

State Levels of Food Insecurity During the COVID-19 Crisis

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Photo: *Food Insecurity App*, July 14, 2020

“State Levels of Food Insecurity During the COVID-19 Crisis”

by Diane Schanzenbach and Natalie Tomeh

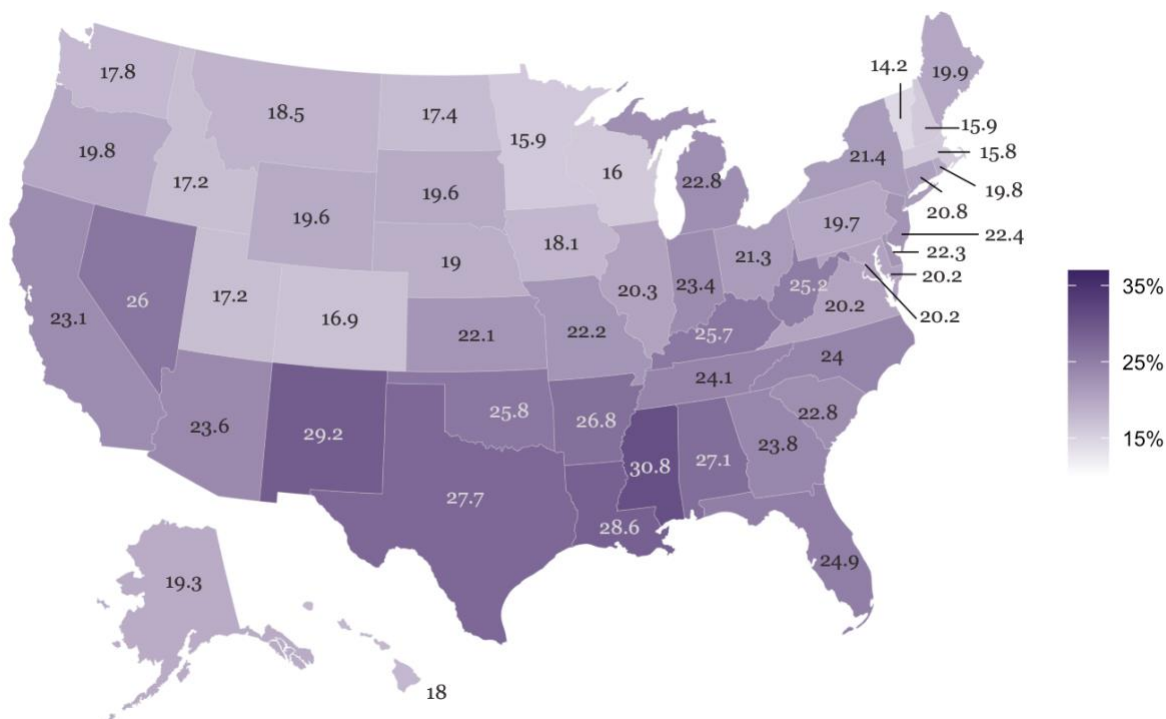
Introduction

During the COVID-19 crisis, rates of food insecurity have soared. According to weekly data released by the U.S. Census Bureau’s Household Pulse Survey from April 23–July 21, 22.5% of all respondents and 29.3% of respondents with children reported experiencing conditions of food insecurity.

Food Insecurity Varies Widely Across States and by Race and Ethnicity

As shown in the map in Figure 1 below, rates of food insecurity vary widely across states, ranging from a low of 14.2% in Vermont to a high of 30.8% in Mississippi.

Figure 1: Average Food Insecurity April 23–July 21, All Respondents¹



¹ The figures in this map were updated on October 2, 2020 to correct for a minor data error.

Food insecurity also ranges widely by the respondent's racial and ethnic group, ranging from 31.8% of Black respondents and 30.6% of Hispanic or Latino respondents, to 18.6% of White and 19.3% of Asian respondents. Rates vary for racial/ethnic groups within state as well.

New App Allows Users to Better Visualize Food Insecurity Rates

To allow users to easily access food insecurity rates for different states and different racial and ethnic groups, we have created an app that allows users to graph weekly food insecurity rates, available [here](#).

Note that we transform the Census Household Pulse Survey's question on food sufficiency in the household to the more-familiar rate of food insecurity, as described in the "Notes on the Data" button on the app. The data are weighted at the respondent level and represent respondents' reports about their household's food security status.

Further details on racial and ethnic disparities in households with children can be found in an earlier IPR Rapid Research Report [here](#).
