

CHILDREN SERVED BY THE SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (FOOD STAMPS)

DEFINITION: Average number and percentage of children served by the SNAP program in the state fiscal year (July 1-June 30).

SIGNIFICANCE

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) program provides participants with monthly benefits that help families purchase the food they need for good health. All benefits provided by SNAP, formerly known as Food Stamps, are paid for by the federal government. States and the federal government share the costs of administering the program.¹

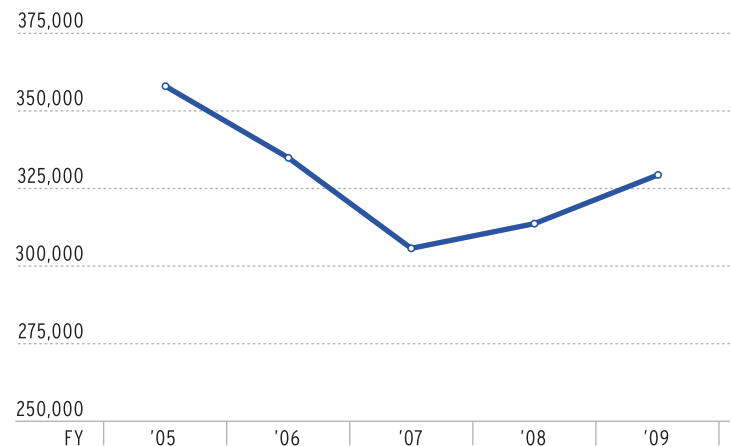
The SNAP program provides participants with an electronic benefits card that can be used to purchase food. SNAP benefits cannot be used to purchase hot food or non-food items (such as medicine or vitamins), nor can they be used to purchase alcohol or tobacco products. In July 2009, the average Louisiana household participating in SNAP included 2.4 recipients and received an average benefit of \$322.² The exact amount of a household's benefits is determined by a household's size and income, with the lowest-income households receiving the largest benefits.

In order to qualify for SNAP assistance, most households must meet certain asset and income criteria. For most households, gross income must be below 130% of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL) and net income must be below 100% FPL. In 2009, this means that a family of four's gross monthly income must be less than \$2,297 and net monthly income (gross income, less allowable deductions) must be less than \$1,767. Households may have up to \$2,000 in resources, such as checking and savings accounts. Certain assets are exempt from the calculation of resources, including a house, vehicle, and the resources of someone receiving Supplemental Security Income (SSI). If the household includes at least one person who is elderly or disabled, the resource limit is \$3,000. In order to receive benefits, all able-bodied adults (with specific exceptions) in the household must register for work and accept suitable employment.³

The USDA estimates that 75% of all Louisianans who were eligible for SNAP in FY 2006 actually participated in the program. Participation rates were slightly lower among

AVERAGE NUMBER OF CHILDREN SERVED BY THE SNAP IN LOUISIANA

Fiscal years 2005-2009



the working poor. Approximately 70% of people who were considered to be among the eligible working poor in Louisiana participated in SNAP in 2006. According to estimates from 2004, 2005 and 2006, Louisiana's SNAP participation rate has been consistently higher than the national average.⁴

The number of Louisiana children served by SNAP declined by 52,365 between FY 2005 and FY 2007, falling from 358,033 to 305,668. This downward trend reversed in FY 2008 and FY 2009, when the program served an average of 329,348 Louisiana children each month.

DATA SOURCE

SNAP data: Department of Social Services, Office of Family Support, Quality Assurance Division. Population Data: Population Estimates Program, Population Division, U.S. Census Bureau Washington D.C. Release Date: August 7, 2008. Available at www.census.gov/popest/estimates.php

DATA NOTE

Because SNAP data are based on state fiscal year averages, population estimates for two years were averaged to calculate a SNAP participation rate per 100 children.

RATE CALCULATION

$100 * (\text{average number of children ages 0-17 served by SNAP} \div \text{total number of children ages 0-17})$

¹ Food Research and Action Center, "Food Stamp Program," Food Research and Action Center, retrieved from www.frac.org on 6/30/2009.

² Louisiana Department of Social Services, Office of Family Support, "Food Stamp Program: State Fiscal Year 2010," Louisiana Department of Social Services retrieved from www.dss.state.la.us/ on 8/20/2009.

³ Louisiana Department of Social Services, Office of Family Support, "Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (Food Stamp Program)," Louisiana Department of Social Services, retrieved from www.dss.state.la.us/ on 6/30/2009.

⁴ Christine Kissmer, "Reaching Those in Need: State Food Stamp Participation Rates in 2006," United States Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service, 2008, retrieved from <http://www.fns.usda.gov> on 6/30/2009.

