

Overview of key COVID-19 legislative and regulatory changes to SNAP

NOPREN Summer Series for Students
June 17, 2020

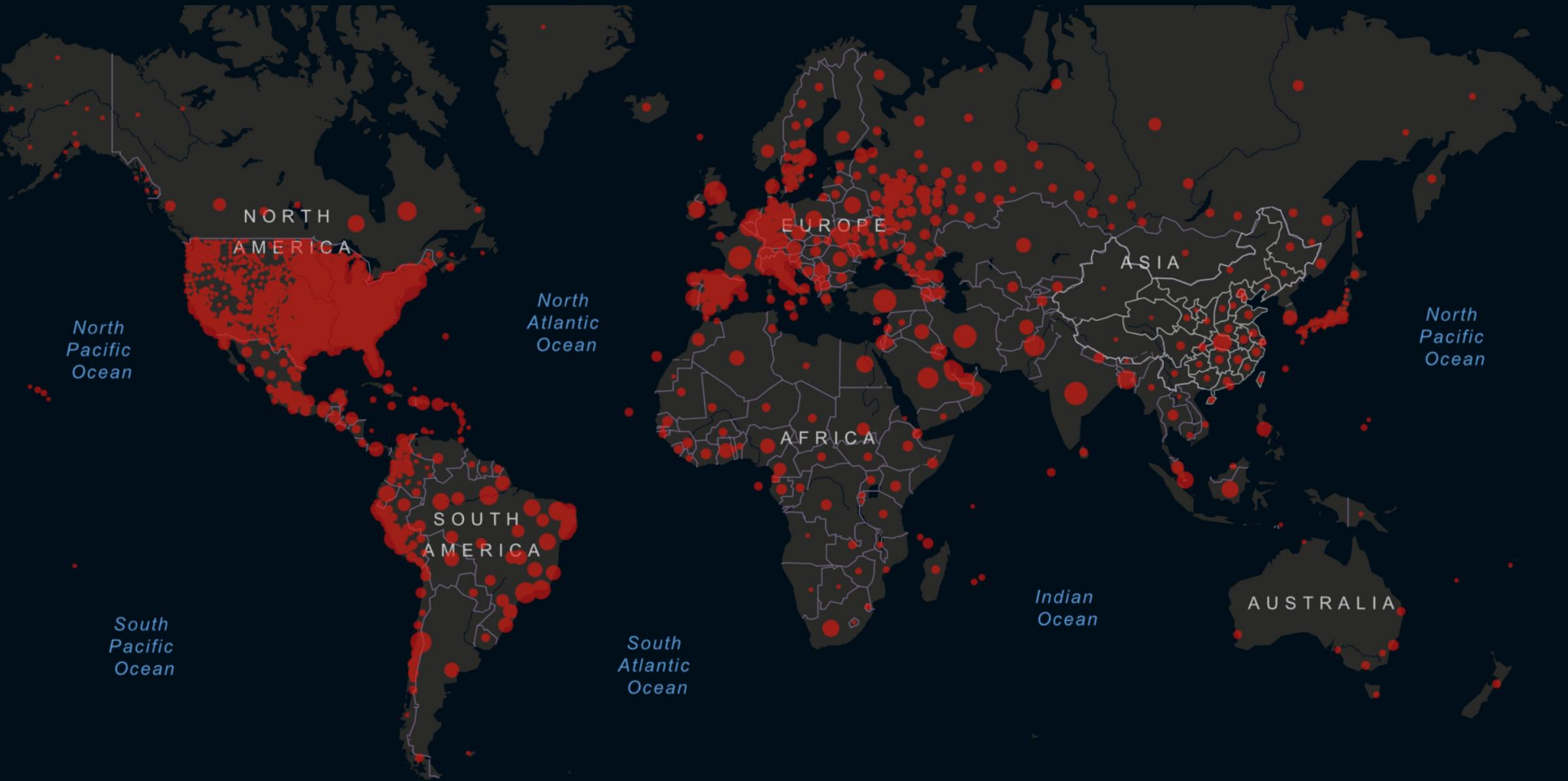


Global spread of COVID-19

Total cases
8,184,331



Total deaths
443,960

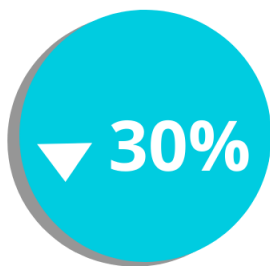


US cases
2,137,731



US deaths
116,963

Increasing SNAP is a proven policy approach to stimulate the economy and reduce food insecurity



SNAP reduces food insecurity by 30%



In 2018, SNAP lifted 3.2 million people out of poverty, including 1.5 million children



Current SNAP benefit levels are insufficient, which is amplified as a result of COVID-19

Federal legislation for coronavirus

March 5

Coronavirus Emergency Spending Package

- \$8 billion
- States and local preparedness, medical supplies, vaccine R&D

March 18

Families First Coronavirus Response Act

- \$100 billion
- Paid sick and family leave for some workers, extended unemployment benefits, free testing, boost SNAP and Medicaid

