



## Fact Sheet: Suny Addresses Food Insecurity to Support Student Success

Student hunger and food insecurity are persistent challenges on college campuses across the country, and SUNY is no exception. Findings from the National Center for Education Statistics reveal that 22% of undergraduate students experienced food insecurity—over double the rate of U.S. households. A 2019 survey conducted by SUNY found that 54% of community college students and 40% of students from State-operated campuses were sometimes unable to eat because they did not have money for food.

**Thanks to the historic investment by Governor Hochul and the Legislature in SUNY's operating budget for 2023-24, SUNY is investing first-ever sustainable funding of \$1 million per year to support State-operated campuses in addressing food insecurity.** As a result of these resources:

- At least 22 campuses will **directly buy food and supplies for their food pantry**, including food and other necessities such as toiletries, baby items, and laundry detergent. Investments in needs such as refrigerators will allow campuses to offer fresh food and produce. For example:
  - SUNY Brockport is opening its first-ever on-campus food pantry. The pantry will be stocked with shelf staples, refrigerated and frozen food, toiletries, and baby items.
  - SUNY Canton is focusing on expanding access to perishable products.
  - SUNY Purchase is developing a garden to provide fresh produce for the food pantry.
- At least 18 campuses will **hire staff for food insecurity**, which includes staff for food pantries, basic-needs coordinators, and SNAP outreach and education personnel. In addition, the staffing support will allow several campuses to **offer expanded hours**. For example:
  - SUNY Old Westbury is hosting a social service system navigator for students to help them enroll in SNAP and other public benefit programs.
  - SUNY Oswego is hiring a basic-needs case manager.
  - SUNY Oneonta is expanding food pantry hours and hosting SNAP information sessions.
- At least 6 campuses will expand or **improve their food pantry's physical space**. For example:
  - Alfred State is leasing a new space that will be ADA-compliant.
  - Binghamton University is opening two satellite food pantry locations.
- At least 5 campuses will invest in software programs to track inventory and **improve food pantry operations**.
- At least 4 campuses will launch **innovative ways for students to access the dining halls**, such as meal swipe programs, cafeteria meal vouchers, or dining hall access over breaks.

**Together, these investments will reach a total of 28 campuses enrolling more than 200,000 students in total and build on other steps that SUNY is taking to address food insecurity this year, including:**

- Launching an **easy online tool** to make SNAP enrollment more streamlined for students.
- Partnering with the national non-profit Benefits Data Trust to **improve SNAP outreach**.
- Continuing to **provide refrigerators** for all on-campus food pantries.

A total of 62 SUNY campuses will operate food pantries in the current academic year, and the remaining 2 campuses will partner with other providers.