



# The Political Drivers of Health ECHO

Policies to Advance the Health & Economic Prosperity  
of New Hampshire Communities



# Series Learning Objectives

Learner will be able to:

1. Explain how policy and politics impact the health and well-being of NH individuals and communities
2. Describe key health-related bills before the NH legislature and their potential impact on health.
3. Advocate effectively for policies that support health and well being in our communities

# Political Drivers of Health

*The political processes that impact the social, environmental and health care drivers of health, including executive decisions, legislative policies, judicial decisions, electoral processes and public advocacy.*

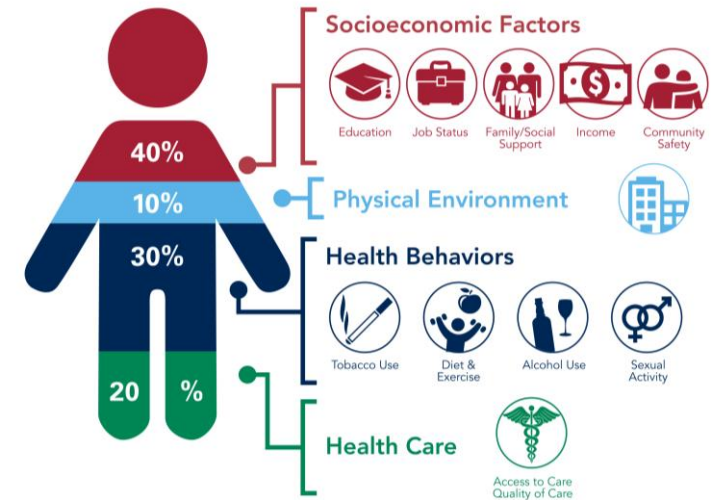
## Upstream

Social & Environmental Drivers



**Midstream**  
Individual Activities & Community Interventions

**Downstream**  
Healthcare Interventions



Source: Institute for Clinical Systems Improvement; Going Beyond Clinical Walls: Solving Complex Problems, 2014 Graphic designed by Prof

80% Socioeconomic, environmental & health behavioral factors

20% Health care factors

# Series Sessions

<b>Date</b>	<b>Session Title</b>
20 February 2025	<a href="#"><u>Our Current Political Landscape/Budget</u></a>
06 March 2025	<a href="#"><u>School Meals - Medicaid</u></a>
20 March 2025	Right Care, Right Time
03 April 2025	Safe and Affordable Housing
17 April 2025	Maternal Health
01 May 2025	TBD
15 May 2025	Budget
29 May 2025	Wrap Up

# Today's Program

- Brief housekeeping
- Didactic: Our Current Political Landscape, *Dean Spiliotes*
- Legislation: House Bill 1 & 2, the NH Budget, *Phil Sletten*
- Discussion- *Facilitated by Courtney Tanner*
- Brief summary
- Up Next



# THE NEW HAMPSHIRE STATE BUDGET AND THE GOVERNOR'S PROPOSAL

PHIL SLETTEN, RESEARCH DIRECTOR

DARTMOUTH ECHO SERIES

FEBRUARY 20, 2025

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# THE BASICS OF THE STATE BUDGET

## Two-year, or Biennial, Operating Budget

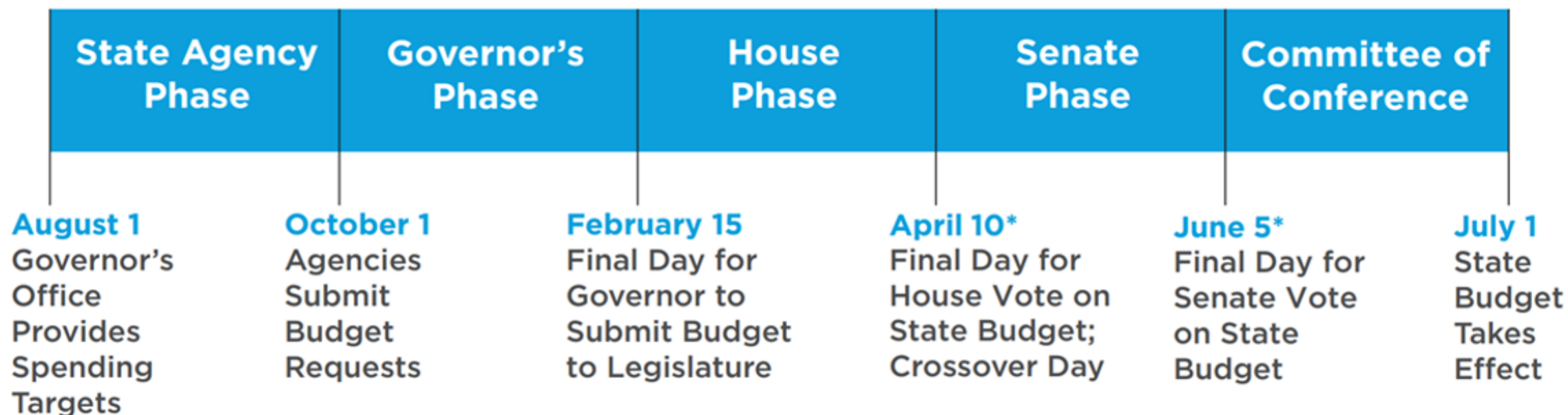
- Funds *most*, but not all, State operations for two State Fiscal Years (SFYs), typically beginning shortly after the budget is approved
- Current State Budget provides funding for SFYs 2024-2025, which spans July 1, 2023 to June 30, 2025, from SFY 2023 surplus carried forward and two years of revenue projected when budget passed
- State Budget, currently being implemented, appropriated approximately \$15.17 billion for SFYs 2024-2025 combined

