



# Food insecurity in nine Chicago community areas

HEALTH SNAPSHOT NO.14

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**F**ood insecurity is defined as limited availability of, or access to, nutritionally adequate and safe foods.<sup>1,2</sup> Although the prevalence is decreasing, more than one in ten US households (affecting over 42 million people) experienced food insecurity in 2015.<sup>2</sup> The greatest burden falls on households with children, people with disabilities, and racial and ethnic minorities.<sup>1,3</sup> In addition to its psychological and emotional effects, food insecurity may play a direct role in the development or worsening of chronic conditions such as diabetes and obesity.<sup>4,5</sup> This health snapshot presents food insecurity findings from the *Sinai Community Health Survey 2.0*, a community-driven, representative survey of nine communities in Chicago.

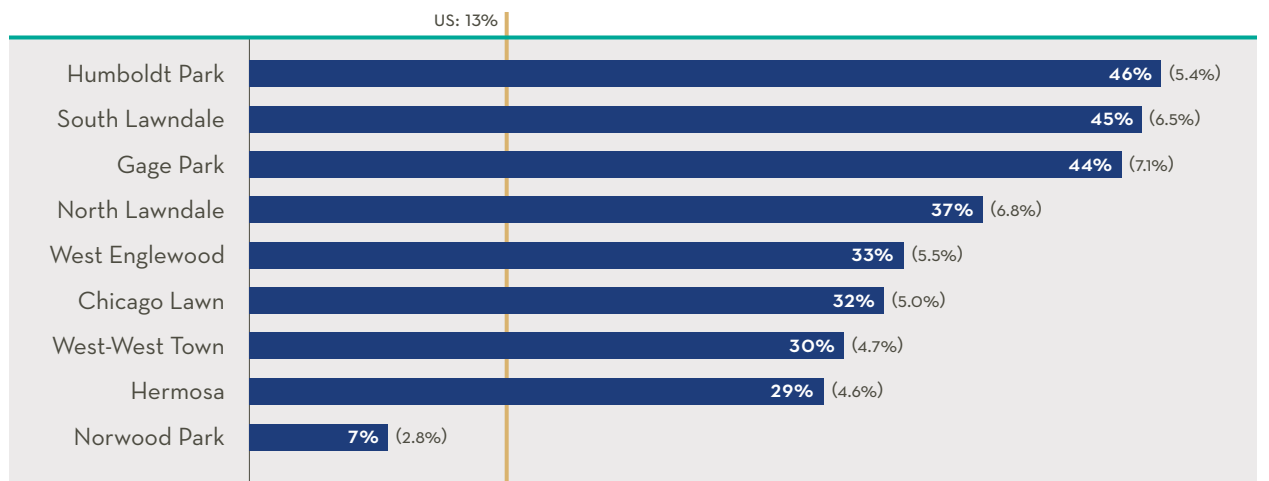
### WHICH COMMUNITIES ARE MOST AFFECTED?

- In Humboldt Park, South Lawndale, and Gage Park, over 40% of households were food insecure in the past year.
- In West Englewood, 44% of households used emergency food and 73% received food stamp benefits in the past year.

### WHO IS MOST AFFECTED?

- There were significant differences in the prevalence of household food insecurity, the percentage that received emergency food, and the percentage that received food stamp benefits by race/ethnicity.
- Compared to non-Hispanic White adults, the percentage of households that received emergency food in the past year was three times as high for adults of Mexican and Puerto Rican origin and nearly seven times as high for non-Hispanic Black adults.

