

## HungerCount 2019 Survey

The primary purpose of the annual *HungerCount* survey is to provide a national and provincial snapshot of food bank and meal program use in Canada. The *HungerCount* provides a solid foundation from which the food bank network can advocate municipal, provincial and federal governments for policies that will reduce the need for food banks. It is also a valuable tool for demonstrating to current and prospective donors that the need for their support continues.

Thank you for participating in the 2019 HungerCount survey.

### **This year's HungerCount survey is a bit different.**

Food Banks Canada has added a few questions back into the survey for 2019. These questions will help to inform policy recommendations and aid food banks in better supporting vulnerable people in their communities

The HungerCount survey we have created for 2019 still focuses on core questions regarding food bank use.

### **As you answer the questions in this year's survey, please keep the following in mind:**

1. We have changed some of the questions slightly this year. Carefully read the questions, as well as the instructions, and contact your provincial association or Food Banks Canada if you are unclear about anything.
2. Count hamper/grocery (food bank) and meal/snack programs separately and keep them separate. **Never combine numbers from hamper/grocery and meal programs – report them in different sections of the survey as noted.**  
**NOTE: A food bank hamper/grocery program provides multiple days' worth of food for people to take home**  
**A meal or snack program provides for people to eat food on-site**
3. As in every other HungerCount survey, we are asking you to provide information for the month of March only.

**Let's get started!**

## SURVEY INSTRUCTIONS

**Please complete this questionnaire by APRIL 19, 2019** and return to your *HungerCount* Provincial Coordinator (see contact information below). **And please keep a copy for your records!** We may have follow-up questions for you, and it helps to have a copy at hand.

Many food banks help to protect their clients' privacy by asking *HungerCount* questions in a private area rather than, for example, while clients are waiting in line to pick up food. Most importantly, **clients are not required to answer detailed *HungerCount* survey questions. It is their choice whether or not to participate.**

For additional help answering the questions, you can use the **HungerCount 2019 Worksheet** to keep track of the people you help in March. The worksheet, as well as electronic copies of this survey, is available at <https://www.foodbankscanada.ca/HungerCount-Survey.aspx>

Please Return the survey to:

Diana Stapleton, Food Banks Canada, 5090 Explorer Dr. Suite 203, Mississauga, ON L4W 4T9

Email: [diana@foodbankscanada.ca](mailto:diana@foodbankscanada.ca)

### **As we noted above, this year's *HungerCount* survey is a bit different.**

We would like to introduce you to 'Abigail' and 'Jon,' two fictional food bank users. **We know that some of the questions in the *HungerCount* survey can be confusing**, and we are going to use Abigail and Jon as examples to help explain some of the questions.

'Jon' is single and has no kids; he gets by on disability benefits. He accessed his local food bank four times in March.

'Abigail' is also single, and she has two children; she makes a living keeping the books for several small businesses. She is also attending college. She used her town's food bank twice in March.

Abigail and Jon will appear in different sections of the survey – we hope they will be helpful!

# **SECTION A**

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## **INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR ORGANIZATION**

**A1/ Please tell us about your organization:**

Organization name: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/Town: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone # : \_\_\_\_\_

Province: \_\_\_\_\_ Email : \_\_\_\_\_

Postal Code : \_\_\_\_\_

Survey contact person: \_\_\_\_\_

**A2/ Does your organization operate a food bank hamper/grocery program that provides multiple days' worth of food for people to take home?**

Yes  No

**A3/ Does your organization operate a meal or snack program, where people eat food on-site?**

Yes  No

**A4/ Do you distribute food to other organizations?**

Yes  No

**A5/ If yes, to how many organizations do you distribute food (please attach a list) ?**

# SECTION B

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## INFORMATION ON INDIVIDUALS SERVED BY FOOD BANK HAMPER/GROCERY PROGRAMS

\*Only complete this section if your organization operates a **food bank hamper/grocery program** – in other words, a program that provides multiple days’ worth of food for people to take home.

\*We understand that it may not be possible to collect all of this information about all of your clients. **The most important thing to count is the number of clients assisted by your organization and affiliated agencies in March 2019, which includes the individuals who walk through your doors as well as their household or family members.**

**Please provide information for the month of March only.**

If you **only** operate a meal or snack program, please go directly to SECTION D.