## Comprised of Two Separate Pieces of Legislation

- Operating Budget Bill, typically House Bill 1 or “HB 1,” holds the line-item appropriations with the amount of money in each component of State programs, standardized class lines for expenditures
- Trailer Bill, typically House Bill 2 or “HB 2,” is the companion omnibus bill with policy changes and appropriations separate from HB 1

# BUDGET CREATED IN A YEARLONG PROCESS, TYPICALLY WITH FIVE PHASES

## State Budget Process Timeline



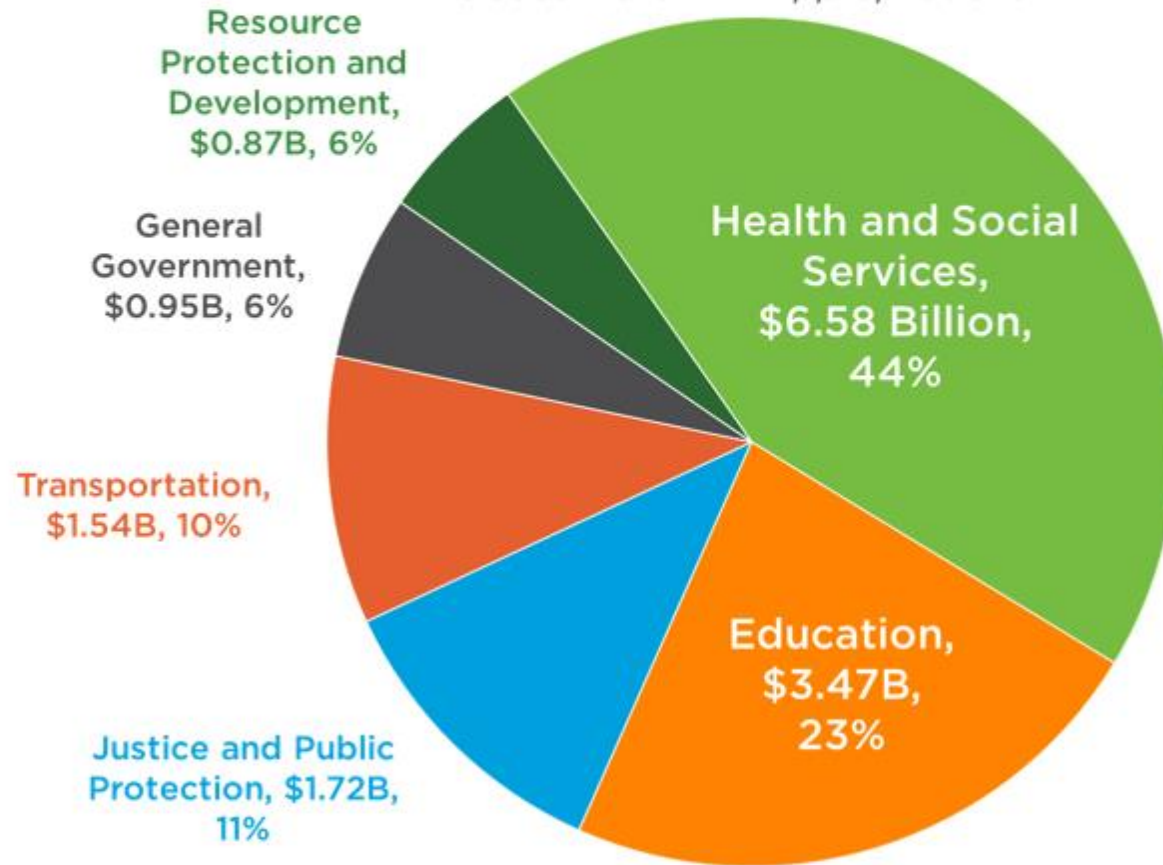
\*Dates set by legislative leadership each session; all other dates specified in statute.



