



Strategies to Reduce Hunger on MA Campuses

SNAP EBT Access on Public College Campuses

This report highlights the many ways public college campuses have recognized and are already addressing food-insecurity on-campus.

But ending hunger on campus requires a range of sustainable solutions across the entire public college system, solutions targeted to the most vulnerable students.

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is a social justice program that trains, inspires, and sustains leaders. The program bridges community-based efforts and national public policy, and fellows develop as effective leaders in the movement to end hunger and poverty.

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Massachusetts Law Reform Institute

The Massachusetts Law Reform Institute (MLRI) provides statewide advocacy and leadership in advancing laws, policies, and practices that secure economic, racial, and social justice for low-income people and communities.

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While in college, she helped uncover school lunch shaming policies impacting school children with meal debt in California. Her work led to a successful passage of Senate Bill 250, district-wide policy changes within Los Angeles Unified School District, and has served as a framework for advocates seeking legislation against school lunch shaming. Yesenia shared her personal story with student hunger on January 09, 2019 at the United States Senate Briefing "Hungry in College: Food Insecurity on American Campuses."

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Executive Summary

For many low-income students getting a college degree is a pathway to break generational poverty. That pathway remains difficult for a majority of low-income students who are forced to choose between purchasing textbooks and buying food for the month because they lack sufficient financial resources.

In Massachusetts, nearly half of community college students report they cannot afford to eat balanced meals; over one-third of four-year public college students report similar concerns.¹ While the rising costs of tuition outpace financial aid packages, students increasingly struggle to find resources to make ends meet. The obstacles low-income college students face goes far beyond their ability to balance their already limited budgets.

A recent Government Accountability Office (GAO) report, found over two million college students potentially eligible for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits but were not participating in the program.² Massachusetts is a leadership state in adopting state options that allow more low-income students to qualify for SNAP, but more needs to be done. Low-income students who receive SNAP benefits are unable to use their benefits to purchase healthy food on campus. **Currently, none of the Massachusetts public 2 and 4 year colleges accept SNAP Electronic Benefit Transactions (EBT) on any of the on-campus food markets.**

This MLRI report highlights the many ways college campuses have recognized and are already addressing food insecurity on campus. Ending hunger on campus requires a range of sustainable solutions across the entire public college system, solutions targeted to the most vulnerable students. In addition to boosting SNAP participation, **Massachusetts public colleges can negotiate with existing contracted food vendors or outside vendors to establish EBT-accepting grocery markets at each public college.** Establishing markets that accept EBT payment methods will both help time-constrained students access nutritious food *and* boost SNAP participation among low-income students.

“Carlos E. Santiago, the state Commissioner of Higher Education, said that while he was aware students struggle with housing and hunger (in response to the 2018 release of the Wisconsin HOPE Lab report re Massachusetts public college students), *“the numbers are so stark . . . it really is sobering....It makes me pause on what to do next because it shows we have to do something,”* he said. *“We have to be able to improve the lives of these students.”* [Boston Globe, May 10, 2018](#)

¹ Goldrick-Rab, S., Richardson, J., Schneider, J., Cady, C. & Hernandez, [Basic Needs Insecurity in Massachusetts Public Colleges and Universities](#). Wisconsin HOPE Lab. Released jointly with the Mass. Department of Higher Education in May 2018.

² U.S. Government Accountability Office, Report to Requesters. [Food Insecurity: Better Information Could Help Eligible College Students Access Federal Food Assistance Benefits](#). GAO-19-95. (December 2018). GAO estimated the SNAP-eligible student population to include undergraduates attending private and public colleges who appear eligible for federal financial aid.

