

Hamilton Hunger Report 2024

For over thirty years, Hamilton Food Share has been the city's primary hunger-relief food hub, supporting Hamilton's Emergency Food Network. It manages a client intake database, gathering data directly from the frontline of hunger, used in this March 2024 report.

A snapshot of food insecurity in Hamilton



ALL HOUSEHOLD
VISITS
IN A MONTH
10,468



ALL VISITS
IN A MONTH
ADULTS 18,613
CHILDREN 11,119
TOTAL 29,732



UNIQUE*
HOUSEHOLDS
IN A MONTH
6,800



UNIQUE* PEOPLE
IN A MONTH
ADULTS 11,603
CHILDREN 6,079
TOTAL 17,682



HOT MEALS
SERVED
IN A MONTH
29,218

*This is a unique count, so each household/individual is only counted once, regardless of the number of times they received services during the reporting period.

Rising Food Insecurity

Over the last few years, we have seen a rise in food insecurity across the entire country with 8.7 million Canadians, in the ten provinces, struggling to afford food.¹ Here in Hamilton, our neighbours reaching out for hunger-relief support has increased by 42% since 2020. Households continue to feel the effects of rising rents, grocery costs, mortgage rates and high inflation rates. Families that have never needed support before are reaching out for food, and those that were already experiencing hunger are needing to return more often.

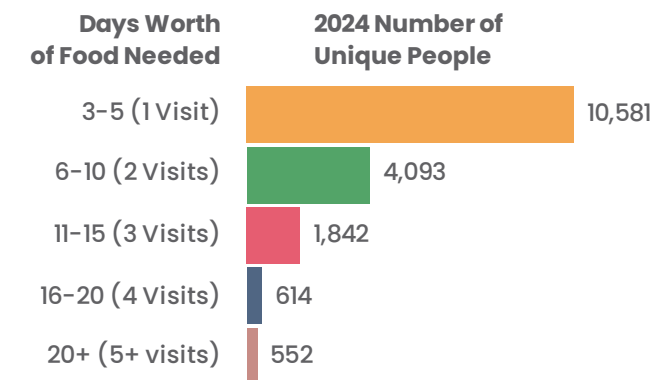
Taking Part in the Survey: Emergency Food Network

Ancaster Community Services / De Mazenod Door Outreach / Flamborough Food Bank / Good Shepherd Centres
Hamilton Jewish Family Services / Living Rock Ministries / Mission Services of Hamilton / Neighbour to Neighbour Centre
Niwasa Kendaaswin Teg / Salvation Army Dundas / Salvation Army Hamilton / Stoney Creek Community Food Bank
Welcome Inn Community Centre / Wesley

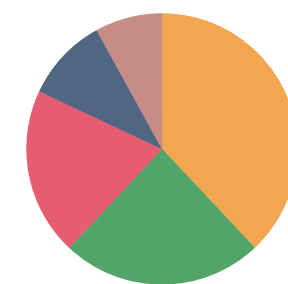
The Hunger Gap for Families

The hunger gap refers to how many days' worth of food a household needs to receive from a food bank to meet their nutritional requirements for the month.

Sixty percent (60%) of Hamiltonians that needed a food bank only visited once in March. This was still a 10% increase over 2023. However, when we look at who is returning frequently throughout the month, it is the families with children. Over 50% of the households that needed to return to the food bank 3 times were families with children, and when you look at who is returning 5 plus times, that number jumps to 70%.



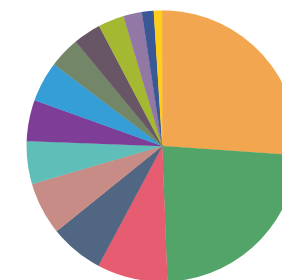
Approximately **959** people reached out to a food bank each day



Family Composition

- Single Households (38%)
- Two Parent Families (24%)
- Single Parent Households (20%)
- Other (10%)
- Couples with No Children (8%)

Primary Source of Income of Food Bank Service Users in Hamilton



- Disability* (26.1%)
- Ontario Works (OW) (23.3%)
- Employed: Full-Time (8.4%)
- Employed: Part-Time (6.4%)
- Child Tax Credit/UCB (6.3%)
- Other (5.1%)
- No Income (4.9%)
- Refugee Assistance Program (4.8%)
- Savings (3.7%)
- OAS (3.3%)
- CPP-Retirement (3.1%)
- Immigration (2.2%)
- EI (1.4%)
- Private Pension (1%)

*(ODSP, CPP Disability, Private Disability)

37% of all food bank visits were needed for children

An Inadequate Standard of Living

Despite Canada's 10% poverty rate, a quarter of Canadians live below the standard poverty level. Access to food and shelter is fundamental, yet many also face material deprivation. This means they are unable to afford transportation, participate in celebrations, or own suitable seasonal footwear.² Rising housing and food costs exacerbate this issue, affecting households above the poverty line as well.

On average **942** hot meals were served each day

¹(2023) "New Data on Household Food Insecurity in 2023" Proof Food Insecurity Policy Research, University of Toronto

²(2024) Michael Mendelson, Geranda Notten, Richard Matern & Sofia Seer "Poverty in Canada Through a Deprivation Lens" Food Banks Canada, the Maple Leaf Centre for Food Security and Maytree