Note: In this section, **only** report on numbers related to your food bank hamper/grocery program (i.e. providing multiple days’ worth of food to take home). **Do not** report on meal program numbers in this section.

### **SURVEY NOTE**

Some people will have used your food bank hamper program only once in March. Other people may have used your food bank hamper program more than once during the month.

**The following questions ask about the number of “unique individuals” who used your food bank hamper program in March (Question 1), and the number of visits those individuals made to the program (Question 2).**

We will use Abigail and Jon as examples to help explain each question.

**B1/ UNIQUE INDIVIDUALS SERVED BY YOUR FOOD BANK HAMPER/GROCERY PROGRAM**

**IN THE MONTH OF MARCH 2019 ONLY, how many unique individuals received a food hamper/groceries (i.e. multiple days' worth of food) from your organization?**

For this question, **PLEASE COUNT EACH PERSON ONLY ONCE**, regardless of the number of times they received food in March. Include the people who came to your organization for your food bank program (i.e. received multiple days' worth of food to take home), and all the people in their families at home.

**Please provide as much information as you are able in the following categories:**

**Here is how we would count Jon and Abigail (who we introduced above):**

Jon used the food bank four times in March. For Question 1, we would count Jon just once – he is one “unique individual.”

Abigail used the food bank twice in March. For this question, we would count Abigail and her two children just once each – making up 3 “unique individuals.”

[\*\* For additional examples, please see Appendix page 16.]

**CHILDREN**

0-2 years of age: \_\_\_\_\_

3-5 years of age: \_\_\_\_\_

6-11 years of age: \_\_\_\_\_

12-17 years of age: \_\_\_\_\_

Total children: \_\_\_\_\_

**ADULTS**

18-30 years of age: \_\_\_\_\_

31-44 years of age: \_\_\_\_\_

45-64 years of age: \_\_\_\_\_

65+ years of age: \_\_\_\_\_

Total adults: \_\_\_\_\_

**AGE UNDISCLOSED:** \_\_\_\_\_

**TOTAL INDIVIDUALS** (adults + children + undisclosed): \_\_\_\_\_

**B2/ VISITS TO YOUR FOOD BANK HAMPER PROGRAM**

**IN THE MONTH OF MARCH 2019 ONLY, how many visits were made to your organization’s food bank hamper program?**

For this question, count each person once for each time they received food in March. Include the people who came to your organization for food, and all the people in their families at home.

**Here is how we would count Jon and Abigail:**

Jon used the food bank four times in March. For this question, we would count Jon four times – making up 4 visits.

Abigail and her two children used the food bank twice in March. For this question, we would count Abigail and each of her kids twice – making up 6 visits.

[\*\* For additional examples, please see page 16.]

**Please provide as much information as you are able in the following categories:**

Children (under 18 years old): \_\_\_\_\_

Adults (18 years or older): \_\_\_\_\_

Age undisclosed: \_\_\_\_\_

Total (adults + children + undisclosed): \_\_\_\_\_

**B3/ Of the total number of *separate adults*, how many were:**

**Provide figures for SEPARATE ADULTS (age 18+) ONLY.** Numbers may overlap. For example, Abigail is in college so would count as ‘1’ for “women,” and ‘1’ for “post-secondary students.”

a. Women \_\_\_\_\_

b. Post-Secondary Students \_\_\_\_\_

c. New immigrants or refugees (in Canada less than 10 years) \_\_\_\_\_

d. First Nations, Inuit, or Métis \_\_\_\_\_

## SECTION C

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### HOUSEHOLD TYPE AND PRIMARY SOURCE OF INCOME OF HOUSEHOLDS SERVED BY FOOD BANK HAMPER/GROCERY PROGRAMS

\* Only complete this section if your organization operates a food bank hamper/grocery program, providing multiple days' worth of food for people to take home.

**Please provide information for the month of March only.**

Note: In this section, **only** report on numbers related to your food bank hamper/grocery program (i.e. providing multiple days' worth of food to take home). **Do not** report on meal program numbers in this section.

If you only operate a meal or snack program, please go directly to SECTION D.

#### **SURVEY NOTE**

Some households will have used your food bank hamper program only once in March. Other households may have used your food bank hamper program more than once during the month.

For the following questions, we are interested in the number of "unique households" who used your food bank hamper program. In other words, **please count each household only once, regardless of the number of times they received food in March.**

C1/ How many of the households assisted by your food bank hamper program in March 2019 were in each of the following categories?

