Speaker Coughlin's newly formed Food Security Working Group, that aims to find legislative solutions to food insecurity across the state.
- HFNJ worked with our national partner, the Food Research Action Center (FRAC), and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) on their NJ Food Security Initiative Project, organizing and facilitating focus groups that directly informed FRAC's 2022 report, [\*Hunger and Its Solutions in New Jersey\*](#).

- In partnership with the NJ Council of County Colleges, HFNJ administered a survey of community colleges across the state to assess food security initiatives on campuses and how schools communicate with students about SNAP. HFNJ co-convened a statewide conference on college hunger with Rutgers University, featuring Governor Phil Murphy, Assembly Speaker Craig Coughlin, and Higher Education Secretary Brian Bridges.
- HFNJ also convened meetings of the NJ Hunger Free Campus Network, a coalition of faculty, staff, and students from two and four-year colleges across the state working together to develop solutions to campus food insecurity. Working with this coalition, HFNJ developed a communication tool kit for colleges to use to inform students about SNAP.
- HFNJ convened the SNAP Alliance, a statewide coalition of SNAP outreach staff working together to identify barriers to SNAP and to strategize solutions.

### Federal Hunger Solutions

- The White House Conference on Hunger, Nutrition, and Health, the first of its kind since 1969, pushed hunger to the forefront of the national conversation this year. In preparation for the conference, HFNJ served as a panelist in two listening sessions hosted by Senator Booker and Congressman Kim and co-hosted a listening session for those with lived experience, so the voices of New Jerseyans were represented at the conference.
- HFNJ held several meetings with key Congressional staff to advocate for support of various pieces of federal legislation leading up to Child Nutrition and Farm Bill reauthorization.

### Local Food Security Work

- This year we convened, co-convened, and/or participated in 15 different local food access coalitions, working with school districts, municipal governments, community and faith-based organizations and other local stakeholders to improve access to healthy food in their communities.
- HFNJ facilitated meetings with the NJ Economic Development Agency (NJEDA) and food access coalition members in designated food desert areas

to discuss the Food Desert Relief Program and to actively engage local stakeholders in creating solutions.

- Working with food access coalition members and statewide organizations, HFNJ helped to expand access to summer and afterschool meals for children in target underserved communities.

## Reach

This year, HFNJ has reached thousands of people online across a variety of channels.

- Our monthly newsletters reach over 2,000 people, and this year through HFNJ's action alert system over 500 letters have been sent to State and Federal representatives on numerous pieces of food-security legislation.
- Our tweets garnered over 25,000 impressions, and we gained over 100 new followers on Twitter and over 200 new Facebook likes.
- HFNJ has also been featured in print and on television this year, with coverage from NJ Spotlight News, North Jersey, NJ.com, and the Philadelphia Inquirer.

*For more information, contact Lisa Pitz at [lpitz@cfanj.org](mailto:lpitz@cfanj.org).*