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Background

Attaining a postsecondary degree is vital for all residents of the United States, but especially individuals and families with low-income backgrounds striving to secure a living wage and transition out of poverty. Individuals with only high school degrees earn substantially less than individuals with associate and bachelor degrees.³ A family of four (2 adults, 2 children) needs to earn at least \$85,592 per year to maintain an adequate standard of living in Western Massachusetts; and a family of four living in an urban area like Boston needs \$113,558.⁴ Fewer opportunities are available to individuals with non-postsecondary education hindering their basic economic survival in Massachusetts and the United States, demonstrating college attainment is indispensable.⁵

According to the U.S. Department of Education (DOE), the portion of all undergraduate students who come from low-income households increased from 28% in 1996 to 39% in 2016.⁶ Although publicly funded two-year and four-year colleges enroll higher amounts of low-income students, the cost of attending college is unaffordable for the average Pell Grant recipient.⁷ State dollars spent on higher education declined by \$1,300 less per Massachusetts student between 2008 and 2017.⁸ Since 1988, the cost of attaining a higher education at a public four-year college has nearly tripled,⁹ making institutional support far more critical for student success.

A critical expense that is typically *not covered* in financial aid packages is a student meal plan. According to the U.S. DOE, during the 2015-2016 school year, public colleges on average charged their students more than \$4,400 for a meal plan.¹⁰ These steep meal costs are far too expensive for many low-income students to cover, on top of paying for non-tuition expenses including housing, transportation, utilities, and books, internet access and other non-tuition school costs. Meal plan costs are extremely burdensome for the growing number of new and returning students with minor children¹¹ who must also juggle the costs of child care. Growing financial demands leave low-income students with little money to cover food costs, increases their stress and food insecurity while attempting to complete their education.

³ U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. (March 27, 2018). [Unemployment Rates and Earnings by Educational Attainment](#).

⁴ Economic Policy Institute (2018). [Family Budget Calculator](#)

⁵ RTI International. (February 1, 2018). [How does limited education limit young people? Young people who do not enter postsecondary education experience unemployment and financial challenges](#). *Science Daily*.

⁶ U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, 1995-1996 National Postsecondary Student Aid Study (NPSAS:96); [2015-2016 National Postsecondary Student Aid Study \(NPSAS:16\)](#).

⁷ [Shutting Low-Income Students Out of Public Four-Year Higher Education](#). [White paper]. (May 2018). *National College Access Network*.

⁸ Mitchell, Michael; Leachman, M., Masterson, K.; (August 23, 2017). [A Lost Decade in Higher Education Funding: State Cuts Have Driven Up Tuition and Reduced Quality](#)

⁹ The College Board. (October 2018). [Trends in Student Aid 2018](#). New York: The College Board.

¹⁰ U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, [Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System \(IPEDS\), Tuition, fees and room and board rates charged students, public/private 2014-15 and 2015-16](#), Table 330.20

¹¹ Noll, Elizabeth, Reichlin, L. Gault B; (July 2017). [College Students with Children National and Regional Profiles](#). *Institute for Women's Policy Research*. Nationally, student parents make up 26 percent of the total undergraduate student body.

"I had difficulty managing working and going to school when I worked full-time. As I began to focus more on school instead of work, it became more difficult to pay my bills ... there's a lot of frustration involved in different elements of being self sufficient." Michael Curran, Bunker Hill Community College student.

[Spare Change News, March 20, 2017](#)

As noted above, the Wisconsin HOPE Lab survey of Mass public college students, released jointly with the Massachusetts Department of Higher Education (DHE) in May of 2018,¹² confirmed student hunger is a growing reality: 47 percent of community college students and 39 percent of public university students reported they *"couldn't afford to eat a balanced meal."*

Additionally, research shows food insecure students are more likely than food secure students to have worse education outcomes.¹³ Such disadvantageous impact on student academic outcomes requires intervention from public college administrators and campus faculty. As the number of low-income students seeking to attain a higher education increases, public college institutions must prioritize supporting under-resourced students to successfully complete their educational goals.

"There are days where I can't even afford to buy a chip . . . and I know I can go up there [to the food pantry] to get bread," Susan Benitez, 30, an Army veteran and student government president at Bunker Hill Community College. [Boston Globe, May 10, 2018](#)

¹² Goldrick-Rab, et.al, [A Basic Needs Insecurity in Massachusetts Public Colleges and Universities](#). Wisconsin HOPE Lab.