**Here is how we would count Abigail and Jon for this question:**

Abigail and her kids are a 'single parent/ guardian family.' Even though Abigail used the food bank twice in March, for this question we would count Abigail's household just once.

Since Jon lives on his own, he is recorded as a single person. While Jon used the food bank four times in March, for this question, we would count Jon just once.

[\*\* For additional examples – **including multi-generational households and multiple singles** sharing a living space – please see Appendix page 16.]

Single-parent / guardian with children under 18: \_\_\_\_\_

Two-parent / guardian with children under 18: \_\_\_\_\_

Couple with no children: \_\_\_\_\_

Single people: \_\_\_\_\_

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Don't know: \_\_\_\_\_

TOTAL: \_\_\_\_\_



**C2/ How many of the households assisted by your food bank hamper program reported that their PRIMARY SOURCE of income was from the following sources? If there are multiple sources of income for a household, ask for the highest income source for that household.**

**Here is how we would count Abigail and Jon for this question:**

Abigail earns most of her income as a bookkeeper, which fits under “employment.” Even though Abigail used the food bank twice in March, for this question we would count her household just once.

Jon receives most of his income from the provincial disability support program, which fits under “disability related benefits.” Even though Jon used the food bank four times in March, for this question we would count him only once.

[\*\* For explanation of disability related benefits please see Appendix page 17.]

Employment: \_\_\_\_\_

Employment Insurance: \_\_\_\_\_

Social assistance (welfare): \_\_\_\_\_

Disability related benefits: \_\_\_\_\_

Old age pension: \_\_\_\_\_

Student loans/scholarships: \_\_\_\_\_

Canada Child Benefit \_\_\_\_\_

No income: \_\_\_\_\_

Other income: \_\_\_\_\_

Don't know: \_\_\_\_\_

TOTAL: \_\_\_\_\_

**C3/ How do the households assisted by your food bank hamper program report their housing situation ?**

**Here is how we would count Abigail and Jon for this question:**

Abigail and her children live in a subsidised apartment. It would fit under social rental housing. Even though Abigail used the food bank twice in March, for this question we would count her household just once.

Jon lives alone in a trailer that he rents. It would fit under private rental housing. Even though Jon used the food bank four times in March, for this question we would count him only once.

[\*\* For additional examples, please see Appendix page 17.]

Home they own:	_____
Private rental housing:	_____
Rooming house:	_____
Social rental housing (public):	_____
Band owned housing:	_____
Emergency shelter:	_____
Group home/youth shelter:	_____
On the street	_____
With friends or family:	_____
Other :	_____
Don't know:	_____
TOTAL:	_____

**C4/ What is the reason for the household needing to visit the food bank? (The answer to this question is useful for public policy discussions). Please pick one.**

- Low Wages/delayed wages \_\_\_\_\_
- Not enough work hours \_\_\_\_\_
- Unemployed/ recently lost job \_\_\_\_\_
- Social assistance/benefits too low \_\_\_\_\_
- Relocation (immigration/moving) \_\_\_\_\_
- Unexpected expense \_\_\_\_\_
- Sickness/ medical expense \_\_\_\_\_
- Homeless \_\_\_\_\_
- Debt \_\_\_\_\_
- Natural disaster (fire/flood) \_\_\_\_\_
- Family break up \_\_\_\_\_
- Other \_\_\_\_\_
- Undisclosed \_\_\_\_\_

# SECTION D

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## MEALS AND SNACKS

**In this section, we are asking you to count the number of meals and snacks served by your organization.**

\* Please provide information on **the number of meals and snacks served** – **NOT the number of people** who were served.

### **SURVEY NOTE**

Meals and snacks are served and consumed on-site. Please note this section **does not** relate to the food you give out through your food bank program.

#### **What is a meal?**

A meal could be a soup and sandwich, chicken and potatoes with dessert, beef stew and coffee – usually served during normal meal times.

#### **What is a snack?**

A snack could be a coffee and a muffin during off-hours at a soup kitchen, or a granola bar and box of juice provided to kids at an after-school program. These usually happen outside of normal meal times but are often provided during breakfast time as well.



# **SECTION E**

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## **POLL – POLICIES TO REDUCE HUNGER**

Throughout the year, Food Banks Canada uses information gleaned from *HungerCount* to influence government policy affecting hunger in Canada.