**FIGURE 1: Prevalence of household food insecurity in past year by community area**



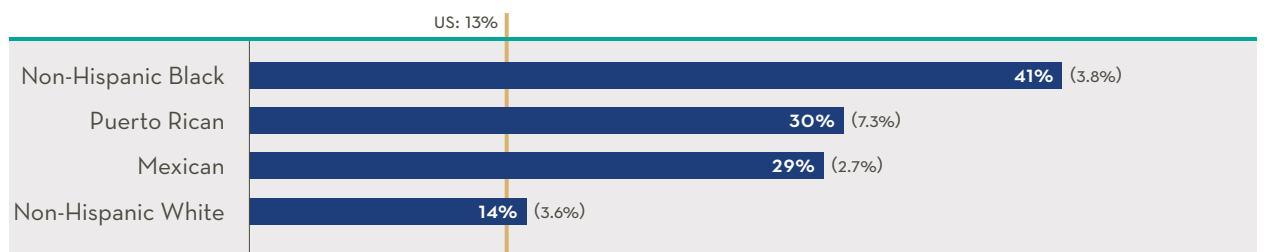
Sampled West Town community area west of Western Avenue only  
 Restricted to one adult respondent per household

PREVALENCE (STANDARD ERROR)

US DATA SOURCE: US Census Bureau, Current Population Survey Food Security Supplement, 2015

- In the nine communities surveyed, the prevalence of household food insecurity in the past year ranged from a high of 46% in Humboldt Park to a low of 7% in Norwood Park.
- Over 40% of households in Humboldt Park, South Lawndale, and Gage Park were food insecure in the past year.

**FIGURE 2: Prevalence of household food insecurity in past year by race/ethnicity**



Restricted to one adult respondent per household

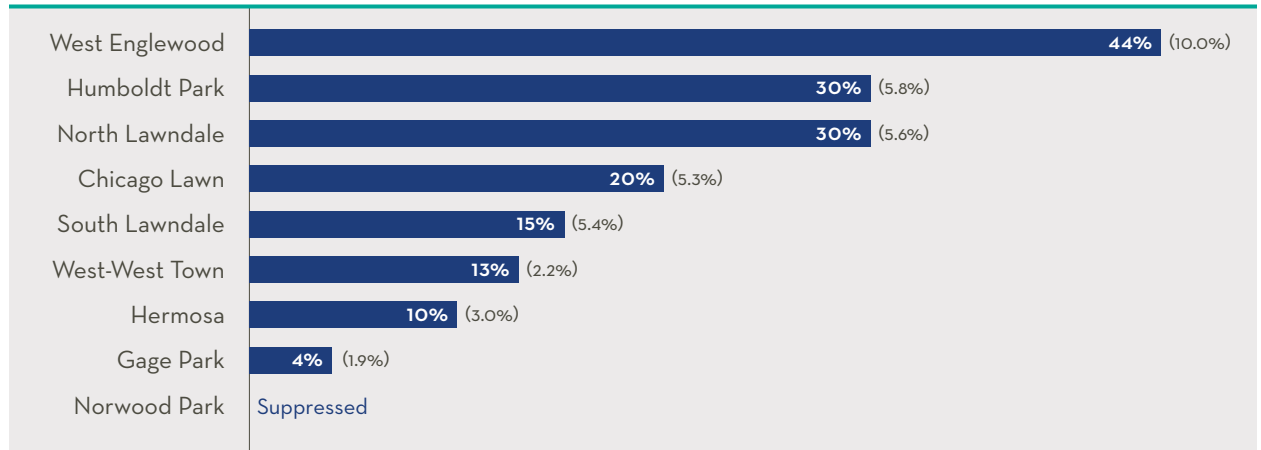
PREVALENCE (STANDARD ERROR)

US DATA SOURCE: US Census Bureau, Current Population Survey Food Security Supplement, 2015

Rao-Scott Chi-Square p-value < 0.0001

- There was a statistically significant difference in the prevalence of household food insecurity by race/ethnic group, which was highest for non-Hispanic Black adults (41%) and lowest for non-Hispanic White adults (14%).
- Compared to non-Hispanic White adults, the prevalence of household food insecurity was twice as high for adults of Mexican and Puerto Rican origin and nearly three times as high for non-Hispanic Black adults.

