



HUNGER-FREE CAMPUS PROGRAM

A LOUISIANA BOARD OF REGENTS INITIATIVE

ACT 719

Authored by Rep. Barbara Freiberg, R-Baton Rouge, Act 719 created a “hunger-free campus” designation program. The bill set forth the criteria schools have to meet to receive the designation and charged the Board of Regents to develop an application and create a grant program for campuses that receive the designation.

BY THE NUMBERS

29%

of students at four-year colleges experience food insecurity across the nation

38%

of students at two-year colleges experience food insecurity across the nation

\$2.5M

appropriated to Feeding Louisiana to fight hunger and food insecurity⁵

PURSUANT TO ACT 719 OF THE 2022 REGULAR LEGISLATIVE SESSION, THE BOARD OF REGENTS ESTABLISHED THE HUNGER-FREE CAMPUS DESIGNATION.

WHAT IS THE HUNGER-FREE CAMPUS DESIGNATION?

The **Hunger-Free Campus** designation and grant program are a two-part mandate not only to recognize those campuses that have established critical student services around hunger and related concerns but also for the Board of Regents to develop a competitive grant program to support our institutions in these efforts.



WHAT IS THE FOCUS OF REGENTS' HUNGER-FREE CAMPUS DESIGNATION?

- A 2020 study¹ indicates that approximately 29% of students at four-year colleges and 38% at two-year institutions experience food insecurity. The numbers are substantially higher for students of color.
- Research shows hungry students have lower GPAs² and struggle more to earn their degree³ than students who know where their next meal is coming from.
- Even outside of hurricane season, college students in Louisiana, where one in five residents live in poverty⁴, are going hungry.
- Most of Louisiana’s colleges and universities have a food pantry of some kind, although some do not offer fresh foods. Food pantries also cannot address the entirety of patrons’ nutrition needs.

FOOTNOTES

- 1 McCoy, M., Martinelli, S., Reddy, S., Don, R., Thompson, A., Speer, M., Bravo, R., Yudell, M., & Darira, S. (2022). Food insecurity on college campuses: The invisible epidemic. Forefront Group. <https://doi.org/10.1377/forefront.20220127.264905>
- 2 Maroto, M. E., 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.
- 3 Silva, M. R., Kleinert, W. L., Sheppard, A. V., Cantrell, K. A., Freeman-Coppadge, D. J., Tsoy, E., Roberts, T., & Pearrow, M. (2017). The relationship between food security, housing stability, and school performance among college students in an urban university. *Journal of College Student Retention: Research, Theory & Practice*, 19(3), 284-299.8
- 4 Knueven, L. (n.d.). The typical American household earns \$61,000 a year. Here are 15 states where the typical resident earns even less. *Business Insider*. Retrieved from <https://www.businessinsider.com/personal-finance/poorest-states-in-the-us-by-median-household-income-2019-8>
- 5 Feeding Louisiana. (2022, June 13). State appropriates \$2.5 million to Feeding Louisiana to fight hunger and food insecurity statewide. Retrieved from <https://www.feedinglouisiana.org/post/state-appropriates-2-5-million-to-feeding-louisiana-to-fight-hunger-and-food-insecurity-statewide>

HFC TIMELINE

2023

Send out applications and select the first institutions to receive the HFC designation

2024

Establish a competitive grant program and process for institutions to apply, if funding is available.

WHAT WORK HAS BEEN DONE LEADING TO NOW?

Regents surveyed public and private institutions to obtain campus contacts responsible for anti-hunger and food pantry efforts at each institution. Institutions wishing to attain this designation submitted applications to Regents staff by May 1, 2023. Thirty-five institutions were recommended for the designation in August 2023.

Regents is partnering with Feeding Louisiana to provide additional resources to designated HFCs. The Feeding Louisiana network consists of five regional food banks based in Shreveport, Monroe, Alexandria, Baton Rouge, and New Orleans. Louisiana's food banks serve food-insecure households in all 64 parishes statewide.

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For campuses to receive this **Hunger-Free Campus** designation, they shall do all of the following:

- Establish a Hunger-Free Task Force that meets a minimum of three times per academic year and includes at a minimum two or more enrolled students, a representative from the Office of Student Affairs, and a representative from the Office of Financial Aid
- Inform students who receive need-based financial aid of their potential eligibility to receive Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits
- Hold or participate in at least one anti-hunger awareness event per academic year
- Assess the need to provide access to on-campus food distribution, a local off-campus food pantry, or an on-campus food pantry.
- Submit information on where the campus food pantry resides and contact information for the food pantry representative responsible for management of campus food pantry efforts
- Provide a summary of campus efforts in the following areas:
 - (1) Hunger-Free Campus Task Force,
 - (2) SNAP benefits communication informing students of potential eligibility,
 - (3) Anti-Hunger campus event (date, time, location, participating schools), and
 - (4) Whether or not the institution provides access to charitable food distribution on campus, or at a local community food pantry