
MEDIA RELEASE**Mar 23, 2026**

Food Insecurity on the Rise in Chatham-Kent: 1 in 4 Households Now Struggling

Chatham-Kent Public Health's newly released *2025 Cost of Eating in CK* infographic reveals an alarming trend: food insecurity is getting worse in Chatham-Kent.

In 2024, we reported that at least 1 in 5 households struggled to afford enough food. In 2025, the latest data shows that the number has risen to almost 1 in 4 households, meaning close to 25% of local families are now unable to buy the food they need.

This increase highlights a growing crisis in our community, driven not by a lack of food, but by a lack of sufficient income.

"Food insecurity in Chatham-Kent is driven by inadequate and insecure income, not a lack of food," says Councillor Carmen McGregor, Chair of the Chatham-Kent Food Policy Council. "When people do not earn enough to cover housing, transportation, and food, they're forced into impossible choices. Policies that support stable and adequate income, including a basic income guarantee, are critical to reducing food insecurity."

While community organizations across Chatham-Kent provide important emergency food supports, these services offer only temporary relief. They cannot resolve the underlying issue: too many residents do not have enough income to meet basic needs.

Food insecurity comes with serious health consequences. Adults and children living without consistent access to nutritious food face poorer health outcomes.

"Food insecurity is fundamentally an income issue," says Dr Shanker Nesathurai, Medical Officer of Health for CK Public Health. "Advancing policies that support stable and adequate income ensures that everyone in Chatham-Kent can live a healthier life."

What Residents Can Do

CK Public Health encourages community members to take action by:

- Learning more about food insecurity and its root causes
- Talking openly with friends, family, and colleagues about why food insecurity happens
- Advocating for income-based solutions, including a basic income guarantee, to help ensure everyone in CK can afford nutritious food

To learn more about how food insecurity affects households in Chatham-Kent, community members can visit the new [CK Public Health Household Food Insecurity Dashboard](https://www.ckphu.com/food-insecurity). This interactive tool breaks down income scenarios and offers a deeper look at the factors driving food insecurity. Access it at www.ckphu.com/food-insecurity.

CUTLINE: Dr. Shanker Nesathurai highlights the cost differences between common food items while discussing the realities of food insecurity.

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