**FIGURE 3: Percent that used emergency food in past year by community area**

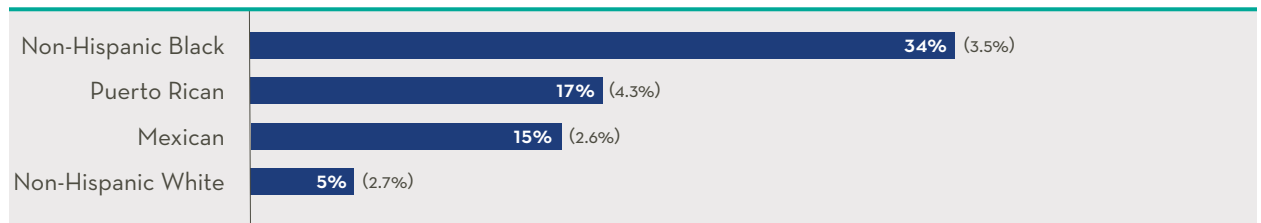


Sampled West Town community area west of Western Avenue only  
 Restricted to one adult respondent per household  
 No national comparison data available

PREVALENCE (STANDARD ERROR)

- The percentage of households that received emergency food in the past year ranged from a high of 44% in West Englewood to a low of 4% in Gage Park.

**FIGURE 4: Percent that used emergency food in past year by race/ethnicity**

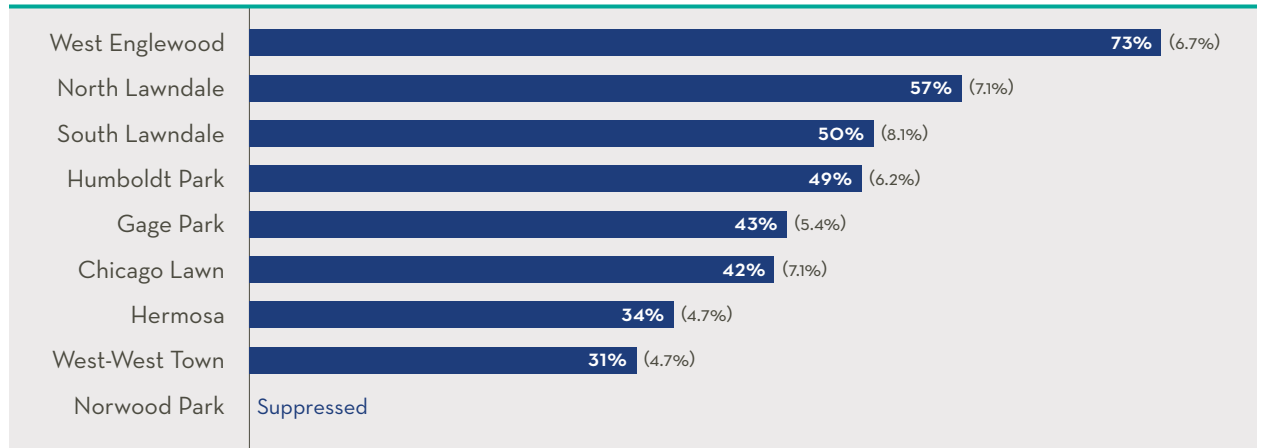


Restricted to one adult respondent per household  
 No national comparison data available  
 Rao-Scott Chi-Square p-value < 0.0001

PREVALENCE (STANDARD ERROR)

- There was a statistically significant difference in the percentage of households that received emergency food in the past year by race/ethnic group, which was highest for non-Hispanic Black adults (34%) and lowest for non-Hispanic White adults (5%).
- Compared to non-Hispanic White adults, the percentage of households that received emergency food in the past year was three times as high for adults of Mexican and Puerto Rican origin and nearly seven times as high for non-Hispanic Black adults.

