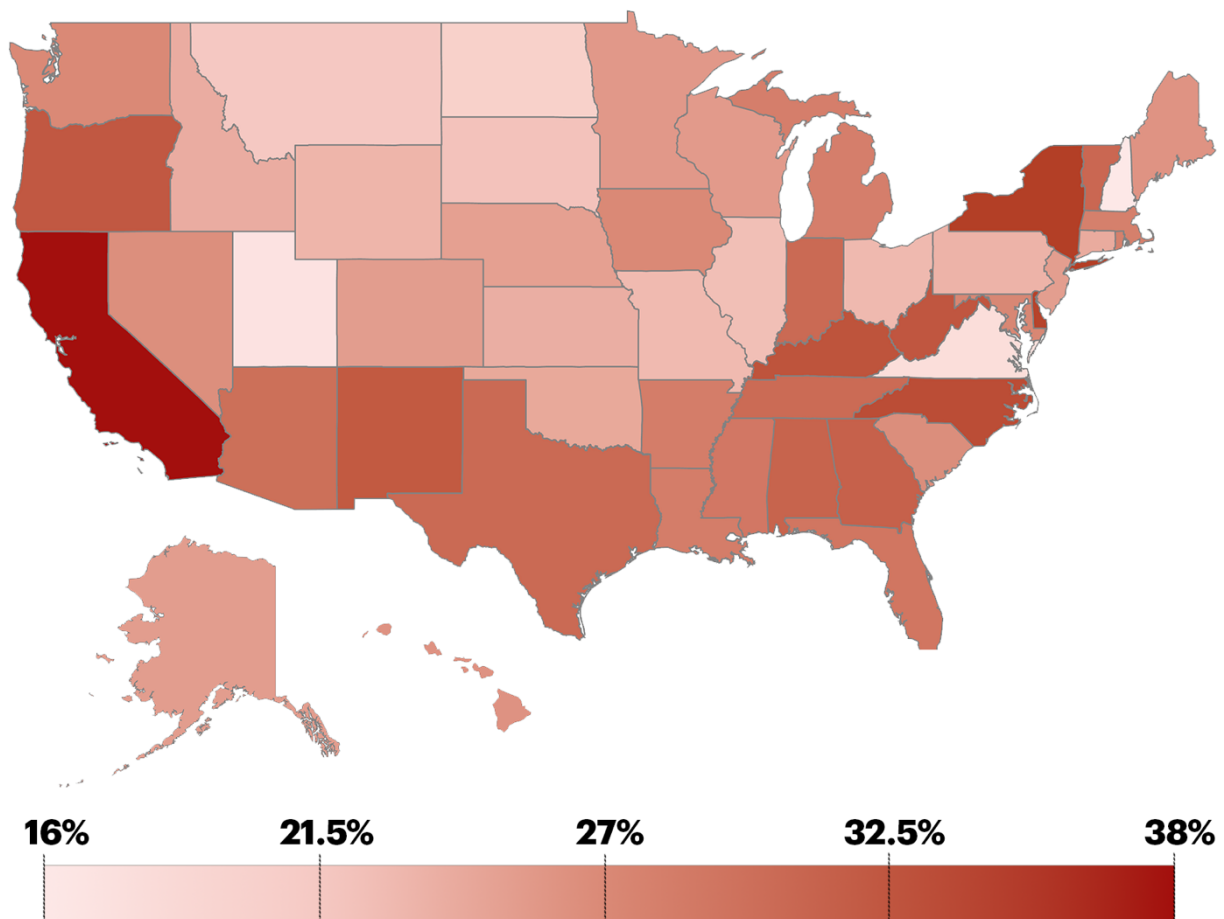


Over 1 in 4 Young U.S. Children at Risk of Hunger From Lost WIC Food Assistance

Over 5 million U.S. children stand to lose food assistance from a crucial nutrition program during the October 2025 government shutdown. The Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) provides free staples like fresh produce and milk, as well as formula vouchers, for nearly 7 million pregnant and breastfeeding parents and young children under 5 who could experience hunger. Currently, it benefits over 1 in 4 young children nationwide.

Food & Water Watch (FWW) used U.S. Department of Agriculture data on WIC participation, along with U.S. Census Bureau population data, to map the number and percentage of young children in each state that are at risk of losing these crucial benefits (see Fig. 1).

Fig. 1: Percentage of Children Under Five Relying on WIC Assistance, by State



Source: Food & Water Watch analysis of data from the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the U.S. Census Bureau

In some states, as many as 1 in 3 children under 5 are at risk of losing WIC benefits (see Fig. 2). This rises to 3 out of 4 in Puerto Rico. The threat of losing WIC benefits comes just after Trump's July 2025 budget reconciliation bill stripped Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits from more than 2 million Americans.

Fig. 2: Number and Percentage of Children Under 5 Relying on WIC Assistance, by State

State	# children <5 on WIC	% children <5 on WIC	State	# children <5 on WIC	% children <5 on WIC
Alabama	88,322	30.9%	Montana	10,582	19.6%
Alaska	11,001	24.5%	Nebraska	29,334	24.1%
Arizona	116,608	29.6%	Nevada	44,236	26.1%
Arkansas	49,559	28.1%	New Hampshire	9,962	16.1%
California	792,368	38.0%	New Jersey	128,415	24.4%
Colorado	75,079	24.5%	New Mexico	33,080	32.0%
Connecticut	41,245	22.9%	New York	362,589	34.9%
Delaware	18,815	34.3%	North Carolina	202,792	33.5%
D.C.	9,522	24.1%	North Dakota	8,114	18.6%
Florida	332,034	29.0%	Ohio	139,166	21.3%
Georgia	191,085	31.2%	Oklahoma	56,188	23.3%
Hawaii	19,606	25.8%	Oregon	63,398	32.2%
Idaho	25,170	22.8%	Pennsylvania	145,165	22.0%
Illinois	135,193	20.6%	Rhode Island	14,313	27.8%
Indiana	122,111	30.3%	South Carolina	76,790	26.2%
Iowa	49,846	26.8%	South Dakota	10,845	20.2%
Kansas	38,410	22.5%	Tennessee	123,581	30.1%
Kentucky	85,358	32.6%	Texas	591,657	30.3%
Louisiana	76,183	28.1%	Utah	37,944	16.6%
Maine	14,997	25.6%	Vermont	8,205	30.6%
Maryland	94,561	26.9%	Virginia	81,565	17.3%
Massachusetts	96,492	27.8%	Washington	112,292	26.8%
Michigan	147,082	28.0%	West Virginia	28,028	32.4%
Minnesota	79,792	25.0%	Wisconsin	74,813	24.7%
Mississippi	47,093	28.8%	Wyoming	6,128	21.6%
Missouri	72,609	21.2%	United States	5,298,126	28.7%

The impacts from the government shutdown are felt most immediately and severely by young children in need. While Congressional Democrats have proposed a short-term appropriations bill to fully fund WIC, the Congressional Republicans' proposal would keep funding flat, amounting to \$600 million over the course of the year in cuts when accounting for rising inflation and grocery prices. All members of Congress must come together to negotiate and pass a bipartisan funding bill that fully funds and protects food assistance for Americans in need, especially children.