The Maryland Hunger Map
How to Use the Maryland Hunger Map

The Maryland Hunger Map is here for you to use, to learn more about the people in need in Maryland as well as the work the Maryland Food Bank is doing to fight hunger. Here are some tips to take advantage of while using this map.

**General Navigation**

1. **Data Layers**
   Layers can be turned on and off via the ‘eye’ icon on the left side of the map layers key.

   ![Data Layers](image)

   Now set to only show “number of partner agencies” and “Food Distributed (lbs.).”
2. Locate Maryland Food Bank Partner Agencies
You can browse through a list of MFB partner agencies in data layer on the top. Make sure to turn on the agency type you would like to see on the map (i.e., “Network partners: Pantry Programs”), and turn off all other agencies you do not wish to see. The color of the dot relates to the type of agency.

3. Search Engine
You can use the search box at the top end of the frame to browse information based on either the name of an MFB partner agency or a specific address. With this feature, you can quickly pull up information for a specific MFB partner site or map out community assets, schools, MFB network partner sites in the vicinity. You may also activate the measure function (top right corner of the frame) to measure geographic distances between places.

4. Bubbles
The bubbles on the map visualize the scale of food distribution impact. The larger the bubble, the larger the amount of food distributed in pounds. You will find a legend under the map layers key to the left, and confirm that the color of the dots on the map and the color on the legend match to confirm the dataset.
5. **Info Boxes**

You can learn more about a data point by clicking on it, which will open a pop-up info box. Depending on what layer you have turned on, different information will be shown. For instance, the Partner Agencies layer will show a set of information about the partner agency. Depending on the extent to which you are zoomed in to one data point, the system will share different information for the nearest geographic unit (Zip, County). Several pop-up boxes may open simultaneously if there are multiple features near where you click. You can view any other pop-up boxes by using the arrows in the upper right of the pop up.

6. **Visualize Data by Zip, County, Census Tract, Zip Code**

You can visualize MFB food distribution or any other item of interest (poverty, etc.) by zip code, census tract, census place, county, or Community Statistical Area (Baltimore City). You may also wish to activate specific indicators such as the number of partner agencies in one area, the percentage of people that are food insecure, unemployed, or in poverty. Click on the appropriate ‘eye’ icon to make those data points visible. Fuller color tones indicate greater need (and inversely, impact). Navigate toward the bottom end of the data layer (left) to turn geo units on or off.

7. **Hunger Hotspots – Food Insecurity**

This layer shows the difference between need and impact within the zip codes (state) and community statistical areas (Baltimore City). MFB projects the number of meals needed to help food insecure neighbors in one neighborhood or jurisdiction (real need), and then compares that number with our actual distribution of food (real impact). Food insecurity projections are based on Feeding America data, which factor in in socioeconomic variables, including median income, poverty, unemployment, disability, and homeownership. Fuller color tones indicate greater need (more ‘unmet pounds’), as explained in the Hunger Hotspots legend in the bottom left of your browser window.
8. Hunger Hotspots – ALICE
Alternatively, you may wish to visualize hunger hotspots calculated using the ALICE algorithm. ALICE, an acronym for Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed, is the United Way’s measure of true financial hardship. Unlike the Federal Poverty Level, the ALICE Household Survival Budget accounts for the actual costs of basic necessities. According to ALICE research, even families with incomes significantly above poverty may be at risk of experiencing food insecurity. This layer visualizes the difference between the ALICE projection of need and the Maryland Food Bank’s food distribution impact. Fuller color tones indicate greater need (more ‘unmet pounds’), as explained in the Hunger Hotspots legend to the left.

9. Use the Map to Visualize Demographics, Community Assets
Finally, you can use the map to answer specific research questions. Located under the jurisdictional data layers (Baltimore CSA, Census Tract, Zip Code, County), you may select food distribution statistics and/or a wide range of needs indicators, including food insecurity, child and senior food insecurity, food stamp participation, unemployment, home ownership, poverty, and demographic data (altogether up to 72 data layers). Higher up in the top left navigation, you can click to visualize nearby schools, community health centers, or SNAP retailers.