**Low-income households at breaking point and routinely skipping meals**

**UNDER EMBARGO 12:01am Tuesday 15October, Sydney:** Low-income households are enduring the highest rates of food insecurity since the onset of the cost-of-living crisis, according to the Foodbank Hunger Report 2024, released today.

Now in its eleventh year, the report from food relief organisation Foodbank, surveyed 4,260 people and highlights the growing divide between those who are able to absorb or adapt to rising costs and those being left behind. More than 870,000 (48%) of Australia’s low-income households (earning less than $30,000) are experiencing food insecurity. This is the highest rate since the onset of the cost-of-living crisis, up 5% on 2022.

The report offers an insight into the state of hunger across the country and reveals more than half (59%) of all food insecure households are experiencing the most severe level of hardship, regularly skipping meals or going entire days without food.

Single parent households are the hardest hit with over two-thirds (69%) facing food insecurity and 41% of these also experiencing the severest form.

Foodbank Australia CEO, Brianna Casey AM is extremely concerned with the latest findings. “We warned at the beginning of the cost-of-living crisis that low-income households were always going to suffer first, worst and for the longest and these findings confirm this. We are seeing families that were just getting by, now reaching their limits and making unimaginable choices.”

This year’s report highlights the most common contributing factors to food insecurity in Australia. “Unsurprisingly, people are being forced to cut back on the most basic of essentials, nutritious food, because of the combination of higher costs of housing and essential goods, particularly food and utilities, while wages fail to keep pace – all of which are entirely outside of the control of most Australian households,” said Ms Casey.

Food relief charities such as Foodbank are continuing to experience heightened demand, not only because of the ongoing impacts of the cost-of-living crisis, but also the increase in awareness of where to get help, coupled with core support systems, such as family and friends, no longer being able to assist.

More than half (53%) of food insecure households reported they are receiving food relief more often than a year ago. Worryingly, food insecure households receiving help from friends and family has dropped significantly from 32% in 2023 to 25% in 2024.

“This is an alarming statistic that demonstrates just how desperate the situation has become for those who were once a lifeline suddenly finding themselves living pay to pay, watching every dollar and sadly, no longer in a position to extend help to loved ones and friends.

“We know it’s going to take months, if not years, for many families to bounce back. We will continue to wrap our arms around our communities for as long as it takes, doing our bit to help nutritious, culturally appropriate food get to as many struggling households as possible,” said Ms Casey.

Foodbank urges anyone under pressure to locate their closest food relief outlet at foodbank.org.au

**-ENDS-**

**Key Foodbank Hunger Report 2024 Statistics**

* Nearly half (48%) of **Australia’s low-income households** (earning less than $30,000 per year) are experiencing food insecurity at the highest rate since the onset of the cost-of-living crisis (5% up on 2022).
* More than half (59%) of **all food insecure households** are experiencing the most extreme level of hardship, regularly skipping meals or going entire days without food.
* **Single-parent households** are the hardest hit, with over two thirds (69%) facing food insecurity and 41% experiencing the severest form, regularly skipping meals or going entire days without food.
* Food insecurity is being felt more acutely in the **regions** (37%)compared to metropolitan areas (30%).
* **Austalia’s charities** continue to grapple withhistorically high demand **f**or food relief. Food insecure households also report receiving food relief more often as they struggle to cope (53% seeking food more often than a year ago).
* Increasingly **family and friends**, are no longer in a position to help fill the gap with only a quarter of food insecure households now receiving this help, down from a third in 2023.

**Methodology**

This report presents key findings from the Foodbank Hunger Report 2024 research which was conducted between 29 July – 16 August 2024, through an online survey of 4,260 Australians aged 18 years or older. The sample was nationally representative by age, gender and location (capital city / rest of state) in each major state, with stratified quotas to ensure all major states have a robust minimum sample size of n=600 or above.

All 4,260 Australians answered up to 18 questions in the United States Department of Agriculture Household Food Security Survey Module (HFSSM) for measurement of the prevalence of household food security over the 12 months ending 16 August 2024.

A total of 1,278 respondents (32%) were identified through the HFSSM as being from moderately and severely food insecure households. This group continued to answer a deep dive module about their experience living with food insecurity over the last 12 months.

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**ABOUT FOODBANK**

At Foodbank we believe everyone should have access to good food. We’re here for the everyday Australians who are going without.

We are working hard to change that.

In Australia we work with 2,844 frontline charities and 3,792 school breakfast programs to source the equivalent of 92 million meals for the many who could use a hand.

For more information, please visit [www.foodbank.org.au](http://www.foodbank.org.au).