# BUDGET APPROPRIATIONS IN SIX CATEGORIES

## STATE BUDGET APPROPRIATIONS BY CATEGORY

*State Fiscal Years 2024-25 and Surplus Appropriations,  
Includes Trailer Bill Appropriations*



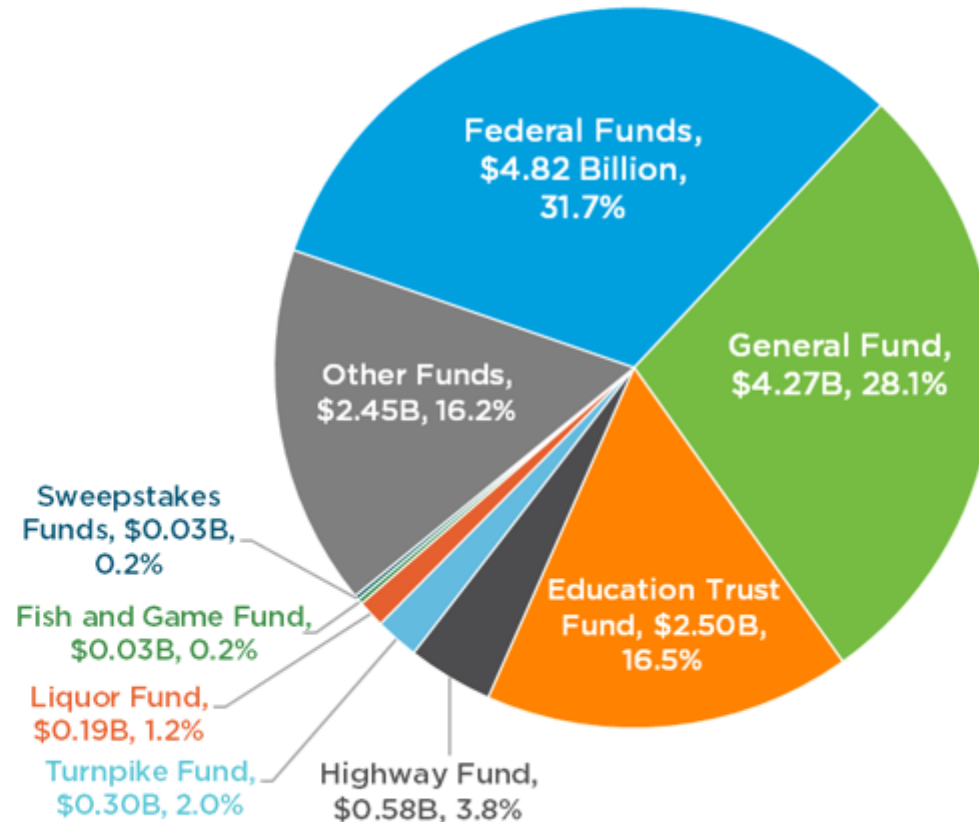
Note: General Government includes HB 2 appropriations for the Affordable Housing Fund, InvestNH, and all State employee pay raises defined by and funded through appropriations made in House Bill 2, as amended by the House.

Sources: New Hampshire Office of Legislative Budget Assistant, Compare House Finance to Governor, March 28, 2023, Surplus Statements, April 6 and 7, 2023, Briefing on Senate Finance Changes to House Passed Budget, June 6, 2023; 2023-2092s; 2023-2171s; 2023-2139s

# FEDERAL FUNDS, GENERAL FUND, AND EDUCATION TRUST FUND ARE LARGEST PARTS

## THE STATE BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEARS 2024 AND 2025, BY FUND

*Includes Operating Budget and Trailer Bill Appropriations*



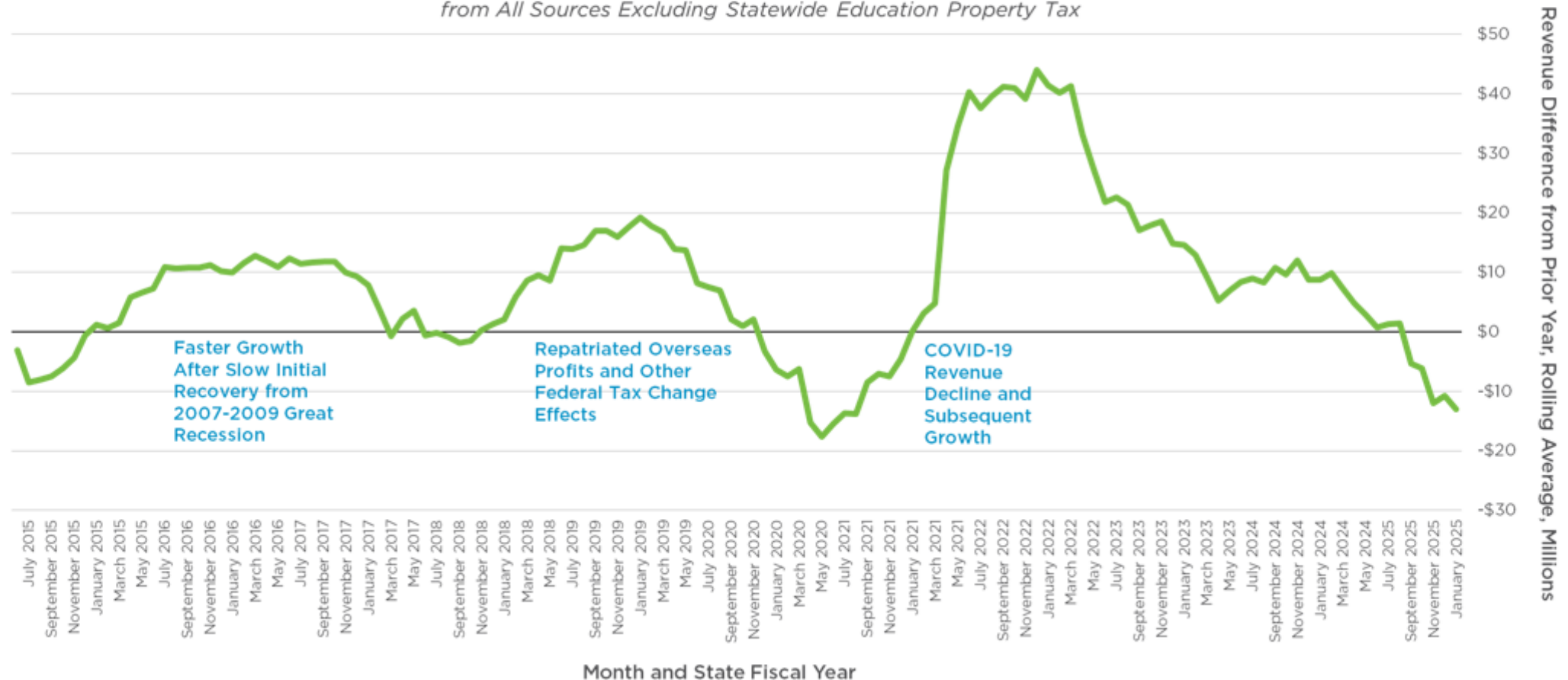
Sources: New Hampshire Office of Legislative Budget Assistant, Senate Finance Committee Surplus Statements, June 2023; 2023-2054s; 2023-2092s; 2023-2171s; 2023-2139s