¹³ Maya E. Maroto, Snelling, A. & Linck, H (2015) [Food Insecurity Among Community College Students: Prevalence and Association With Grade Point Average](#), *Community College Journal of Research and Practice*, 39:6, 515-526, DOI

Massachusetts Combats College Student Hunger

Massachusetts has undertaken a number of initiatives to address food insecurity on college campuses. In 2010, the Department of Transitional Assistance (DTA) implemented a SNAP policy option to allow community college students in an associate or certificate program to qualify for SNAP if their course of study was considered “career and technical education” or would otherwise make them more employable.¹⁴ DTA implemented additional changes in 2017 to help low-income state college students who receive certain types of financial aid qualify for SNAP – students not getting a majority of their meals through school meal plans. DTA is currently working with colleges to raise awareness of SNAP by engaging more colleges to become official SNAP Outreach Partners.¹⁵

In 2014, DHE released its first annual survey¹⁶ of public college students in need after seeing a substantial increase in homelessness and food insecurity. DHE continues to release statewide surveys in collaboration with all of its public college campuses to track homelessness and food insecurity among Mass college students. In 2018, the Baker-Polito administration increased the amount of state financial aid community college students receive through a new MassGrant Plus program and expanded state aid to part-time students to fully cover tuition and fees.¹⁷ In collaboration with DHE, Bunker Hill Community College (BHCC) hosted the first “Voices of Hunger on Campus” convening in May of 2017,¹⁸ followed by a statewide convening at Worcester State University¹⁹ in May of 2018, “Meaningful Change Together.”

DHE and the Mass. Commission for Unaccompanied Homeless Youth announced a new pilot²⁰ to address the needs of homeless students. Full-time students accepted into the program are eligible for on-campus housing and meals, as well as academic and social services through July 2020 including summer and semester breaks.

At the grassroots level, local public colleges are implementing initiatives to address food insecurity on campus through:

- **Improved support for students facing food insecurity and homelessness:** All MA community colleges, state colleges, and UMass campuses are establishing or have established an on-campus point person, called a “single point of contact” or SPOC

¹⁴ DTA Field Operations Memo 2010-28, (June 1,2010). [SNAP Eligibility for Certain Community College Students.](#)

¹⁵ DTA. Retrieved January 28, 2019, from [SNAP Outreach for Partners webpage.](#)

¹⁶ DHE Annual Homeless and Hunger Survey, Retrieved January 18, 2019, from [third annual survey completed in 2016](#)

¹⁷ Mass Dept of Higher Education, News & Announcements. (August 23, 2018). [Baker-Polito Administration Boosts College Access, Affordability with MassGrant Plus Program to Aid Community College Students.](#)

¹⁸ Bunker Hill Community College. (May 5, 2017). [Voices of Hunger Convening.](#)

¹⁹ Worcester State University. (May 11,2018). [Voices of Hunger Convening, Meaningful Change Together.](#)

²⁰ Office of Governor Charlie Baker and Lt Governor Karyn Polito. (January 31,2019). [Baker Polito Administration Highlight Plan to End Youth Homelessness.](#) Partnering schools include: Framingham State & Mass Bay Community College, Bridgewater State & Massasoit Community College, Worcester State University & Quinsigamond Community College, UMass Lowell & Middlesex Community College.

whose job is to assist students with their basic needs including addressing food insecurity and homelessness. The SPOCs have a cross-campus network and regularly share resources with other campuses.