Information from the following poll will help us choose our areas of policy focus in the coming year.

**E1/ Please rank each of the following recommended government policy changes in terms of their importance in reducing hunger in your community. Give a ranking number to each statement.**

**5 = Extremely Important; 4 = Very important; 3 = Moderately important;  
2 = Of little importance; 1 = Not at all important**

- \_\_\_ Improve access to Employment Insurance
- \_\_\_ Increase access to affordable child care
- \_\_\_ Raise provincial minimum wage levels
- \_\_\_ Expand supports for new immigrants
- \_\_\_ Increase the stock of affordable housing
- \_\_\_ Increase addictions services and supports
- \_\_\_ Implement Guaranteed Annual Income/Basic Income
- \_\_\_ Raise pension levels for seniors
- \_\_\_ Increase social assistance benefit levels
- \_\_\_ Expand job training options for adults
- \_\_\_ Increase levels of provincial disability income supports
- \_\_\_ Increase mental health supports
- \_\_\_ Implement a National Poverty Reduction Strategy
- \_\_\_ Implement a National Food Policy
- \_\_\_ Increase supports for low income singles

**Food Banks Canada *HungerCount* Data Use Policy**

Food Banks Canada uses information from the *HungerCount* survey to provide government, academia, the media, the general public, current and prospective donors, and other audiences with information about food bank and other food program use in Canada.

Food Banks Canada reserves the right to use and disseminate national-, provincial-, regional-, and, when appropriate, community-level information provided in the *HungerCount* at its discretion. Food Banks Canada will not, however, release information respecting an individual organization to media, government, or the general public, without first consulting with that organization.

# APPENDIX

## Examples – How to record different types of households

*This page presents four fictional households and demonstrates how they would be reported.*

### Household 1 – Multi-generational family

Liz is 43, and Danny is 47. They are living together, and have a daughter named Maya, who is 14. Six months ago, Danny's mom Harriet, who is 84, moved in with them.

Liz works part-time for a before- and after-school child care provider. Danny is currently unemployed and has no income. They are having trouble making ends meet, and they visited their local food bank two times in March.

Question B1/number of people:	4 people
Question B2/number of visits:	8 visits
Question C1/household type:	Two-parent/guardian family
Question C2/income source:	Employment

### Household 2 – Couple without children

Kathleen is 52, and Roger is 50. They rent a two-bedroom apartment together, and they sub-lease one of their bedrooms for some extra income. Kathleen and Roger operate a small antique business. They access the local food bank from time to time, including once in March.

Question B1/number of people:	2 people
Question B2/number of visits:	2 visits
Question C1/household type:	Couple/Adults without children
Question C2/income source:	Employment

### Household 3 – Single person

Ahmed is 34, and he recently arrived in Canada from Syria. Ahmed is taking ESL classes and receives social assistance. He is subletting a room from Kathleen and Roger (Household 2, above). As part of their living arrangement, they keep their food separate. After being referred to the food bank by Roger, Ahmed received food three times in March. **NOTE: Multiple singles sharing living space should be classified as multiple single households. If your system can't do that, then they would be "other".**

Question B1/number of people:	1 person
Question B2/number of visits:	3 visits
Question C1/household type:	Single person
Question C2/income source:	Social assistance



### **Question C2: Income Source – Disability Related Benefits**

Disability benefits are determined at the **provincial level**. Some provinces have specific disability benefit programs (like BC, AB, SK and ON), while others have one social assistance program with additional supports to people with disabilities, including higher benefits for those with severe and/or permanent disabilities.

Where disability support is a separate program from social assistance (welfare), please classify income source as disability-related support. Where disability support is included within the provincial social assistance program, and the person can state they receive disability benefits on top of their social assistance, then classify it as disability supports. If the person states social assistance, with no reference to disability related support, then classify as social assistance.

### **Question C3 Housing Type**

**In a home they own:** the household owns their home, or currently has a mortgage or payment plan to buy the home in which they are currently living. Can include mobile homes.

**In private rental housing:** the household is paying market rent in a privately-owned house/ apartment building, motel, mobile home etc.

**Please return the completed survey to your provincial association, or email to [diana@foodbankscanada.ca](mailto:diana@foodbankscanada.ca)**

You can also mail the survey to:

5090 Explorer Dr. Suite 203, Mississauga, ON L4W 4T9