# CURRENT STATE REVENUES AND CHALLENGES

# STATE REVENUES LOWER THAN LAST YEAR AFTER PERIOD OF SUBSTANTIAL GROWTH

## DIFFERENCES OVER TIME IN NEW HAMPSHIRE COMBINED GENERAL AND EDUCATION TRUST FUNDS MONTHLY CASH RECEIPTS

*Twelve-Month Rolling Averages of Monthly Cash Receipts to the General and Education Trust Funds Relative to Prior Year from All Sources Excluding Statewide Education Property Tax*



Note: Medicaid Enhancement Tax excluded from historical data. Statewide Education Property Tax excluded due to tax targeting a certain amount collected.  
Sources: New Hampshire Department of Administrative Services, Monthly Revenue Focus Reports

# FISCAL CONSTRAINTS AND LOOMING QUESTIONS

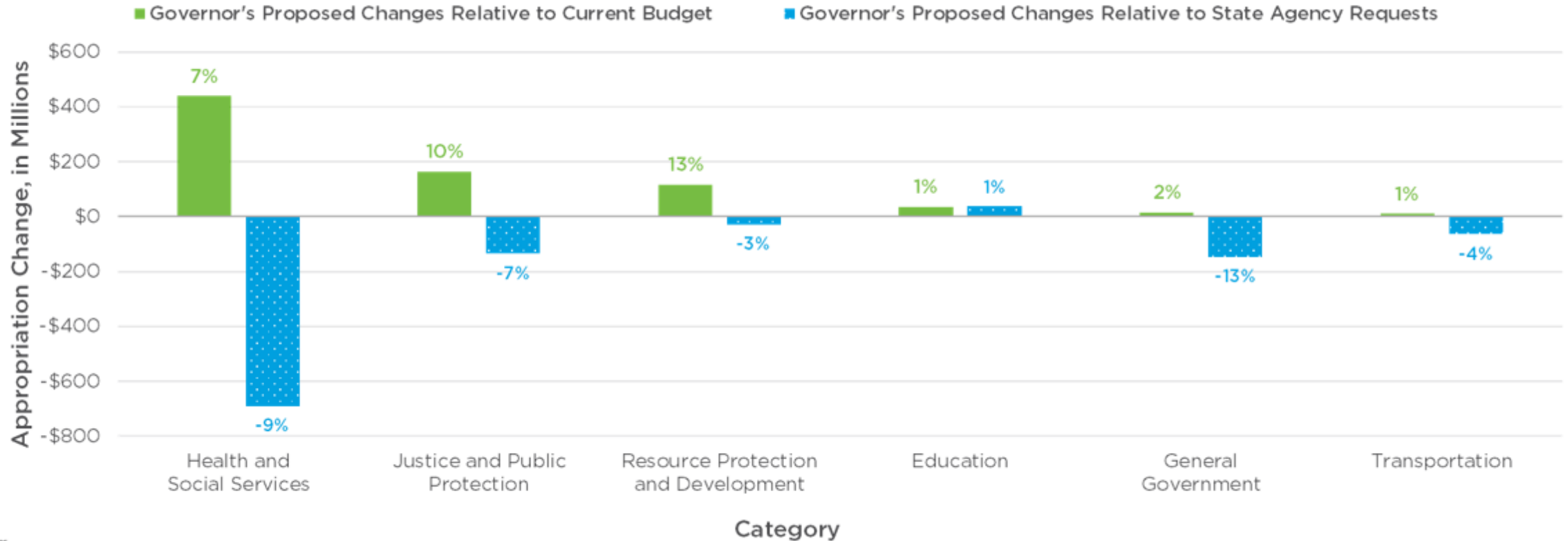
- Interest and Dividends Tax (\$184 million to General Fund, or 8.8 percent of General Fund revenues, last fiscal year) repealed effective January 2025
- State will earn less interest on cash holdings due to smaller cash reserves
- Youth Development Center settlements: paid \$127 million in 242 settled claims as of December 2024, \$792 million pending in 606 filed claims, claims period open until June 2025; \$160 million to settle claims appropriated previously, outlays capped at \$75 million per year
- Court cases associated with the Youth Development Center and children in the care of the State could generate substantial liabilities
- Decisions related to education funding from the State Supreme Court; second-largest State expenditure, small changes can lead to large funding commitments
- Construction of a new State prison for men, potentially \$500-\$600 million, annual bond payments may be substantial
- Changes to federal funding to the State for operations, with about one in three dollars to fund State services coming from the federal government