- **Food pantries:** 14 of 15 community colleges have established a food pantry or mobile market²¹ on campus with help from the four regional Food Banks; 5 of 8 state colleges have established a food pantry or mobile market partnership. All UMass campuses have food pantries available on campus to serve students in need.
- **SNAP outreach:** Many of the MA public colleges now screen students and advise them to sign-up for SNAP benefits, many directly assist with the SNAP application. At least one college, BHCC has enrolled as a “SNAP outreach partner” through DTA, which qualifies the SPOC services for partial USDA federal reimbursement. See **Appendix C** for sample SNAP outreach resources.
- **Meal Swipe donation program:** 4 public colleges – inspired by the “Swipe Out Hunger”²² movement – have implemented a meal donation program, encouraging food secure students to donate unused meal swipes to peers in need. The number of donated “meal swipes,” however, is quite limited and campuses determine how many swipes a student can access.²³
- **Food Voucher programs:** In the Spring 2016 semester, BHCC piloted a food voucher program called “One Solid Meal” with funding from a group of generous individual donors. About 50 students per semester receive up to three \$7 voucher for use in any of the College’s food establishments on the Charlestown Campus. In the Fall 2017 semester, the “Meal Voucher Program” was begun. MVP provides \$400/semester to a cohort of Pell-eligible, first-time enrolled students to purchase food from the cafeteria while also tracking student retention and educational outcomes. This pilot is one of three studies funded by The Kresge Foundation as part of research being done nationwide by Dr. Sara Goldrick-Rab.²⁴

Appendix A details the activities of the Mass public colleges, as of December 2018.

²¹ A mobile market is similar to a food pantry, but not set in a fixed location. Food banks distribute free food to partner sites that serve high poverty areas, usually on a weekly or monthly basis depending on food availability. The delivery often includes “perishable” foods (fruits and vegetables and frozen foods), set up on tables in a farmer’s market style. See Greater Boston Food Bank [webpage on Mobile Markets](#).

²² [Swipe Out Hunger](#) began in 2010 and partners with colleges to allow students to donate unused funds or “meal points” from their meal plans to food insecure peers to use at campus dining halls.

²³ None of the MA public colleges are currently partnered with the national “Swipe Out Hunger” non-profit, but have developed their own meal swipe donation programs. For example, UMass Lowell allows eligible students to access 5 free meals/week, funded through peer swipe donations.

²⁴ Goldrick-Rab, Sara, Scholars Strategy Network. (May 16, 2016). [Why the Time is Right to Expand the National School Lunch Program to Higher Education](#).

Lack of EBT Access on MA Campuses

SNAP is regarded as the “nation’s first defense against hunger” and is an essential benefit eligible individuals and families need to purchase healthy foods. Indeed, a bipartisan Congress declared in the passage of the historic Food Stamp Act of 1977:

To alleviate such hunger and malnutrition, a food stamp program is herein authorized which will permit low-income households to obtain a more nutritious diet through normal channels of trade by increasing food purchasing power for all eligible households who apply for participation. Section 2, Declaration of Policy Public Law 88–525

Yet the majority of full-time students who qualify for SNAP often struggle to use their EBT benefits through the “normal channels of trade,” such as fully stocked grocery markets.

Distance from food markets: MLRI reviewed the websites of all 2-year and 4-year public college campuses and contacted many of the college SPOCs. We found no established on-campus grocery markets that accept SNAP EBT as a form of payment for food. While some campuses, such as UMass Lowell, may be conveniently located in a downtown urban area near grocery stores or supermarkets, the majority of Massachusetts public colleges tend to be physically located in “food deserts,” far from traditional grocery stores and supermarkets. Berkshire Community College students hoping to use their SNAP benefits must walk 50 mins to get to Sean’s Variety, the closest EBT store to campus.²⁵ Berkshire students depending on public transportation must wait every hour to catch a bus to the closest supermarket. Typically the only immediate food options for students involve costly cafeteria food, snack bars, limited “convenience stores” or vending machines.