CHILDREN SERVED BY SNAP

AVERAGE MONTHLY NUMBER
AND PERCENT OF ALL CHILDREN

FY 2005

FY 2007

CHANGE FROM
FYs 2005-2007

	FY 2005		FY 2007		% change in rate*	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
LOUISIANA	358,033	31.0	305,668	28.5	-52,365	-8.2
Acadia	4,715	28.4	4,612	27.7	-103	-2.7
Allen	1,781	30.0	1,689	28.4	-92	-5.4
Ascension	4,042	16.4	4,401	15.7	359	-4.7
Assumption	1,983	33.6	1,908	33.6	-75	0.0
Avoyelles	4,331	40.6	4,065	37.9	-267	-6.7
Beauregard	1,826	21.0	1,722	19.4	-104	-8.0
Bienville	1,320	35.3	1,292	36.0	-27	2.0
Bossier	5,861	21.2	6,105	20.7	244	-2.1
Caddo	21,523	33.8	21,700	33.7	177	-0.3
Calcasieu	12,550	26.5	11,374	24.1	-1,176	-9.0
Caldwell	810	33.4	825	34.9	16	4.4
Cameron	375	16.1	156	9.6	-218	-40.6
Catahoula	946	39.0	1,074	43.9	129	12.6
Claiborne	1,476	39.6	1,353	38.5	-122	-2.7
Concordia	2,265	46.6	2,294	47.6	29	2.3
De Soto	2,222	32.8	2,198	32.7	-24	-0.4
East Baton Rouge	32,226	31.7	34,458	32.0	2,232	0.9
East Carroll	1,658	66.1	1,616	71.6	-42	8.4
East Feliciana	1,235	25.2	1,386	29.0	151	15.2
Evangeline	3,783	39.0	3,638	37.1	-145	-4.9
Franklin	2,354	44.1	2,406	47.1	52	6.6
Grant	1,722	34.2	1,669	32.4	-54	-5.1
Iberia	7,340	35.4	7,173	34.7	-168	-2.0
Iberville	2,982	37.6	3,195	40.8	213	8.4
Jackson	1,024	28.6	1,068	30.1	43	5.0
Jefferson	24,460	22.3	17,730	17.9	-6,730	-20.1
Jefferson Davis	2,148	25.1	1,950	23.1	-198	-8.0
Lafayette	11,798	23.5	11,958	22.7	160	-3.6
Lafourche	5,827	25.4	5,503	24.1	-324	-5.0
La Salle	796	23.4	757	22.3	-39	-4.9
Lincoln	2,944	33.8	3,042	33.6	98	-0.6
Livingston	5,687	20.2	5,876	18.7	190	-7.4
Madison	2,058	57.2	2,022	58.8	-36	2.8
Morehouse	3,611	46.4	3,566	49.1	-45	5.6
Natchitoches	3,958	41.3	4,238	43.5	280	5.3
Orleans	58,867	50.4	18,087	45.9	-40,779	-8.9
Ouachita	14,271	36.3	14,946	37.6	676	3.6
Plaquemines	1,834	23.7	1,157	20.4	-677	-13.9
Pointe Coupee	1,707	30.9	1,867	34.4	159	11.3
Rapides	11,354	34.6	11,085	33.1	-269	-4.4
Red River	962	35.9	948	37.4	-14	4.3
Richland	2,354	44.7	2,346	45.0	-8	0.6
Sabine	1,582	26.9	1,656	28.3	74	5.4
St. Bernard	3,410	21.8	923	36.8	-2,486	69.2
St. Charles	2,807	20.8	2,502	18.0	-304	-13.6
St. Helena	1,156	43.5	1,273	47.8	118	9.9
St. James	1,780	31.5	1,643	29.4	-137	-6.7
St. John the Baptist	3,869	29.5	3,917	28.5	48	-3.3
St. Landry	8,944	36.4	9,102	36.8	158	1.1
St. Martin	4,410	32.7	4,125	30.1	-285	-8.1
St. Mary	5,601	39.5	5,140	37.5	-461	-4.9
St. Tammany	8,198	14.7	6,766	11.5	-1,432	-21.4
Tangipahoa	10,363	37.9	10,617	35.3	253	-6.9
Tensas	840	55.7	833	59.4	-6	6.8
Terrebonne	8,437	29.3	7,274	25.2	-1,163	-13.9
Union	1,546	27.9	1,692	30.5	146	9.0
Vermilion	3,871	27.3	3,564	24.9	-307	-8.6
Vernon	2,042	13.4	2,264	15.2	222	14.1
Washington	4,870	43.2	4,527	39.7	-343	-8.2
Webster	3,063	31.2	3,086	32.1	23	3.1
West Baton Rouge	1,401	25.3	1,474	25.8	73	2.0
West Carroll	1,053	38.0	962	36.2	-91	-4.7
West Feliciana	497	18.8	541	21.7	44	15.1
Winn	1,312	35.8	1,333	38.6	21	7.8

* Note that the "percentage change" refers to the change in the percentage of children who received Food Stamps between 2005 and 2007. Statewide, the percentage of children who received food stamps declined 8.2%, falling from 31% in FY 2005 to 28.5% in FY 2007.