# A BRIEF LOOK AT THE GOVERNOR'S PROPOSAL

# GOVERNOR'S BUDGET BOOSTS ALL CATEGORIES, FALLS SHORT OF AGENCY REQUESTS

## CHANGES IN GOVERNOR'S PROPOSED TOTAL STATE BUDGET BY CATEGORY FOR FISCAL YEARS 2026 AND 2027

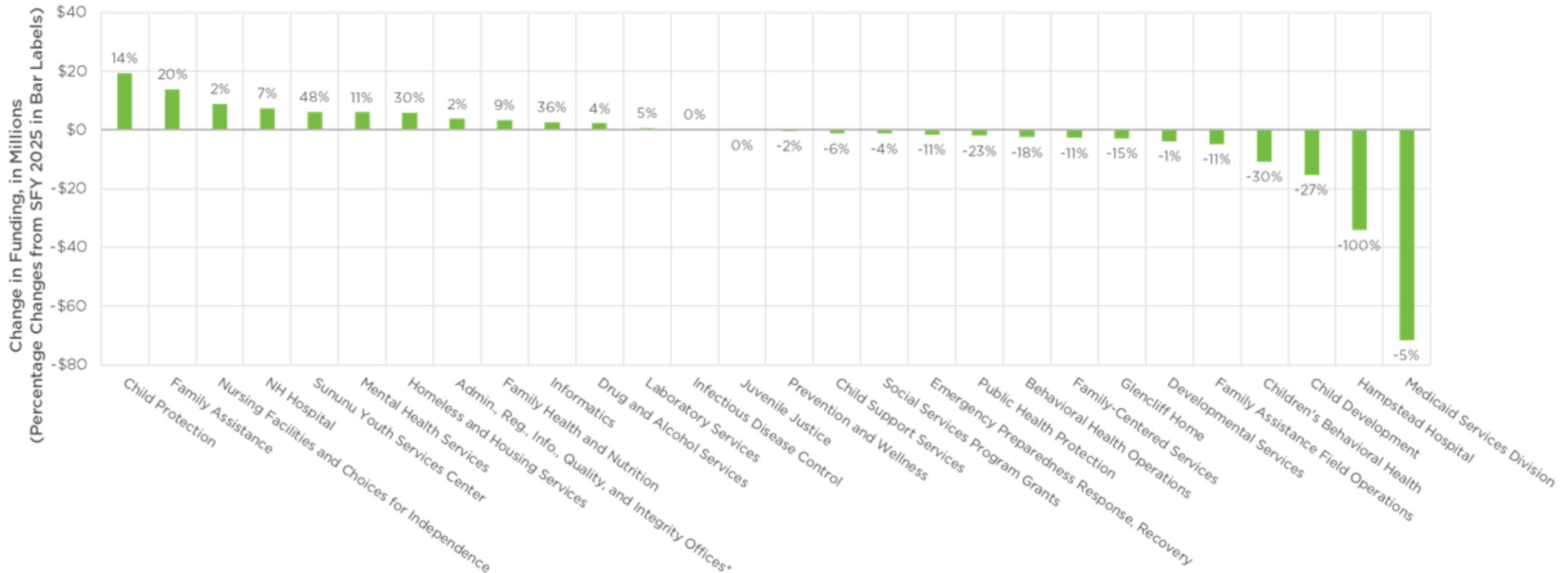
*Appropriation Change Relative to Actual Final Budget Appropriations for SFYs 2024-2025 and Agency Budget Requests for SFYs 2026-2027, for New Hampshire*



Note: These changes account for inter-agency transfers.  
Source: New Hampshire Department of Administrative Services, Budget Office