Lack of access, lack of time: Low-income commuter students and students who live on campus – but without a full meal plan – often lack time to buy and prepare food. Indeed, most full-time students tend to have limited time in general to prepare food, which is exactly why dining halls were established. Shut out of these by lack of financial resources, low-income students have few options with less “disposable time” than their peers, must work full-time jobs to cover their education and living expenses, and work for longer hours – all out of pure necessity and not choice.²⁶

Many low-income students depend on public transportation in urban areas, or unreliable cars in the rest of the state. As Bunker Hill Community College President, Dr. Pam Eddinger aptly noted, students are often “*one broken carburetor away from dropping out of school.*”²⁷ Further, even if they own a car or have access to reliable public transportation, commuter

²⁵ EBT card balance. (2019). [EBT Retail Store Locator](#)

²⁶ Jones, L. *Diverse Issues in Higher Education*. (August 28, 2018). [Study Outlines Challenges for Low-income Working Students](#).

²⁷ Dr. Pam Eddinger, President, Bunker Hill Community College; public comments at January 9, 2019 Senate Briefing “Hungry in College: Food Insecurity on American Campuses.” [MAZON recording of briefing](#), (18 mins, 30 secs)

students simply do not have enough time in between work, school and studying to head off campus to buy and prepare food. These challenges are especially difficult for non-traditional²⁸ students who typically live off campus and must factor in more travel time. A multi-year study showed students with access to public benefits, including SNAP, improved their likelihood to graduate college.²⁹

“So, I was sleeping in my car and couch surfing,” she says. There were many days when food was scarce, and she didn’t have enough to eat. Then she heard about the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, or SNAP, and went to the local office to apply. “They gave me an emergency SNAP card that day with, like, \$200 on it and it quite literally saved my life,” Brooke Maxfield, Worcester State University student. [WSU News, December 6, 2018](#)

²⁸ “Non-traditional” college students are individuals who typically do not attend college promptly after graduating from high school, cannot rely on parental support for college, may have a dependent child, typically must work their way through college, may be older students entering college for the first time after employment or seeking new skills. U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, [Nontraditional Undergraduates, NCES 2002–012](#), Susan Choy. Washington, DC: 2002.

²⁹ Duke-Benfield, A. E.; Sanders, K. *Center for Law and Social Policy*. (July 11, 2016). [Benefits Access for College Completion : Lessons Learned from a community college initiative to help low-income students.](#)

SNAP EBT on College Campuses

Several colleges currently receive SNAP EBT payments as an option to purchase food at eligible on-campus stores including both public and private colleges in at least seven states: California, Ohio, Oregon, Minnesota, Montana, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin. The following are a few examples of public colleges with on-campus grocers that accept EBT:

California

- **Humboldt State University, HSU**, is among the first colleges in the nation to establish their on-campus food store as an EBT grocer in February 2016.³⁰ According to Executive Director of HSU University Center David Nakamura, in 2018 alone - over \$100,000 sale purchases were made using SNAP benefits at the College Creek Marketplace, comprising 5% of their food sales for the school year with average SNAP transactions between \$6 and \$7. Director Nakamura commented, *“That shows students are purchasing [grab-n-go] items such as packaged sandwiches paired with a fruit juice.”* At HSU, food insecurity research and outreach from the “Oh! SNAP” program helped provide momentum for the campus dining department to apply as an EBT grocer. Although HSU does not have data on the number of students enrolled in SNAP, after establishing the EBT grocer on campus Director Nakamura says, *“students are clearly using their benefits on campus.”*³¹
- **The University of California, UC Davis**, began making its on-campus food stores EBT compatible since 2017. To date, UC Davis has three on-campus locations that accept EBT including: the Marketplace, the CoHo and the UC Davis Farmers Market.³² Nolan Sullivan, Branch Director for the Yolo County Health and Human Services agency, said the SNAP agency collaboration with UC Davis helped increase the overall county SNAP participation (called “CalFresh” in CA) by increasing its outreach to students. Director Sullivan reported *“the UC went from 400 CalFresh applications two years ago to just over 3,000”* in 2017.³³
- **The University of California, UC Berkeley**, began accepting EBT transactions at its Bear Market mini-grocery store in 2018. The Bear Market provides Berkeley students the ability to purchase grab-and-go foods, microwavable and frozen meal options, as well as snacks and beverages using their SNAP EBT benefits.³⁴ Students rallied together to fund and establish the Berkeley Student Food Collective in 2010, an EBT grocer.³⁵ The mission of the student organized store is to fight food insecurity and reduce wasted food on campus and in the Berkeley community.