**FIGURE 5: Percent that received food stamp benefits in past year by community area**

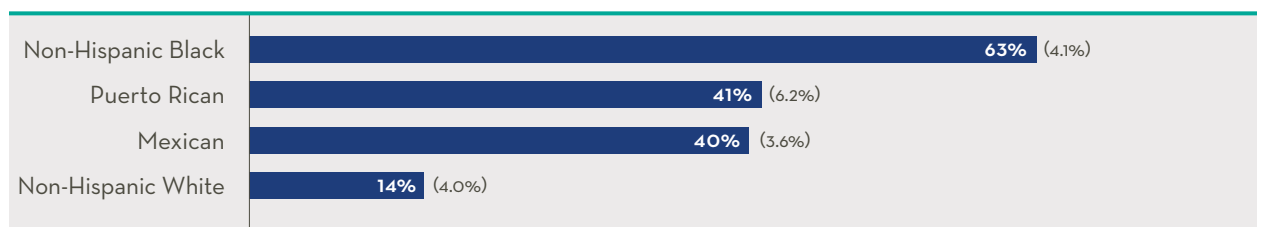


Sampled West Town community area west of Western Avenue only  
 Restricted to one adult respondent per household  
 No national comparison data available

PREVALENCE (STANDARD ERROR)

- The percentage of households that received food stamp benefits in the past year ranged from a high of 73% in West Englewood to a low of 31% in west-West Town.
- In West Englewood, nearly three out of four households received food stamp benefits in the past year.

**FIGURE 6: Percent that received food stamp benefits in past year by race/ethnicity**



Restricted to one adult respondent per household  
 No national comparison data available  
 Rao-Scott Chi-Square p-value < 0.0001

PREVALENCE (STANDARD ERROR)

- There was a statistically significant difference in the percentage of households that received food stamp benefits in the past year by race/ethnic group, which was highest for non-Hispanic Black adults (63%) and lowest for non-Hispanic White adults (14%).
- Compared to non-Hispanic White adults, the percentage of households that received food stamp benefits in the past year was nearly three times as high for adults of Mexican and Puerto Rican origin and over four times as high for non-Hispanic Black adults.

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## ABOUT THE SURVEY

Sinai Urban Health Institute (SUHI) is a unique, nationally-recognized research center on the west side of Chicago. Our mission is to achieve health equity among communities through excellence and innovation in data-driven research, interventions, evaluation, and collaboration. SUHI is a proud member of Sinai Health System. For more information about SUHI, visit [www.SUHChicago.org](http://www.SUHChicago.org).

SUHI designed and conducted the *Sinai Community Health Survey 2.0* in partnership with our Community Advisory Committee and The University of Illinois at Chicago Survey Research Laboratory (SRL). SRL administered surveys face-to-face in both English and Spanish to randomly selected households from each of the nine surveyed communities. Interviewers randomly selected up to two adults (18 and over) per household. Data collection took place between March 2015 and September 2016 with a final sample size of 1,543 adults. Survey results are representative at the community area level for all communities with the exception of West Town, which was sampled west of Western Avenue only. More information about the survey is available at [www.SinaiSurvey.org](http://www.SinaiSurvey.org).

## DEFINITIONS

The presence of **household food insecurity** was defined as scoring at least two out of six on the six-item Household Food Security Survey.<sup>6</sup> If one scale item was missing, the mean value from the five answered items was imputed to calculate a score. A score was not calculated for respondents with two or more missing scale items.

**Emergency food in the past year** was defined as any household member getting emergency food from a church, a food pantry, a food bank, or a soup kitchen in the past 12 months.

**Food stamp benefits in the past year** was defined as any household family members receiving food stamp benefits or benefits from the Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) program in the past 12 months.

## METHODS

We used sampling weights to compute statistical estimates to ensure (1) the estimates accounted for the differential probability of the selection of respondents; and (2) the demographic profile of survey respondents matched the community area demographic profiles from the *2010–2014 American Community Survey*. The Rao-Scott Chi-Square test was used to test for statistical differences by race/ethnic group. Findings were suppressed when the number of observations was less than five. All measures in this brief were restricted to one adult respondent per household.

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## REFERENCES

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