# FUNDING WITHIN NH DHHS INCLUDES SHIFTS, REORGANIZATIONS, ONGOING INVESTMENTS

CHANGES BY SUB-AGENCY WITHIN THE NEW HAMPSHIRE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES, CURRENTLY-AUTHORIZED EXPENDITURES FOR SFY 2025 VS. PROPOSED SFY 2026



Subagency with the New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services

\*Note: Combined nine operating units across separate budget lines, including the Commissioner's Office. The Bureau of Healthcare Access and Policy is being reorganized and does not appear here.  
Source: Governor's Operating Budget and Governor's Executive Budget Summary, February 13, 2025



# OTHER FACTS ABOUT, AND POLICY INITIATIVES IN, THE GOVERNOR'S BUDGET PROPOSAL

- State Budget proposal grows each year in aggregate relative to the current budget, constrained growth supported by relatively optimistic revenue projections and a new proposed revenue source: video lottery terminals
- Policy initiatives include:
  - Bail reform changes
  - New retirement system investments for police and firefighters
  - Waste disposal site evaluation process revisions
  - Streamlining State components of housing permitting process, including interactions with environmental protections and a 60-day timeline for State processing
- Medicaid copayments may be required, no details yet
- Does not include funds set aside for the new State prison for men or for the Youth Development Center-related costs

# KEY TAKEAWAYS

- State Budget is two pieces of legislation constructed over a nearly year-long process, funding most (but not all) State operations
- State revenues are declining due to both external factors, such as corporate profits and interest rates, and policy choices that have reduced State revenue
- Key potential expenses could impact State Budget decision-making and limit resources available for other services, including unknown costs associated with Youth Development Center settlements and court cases, and separate State Supreme Court decisions regarding education funding
- Federal funds key to supporting services within the State Budget with significant federal policy choices likely in 2025
- Governor's proposal retains funding for most State agency operations slightly above current levels, does not include funding for certain initiatives included in the current State Budget and key potential expenses
- Some components of proposal still unknown, more clarity to come as House Finance Committee considers the proposal and makes amendments

# ADDITIONAL NHFPI RESOURCES

- Weekly Newsletter: <https://nhfpi.org/subscribe>
- Blog: Bigger Budget, New Lottery Revenues, and Less Money for Housing and Child Care Workforce: Five Takeaways from the Governor's Budget Proposal – February 18, 2025: <https://nhfpi.org/blog/bigger-budget-new-lottery-revenues-and-less-money-for-housing-and-child-care-workforce-five-takeaways-from-the-governors-budget-proposal/>
- Blog: January Revenues Reach Target, But Continue to Send Warning Signs – February 6, 2025: <https://nhfpi.org/blog/january-revenues-reach-target-but-continue-to-send-warning-signs/>
- Blog: Sliding Revenues, Spending Needs, and Federal Questions: Seven Facts About the New Hampshire State Budget – February 3, 2025: <https://nhfpi.org/blog/sliding-revenues-spending-needs-and-federal-questions-seven-facts-about-the-new-hampshire-state-budget/>
- State Budget Webinar Series: Register here: <https://nhfpi.org/events/examining-the-state-budget-2025-webinar-series/>
- Resource Page: Budget: <https://nhfpi.org/topic/budget/>



# The Political Drivers of Health ECHO

Policies to Advance the Health & Economic Prosperity  
of New Hampshire Communities

*Session 2, School Meals-Medicaid Certification, March 6<sup>th</sup>, 2025*





# Food and nutrition support

PDoH ECHO

March 6, 2025

Chelsey Canavan, MSPH

Manager, Center for Advancing Rural Health Equity

Population Health Department

Dartmouth Health

Food security means access by all people at all times to enough food for an active, healthy life.

Nutrition security means consistent access to and availability and affordability of foods and beverages that promote well-being, while preventing—and, if needed, treating—disease.