³⁰ Humboldt State Now. (February 16, 2016). [HSU Expands Food Access With SNAP Benefits](#).

³¹ MLRI conversation on January 29, 2019 with Executive Director of HSU University Center David Nakamura.

³² University of California, Davis. Retrieved January 27, 2019, from [Student Food Access Map](#).

³³ Escalante, E. (September 25, 2018). [Why and how students can apply for food stamps in college](#). ABC 10.

³⁴ UC Berkeley. (February 2, 2018). [Got CalFresh? Bear Market welcomes you](#).

³⁵ Berkeley Student Food Collective. Retrieved January 30, 2019, from [BSFC Our Programs](#).

Oregon

- **Oregon State University, OSU** is one of the early colleges that established an EBT grocery store on campus in 2016. Nearly 3,000 students used the OSU emergency pantry in 2015. Tara Sanders, a campus nutritionist at OSU, led the effort that took “tremendous coordination.”³⁶ While it took OSU nearly five years to work out the USDA food stocking requirements and point of sale system to be EBT compatible, the campus has not looked back and the Cascadia Market is up and running, responding to the needs of its students.

Montana

- **University of Montana, UM** currently hosts two stores on campus that are EBT compatible, called “The Market.” Trevor Lowell, UM Director of Sustainability³⁷ led the effort to create a second on-campus market and also developed and integrated a SNAP EBT training program with its existing cashier training program to help store staff understand SNAP retailer guidelines and provide appropriate assistance to SNAP customers. UM has also increased its SNAP outreach efforts. According to the Director Lowell, *“SNAP is an important tool for people who are struggling to meet their food and nutrition needs, and we know that many UM students are dealing with those challenges. We hope that adding it as a payment option in The Market helps make their lives a little easier.”*

Using SNAP benefits for “grab and go” food: As most traditional grocers know, SNAP can and is used for a wide range of food items that take very little or no preparation and does not require recipients to have access to cooking facilities. Under the US Department of Agriculture’s EBT retailer food stocking requirements, the majority of staple items as well as “grab and go” foods available in most grocery stores can be purchased with SNAP benefits.³⁸

See **Appendix B** for HSU sampler flier for tips on how to make your on-campus store EBT eligible.

See **Appendix C** for USDA EBT retailer application and learn which stocking items qualify for SNAP purchases.

Other grocer models, like the Daily Table (see below) help provide affordable food items to under-resourced communities through gleaning efforts.

³⁶ Inside Higher Education. (January 29, 2016). [Joining U.S. Hunger Program Is Not a Snap](#)

³⁷ MLRI conversation on November 28, 2018 with UM Director of Sustainability Trevor Lowell. See also *UM News*. (November 26, 2018). [UM Dining Now Accepting SNAP at the Market](#).

³⁸ Under federal SNAP EBT retailer requirements, SNAP cannot be used to purchase hot foods, such as rotisserie chicken, “take out” or “prepared foods that are consumed on the premises or sold for carryout” 7 C.F.R. §278.1 (b)(1)(vi). However, SNAP can be used to purchase a wide range of staple foods that can be consumed with minimal preparation.

The Daily Table Model

In 2015, Doug Rauch, the former President of Trader Joe's, opened the first Daily Table store in Dorchester, Mass with the aim to make food affordable for under-resourced communities. The non-profit grocer offers low priced, healthy and convenient food options including "grab-n-go" ready to eat meals designed to meet every budget.