March 27

Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act

- \$2.2 trillion
- Direct payments to Americans and loans to large and small companies; greatly expands unemployment insurance to cover freelance and gig workers
- Additional paycheck protection added afterwards

May 15 (House)

Health Economic Recovery Omnibus Emergency Solutions (HEROES) Act

- \$3 trillion
- Another round of stimulus checks, extended unemployment benefits, funds for school meals program

Changes to SNAP through Family First Act: Emergency SNAP

States have flexibility to ask for emergency SNAP benefits



Emergency allotments (supplements) for all SNAP households up to the maximum benefit (\$646 for a family of four) for up to 2 months

Pandemic-Electronic Benefits Transfer (P-EBT) for households with children who would normally receive free/reduced-price school meals (~\$114 per child/month)

Who is ineligible or potentially left out of P-EBT?



Non-school-aged preschool children participating in the CACFP do not qualify



Public Charge Rule may dampen participation for some families

Changes to SNAP through Family First Act:

SNAP waivers



Suspends work requirements



State waivers for emergency SNAP benefits to existing SNAP households up to the maximum monthly allotment



More flexibility in managing SNAP caseloads by state



These approaches depend on each state's use of these flexibilities, which vary greatly

Changes to SNAP through CARES Act

\$15.8 billion
appropriation for



This allocation is only for
anticipated surges in
administrative and benefit
costs resulting from increased
unemployment

Changes to SNAP through Heroes Act

Raise SNAP benefits

▲ **15%**

Raise maximum benefits from June 1, 2020 through September 30, 2021 (~\$25/person/month)

▲ **100%**

Raise minimum SNAP benefit from \$15/month to \$30/month



Raise administrative funding for 2 years to help state SNAP agencies with increased enrollment



Suspend time limits and work requirements for ABAWDs for 2 years



Extends P-EBT through the summer, includes children in childcare programs

Prior legislative boosts to SNAP benefits: American Reinvestment and Recovery Act

ARRA boost during Great
Recession

▲ **14%**

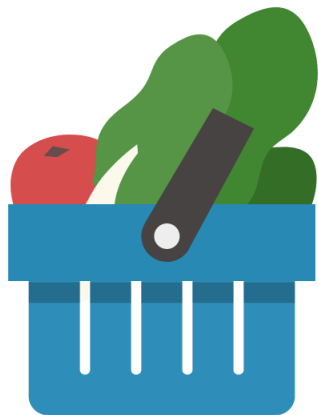
Average monthly SNAP benefit
(\$80/month for family of 4)

Evidence from the ARRA boost:

Increasing SNAP benefits can reduce food insecurity and increase food spending as well as mitigate the decline in calorie intake over the month

Strengthening the public health impact of SNAP

POLICY OPPORTUNITIES



Food production and distribution

Example:

Restrict SSB purchases



Benefit allocation

Example:

Increase size of benefit



Eligibility and enrollment

Example:

Increase participation

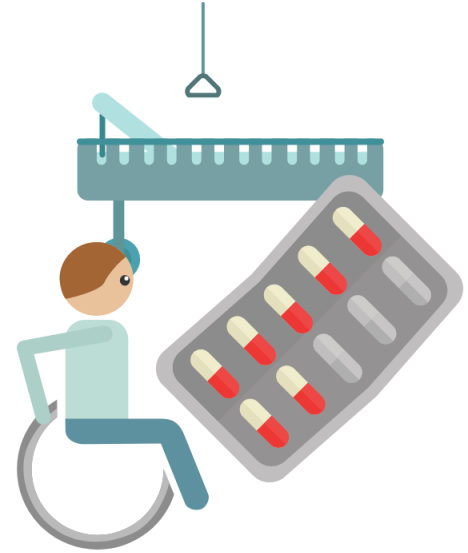
Impact of nutrition shortfalls on health



Widening disparities
in academic
achievement



Food rationing for
adults/older children



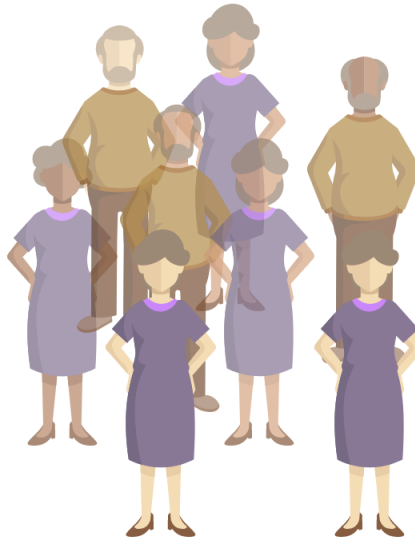
Negative developmental,
psychological, physical,
and emotional
consequences

Implications of coronavirus:

Charitable food system



Tremendous strain
due to increased need



Reduced staffing due to
vulnerability of elderly
workers



Unhealthy food items

Wrap up

Significant changes
to SNAP policy



More change is needed

Need to work towards
better equitable
readiness for future
crises