# Prevalence of household food insecurity (2023)

Nationally: 13.5%

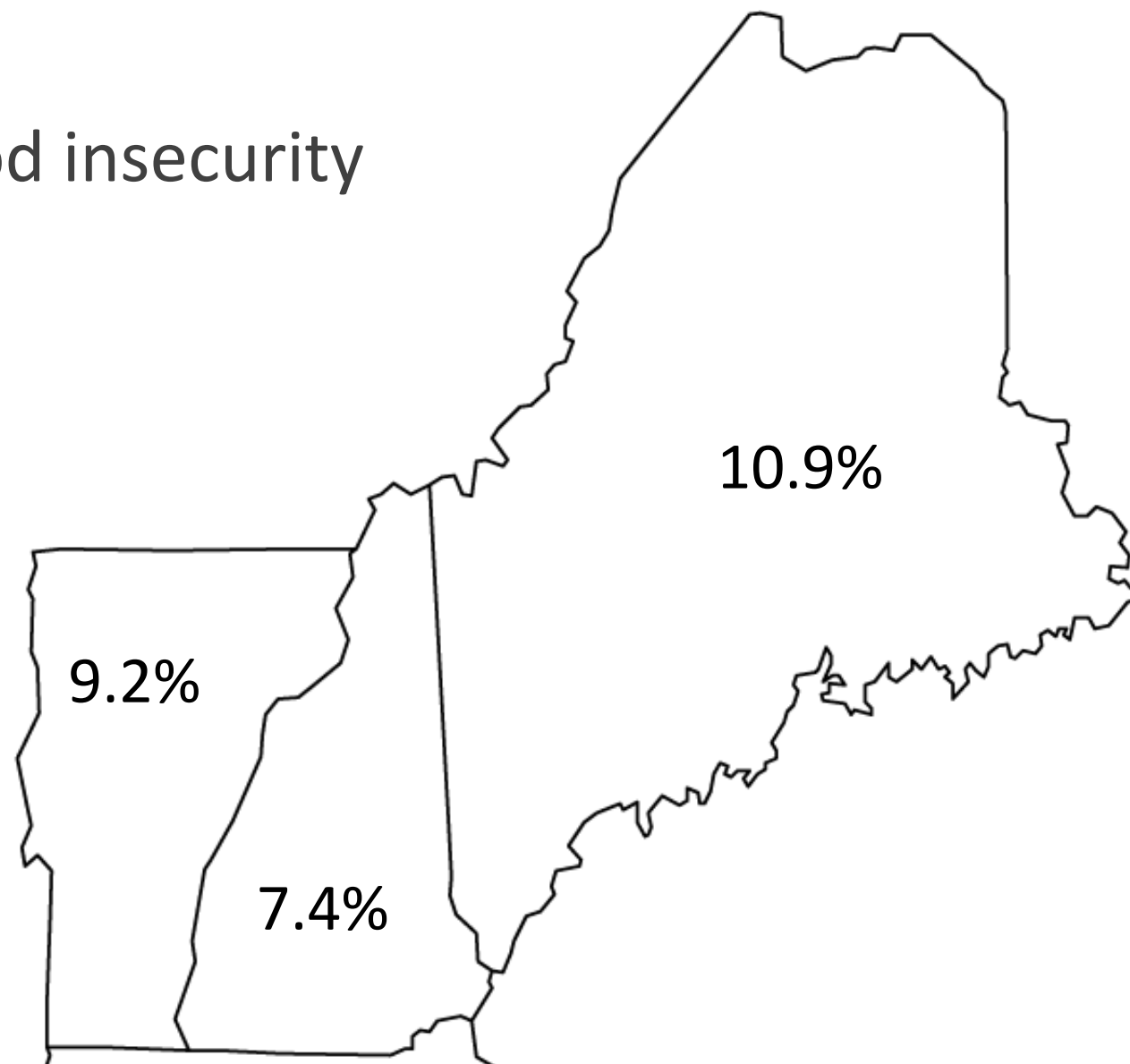
Higher in rural areas: 15.4%

Lower in the northeast: 12.0%

**17.9% of households with children**

**20.3% in rural