Food items sold at the Daily Table include freshly prepared meals cooked from an onsite kitchen and repackaged as microwavable meals, making food items SNAP eligible. Healthy food items are donated to the Daily Table from outside food networks which allows the non-profit to keep prices affordable for customers in Dorchester and Roxbury, Mass. The Daily Table plans to establish more food stores to help address food insecurity and improve community health outcomes by ensuring under-resourced communities have access to healthy affordable foods.³⁹

The "Restaurant Meals Program: is a federal option worth noting that allows the use of SNAP benefits to purchase hot foods, an option that is currently in operation only on a small number of California campuses. Known as the "restaurant meals program," (RMP) this allows certain SNAP recipients to use their benefits to purchase hot meals in EBT-approved restaurants or campus dining halls. RMP is restricted to SNAP recipients who are either elderly (age 60+), severely disabled or homeless.⁴⁰ California is the only state that has implemented the RMP option *on campus*. Santa Monica City College currently participates as an authorized restaurant, due to the high number of homeless students in the county of Los Angeles. In addition, both the state of California⁴¹ and Rhode Island⁴² have implemented the RMP option generally to elderly, homeless and severely disabled SNAP recipients to purchase hot foods in certain EBT-approved restaurants.

There are benefits and challenges to the RMP option on campus, notably only a limited number of students who receive SNAP can elect this option – which ends once a student is no longer homeless. The dining hall or cafeteria must be approved by the state, must secure a USDA EBT retailer status and offer a "low-cost" meal option.

³⁹ MLRI conversations with Daily Table customers and food store managers in January 2019. See also: [The Daily Table - Our Story](#).

⁴⁰ The federal SNAP regulations give states the option to create a "Restaurant Meals Program," which specifically allows SNAP recipients who are over age 60, severely disabled or homeless to purchase *hot prepared food* in *authorized restaurants*. 7 CFR § 272.9 and 278.1; See also Form FNS-252-2

⁴¹ California EBT Project Office, [CA Restaurant Meals Program](#), Currently 10 counties participate in RMP with designated EBT-approved restaurants.

⁴² DHS Rhode Island has a smaller RMP with a limited number of authorized EBT restaurants. See: [Eatbettertoday.com](#)

Policy Options

A multi-pronged policy approach must be applied to reduce student hunger on campus. Our core recommendation is that Massachusetts lead the way in encouraging the ability to use EBT benefits across all public colleges. Providing access to students to use benefits on campus to purchase healthy, affordable food is essential for resource and time-strapped students and will help boost SNAP enrollment.

- **The Department of Higher Education** (DHE) can take a leadership role in working with public colleges to examine their food services contracts (in house or private) to ensure all public colleges have on-campus grocers that accept SNAP EBT transactions. Campuses with private food service contractors should be encouraged to either apply for EBT retailer status or allow an independent grocer to provide an on-campus store.
 - **The Department of Transitional Assistance** (DTA) can work with DHE and state colleges to provide guidance to campus grocery managers on how to apply through USDA to become a SNAP EBT retailers.
 - **At the local college level**, the college administration, SPOCs and student government associations can form advisory committees or task forces to strategize on ways to get EBT-markets on campus, identify locations accessible to students to maximize SNAP usage and recommend student-preferred foods that meet the USDA food stocking requirements. Local college task-forces can also look for ways to collaborate with food service providers to minimize wasted food on campus, such as replicating models used by the Daily Table. Repackaged food items can be distributed to on-campus EBT grocers to either donate to on-campus food pantries, or sell at low cost time-saving “grab-n-go” microwavable food items at affordable prices for all student customers including SNAP recipients.
 - **DTA and DHE together** can also explore the requirements and feasibility of establishing “restaurant meal programs” on campuses as a separate option for SNAP-eligible homeless and disabled students to purchase hot prepared foods from college cafeterias.
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Appendix A

Campus	Food Pantry (On-Campus/ Free Mobile Market)	Campus staff screen students for SNAP	On-site Grocery/ Convenience Store	Store is approved SNAP EBT vendor?	On-Campus Meal Plan Package	Meal SWIPE donation program	How many donated SWIPES does your program allow students to access a semester?
Community Colleges							
Berkshire	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Bristol	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Bunker Hill*	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Cape Cod	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Greenfield	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Holyoke	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Mass Bay	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Massasoit	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Middlesex	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Mount Wachusett	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Northern Essex	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
North Shore	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Quinsigamond	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Roxbury	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Springfield Technical	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
State Colleges							
Bridgewater	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Fitchburg	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	SWIPE nomination system, uncapped swipe amount w/ evaluation process
Framingham	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Case by case meal swipe access

