

# Student Hunger & Homelessness

Over 1/3 of public campuses report that hunger & homelessness are on the rise.

**34%** 

of campuses report an increase in **students being served by food pantries**

**38%** 

of campuses report an increase in **students living with food insecurity**

**45%** 

of campuses report an increase in **student homelessness**

24 out of 29 campuses operate food pantries or partner with community pantries.

Campuses operating or partnering with brick-and-mortar or mobile food pantries:



**13**

Community Colleges

**7**

State U's

**4**

UMass Campuses

Campus pantries serve:

- **72%** serve students
- **48%** serve faculty & staff
- **43%** serve local residents
- **13%** serve other groups including veterans

18 campuses offer additional or other types of assistance programs.

**88%** 

of these campuses report offering **community resources and referrals**

**50%** 

of these campuses report offering **hunger awareness programs**

**56%**

of these campuses report offering **food drives**

**56%**

of these campuses report offering **voucher programs**

Some also offer:

- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)
- Meal cards
- Student-to-student donations of meal plan credits
- Short-term emergency loan programs

## ABOUT MASSACHUSETTS PUBLIC HIGHER EDUCATION

- 29 CAMPUSES
  - 15 COMMUNITY COLLEGES
  - 9 STATE UNIVERSITIES
  - 5 UMASS CAMPUSES
- 290,000 STUDENTS
- 40,000 FACULTY AND STAFF
- 43,000 NEW GRADUATES ANNUALLY



MASSACHUSETTS  
Department of  
Higher Education

24 out of 29 campuses are aware of enrolled students who are homeless.

Campuses aware of homeless students in 2016:

15

Community Colleges

7

State U's

2

UMass Campuses



Many reasons were proposed to explain increases in student hunger & homelessness.

Insufficient Funds  
Selection of Insufficient Meal Plan  
Cost of Living  
Lack of Family Support  
Student Debt  
Poor Budgeting  
Low-Paying Jobs  
Financial Aid Issues

Campuses report a variety of places where homeless students sleep.

Most campuses report knowledge of students:

1. Couch surfing
2. Living in shelters
3. Living in cars

Some also report students living in:

- State housing through Dept. of Children & Families (DCF)
- 24-hour businesses such as Dunkin' Donuts, McDonald's, airports, etc.
- Outdoors in warmer weather
- Campus residence halls during holidays or intersession

Supporting Student Success: Comments from Campus Officials

"As soon as the college community became more aware of the problem here, **faculty and staff responded** with donations and our Student Life Office started to incorporate opportunities to donate non-perishables. We also increased student awareness of our Stop Hunger on Campus fund, which gives \$7 food vouchers to students who are hungry and in need of food."

—NORTH SHORE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

"Some concerned faculty, staff and students have created a working group called (the) 'Fostering Student Success Initiative' with a special focus on **students who have aged out of the foster care system** as well as other disconnected youth."

—WESTFIELD STATE UNIVERSITY

"We are helping to create **a welcoming environment where students will not feel ashamed** when they need food or help with housing. We are helping students to realize that **the best way out of poverty is through their education.**"

—BUNKER HILL COMMUNITY COLLEGE

"We are engaging the whole university with food drives across campus and attempting to **remove the stigma of food insecurity** among our students."

—UMASS BOSTON

"Our student philanthropy group, overseen by Alumni Affairs, is doing a **Grilled Cheese for Giving** event. The proceeds will be donated to the (campus) pantry."

—SALEM STATE UNIVERSITY

"We are looking into creating **supply closets (with) toiletries and other household items** that students can take to help bring down their cost of living."

—UMASS AMHERST