Campus	Food Pantry (On-Campus/ Free Mobile Market)	Campus staff screen students for SNAP	On-site Grocery/ Convenience Store	Store is approved SNAP EBT vendor?	On-Campus Meal Plan Package	Meal SWIPE donation program	How many donated SWIPES does your program allow students to access a semester?
Mass Art & Design - Boston	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Mass Liberal Arts-North Adams	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Uncapped Swipe amount
Mass Maritime Academy - Buzzards Bay	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Westfield State	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Worcester State	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
UMass Colleges							
UMass Amherst	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
UMass Boston	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
UMass Dartmouth	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
UMass Lowell	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	5 meals/wk

TIPS FOR ESTABLISHING CALFRESH EBT ON YOUR COLLEGE CAMPUS

Would you like to make it possible for college students to use CalFresh benefits on campus?

Recipients of CalFresh benefits can now use Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) cards to purchase food.

Also known as Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, SNAP, or formerly referred to as "food stamps".



At Humboldt State University (HSU), HSU Dining Services was able to qualify for EBT transactions for one of the HSU campus locations that sells groceries among other things (College Creek Market Place). **Students can now buy nutritious food with their CalFresh benefits!**

STEP 1

To get the process started, you first need to see if one of your campus markets will qualify:

[Retail Store Eligibility USDA Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program](#)

STEP 2

If you think the store qualifies, the next step is starting a simple online application:

[Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program \(SNAP\) Retailer Application Link](#)

In addition to qualification as an EBT retailer, there are other questions to consider:

- Do you have campus partners and/or programs that can help with outreach to get qualifying students signed up for SNAP benefits?
- Are EBT transactions compatible with your POS system?
- Can you use your existing cashiering equipment or do you need to upgrade?
- How will you integrate income from EBT sales into your accounting system?
- Training and supervision of staff to properly manage transactions at the location?

At HSU, campus administrators responsible for making EBT available are willing to answer questions about their experience.

David Nakamura, Executive Director of HSU University Center can be reached at dave.nakamura@humboldt.edu and **Ron Rudebock**, Director of HSU Dining Services who can be reached at ron.rudebock@humboldt.edu

Visit [Humboldt State University Oh SNAP!](#) Student-to-Student Support for a Healthier College Experience for ideas about how to increase access to healthy foods for college students!

For information about Best Practices for conducting CalFresh Outreach on your campus, go to the [California State University, Chico Center for Healthy Communities](#).

Your work to help reduce barriers to inclusive student success is important. We wish you the best of luck as you move forward with this vital work on your campus.

Appendix C

Additional EBT Retailer and SNAP Outreach Resources

Establishing an EBT Store On-campus

Most campus c-stores or mini-grocer markets are eligible to participate in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). Check out the USDA materials below to learn how to become an EBT grocer:

- [USDA: Is My Store EBT Eligible?](#)
- [USDA: How Do I Apply to Accept Benefits](#)
- [USDA: SNAP Staple Food Requirements Video](#)

SNAP Outreach Material for MA College Students

Know of a student that is food insecure or can use some extra financial aid for food? Share these SNAP resources:

- [YouTube Video - My SNAP Rights: Massachusetts College Students](#)
- [SNAP 4 Community College Students Flier](#)
- [SNAP 4 Four-year College Students Flier](#)
- [DTA Connect - Online SNAP application](#)

SNAP Advocacy Training Tools for Campus Administrators and Volunteers

Learn how to become a SNAP advocate with MLRI's SNAP Advocacy Guide available for [download](#) or [paperback](#) purchase.

- [MLRI's 2019 SNAP/Food Stamp Advocacy Guide](#)
- [MLRI Annual SNAP 101 Basic Benefits Training, hosted by Mass Continuing Legal Education](#)

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