areas**

**9.9% of children (7.2 million)**

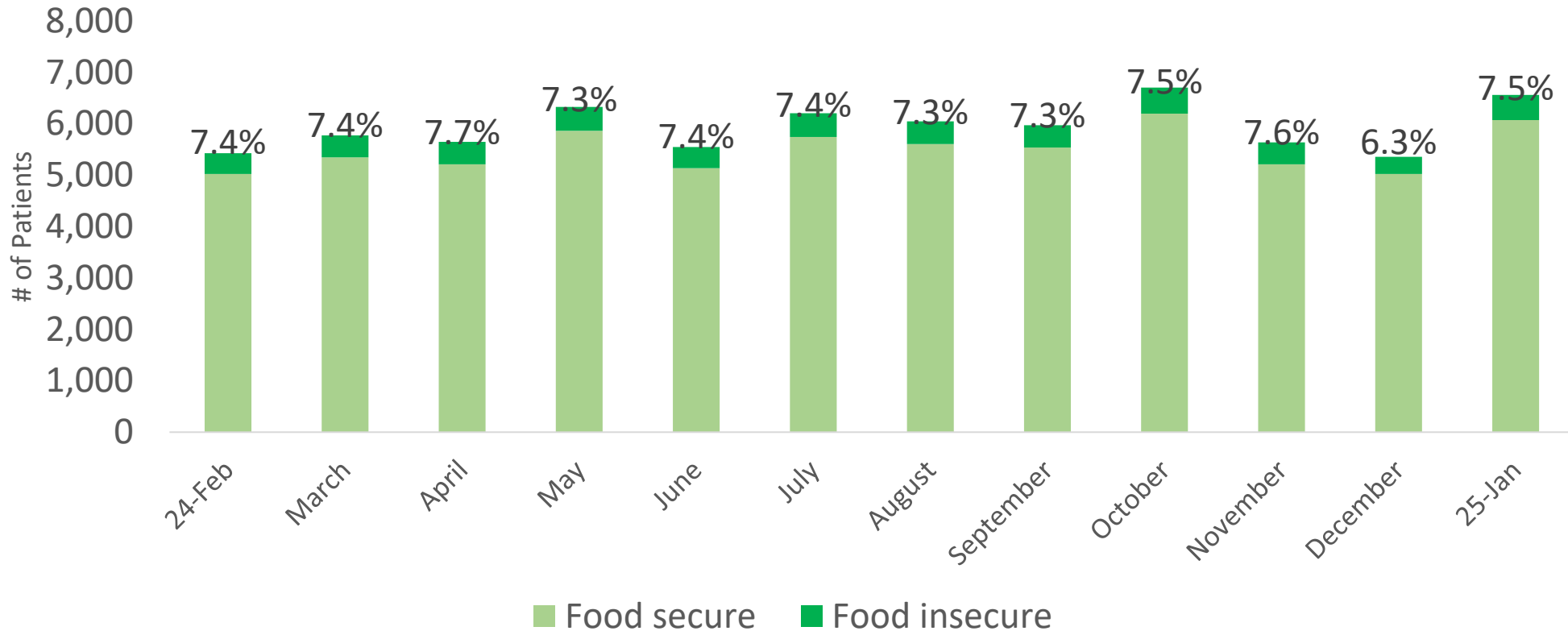


# Food Security Screening at Dartmouth Health

## Adult Primary Care Patients

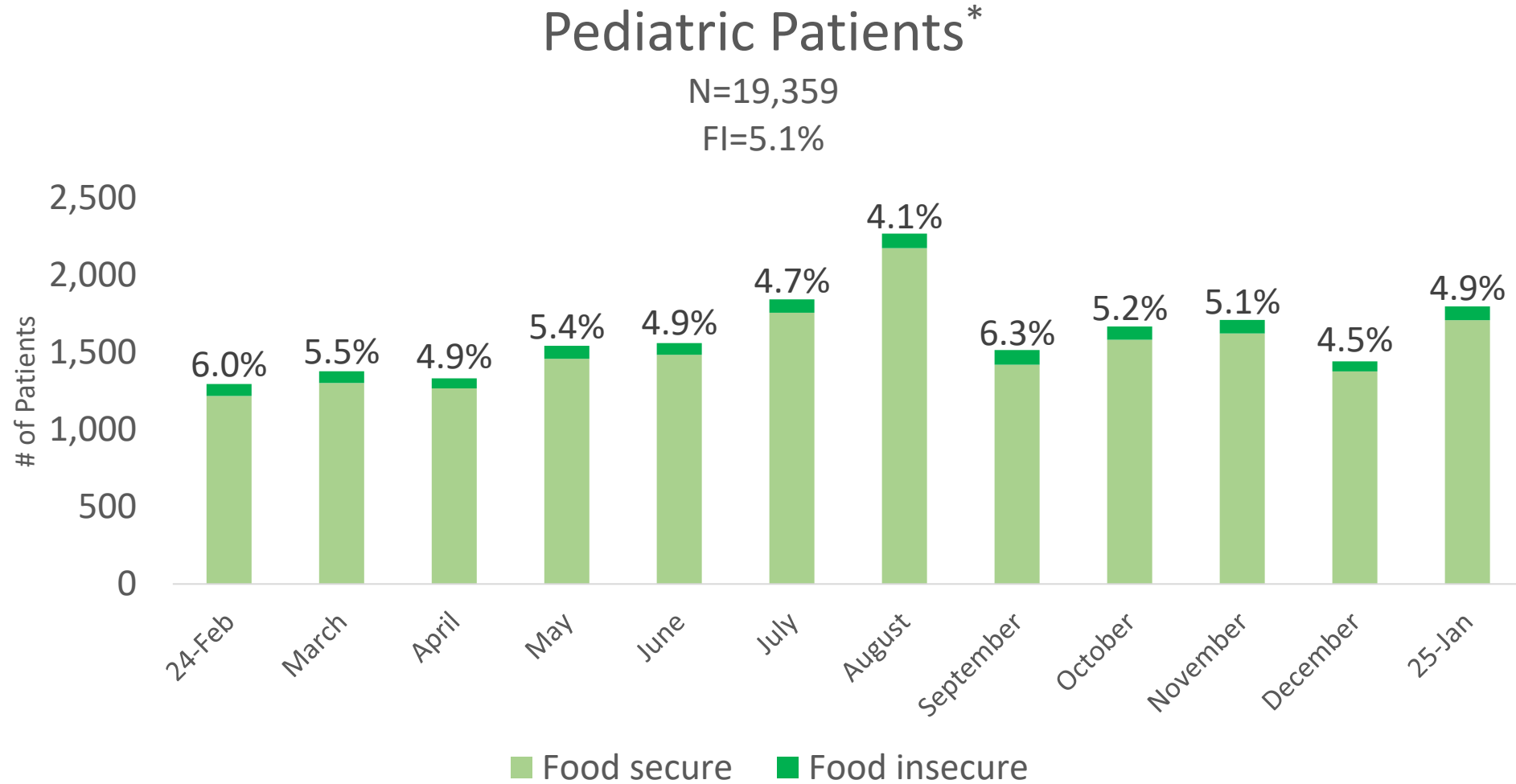
N=71,205

FI=7.4%

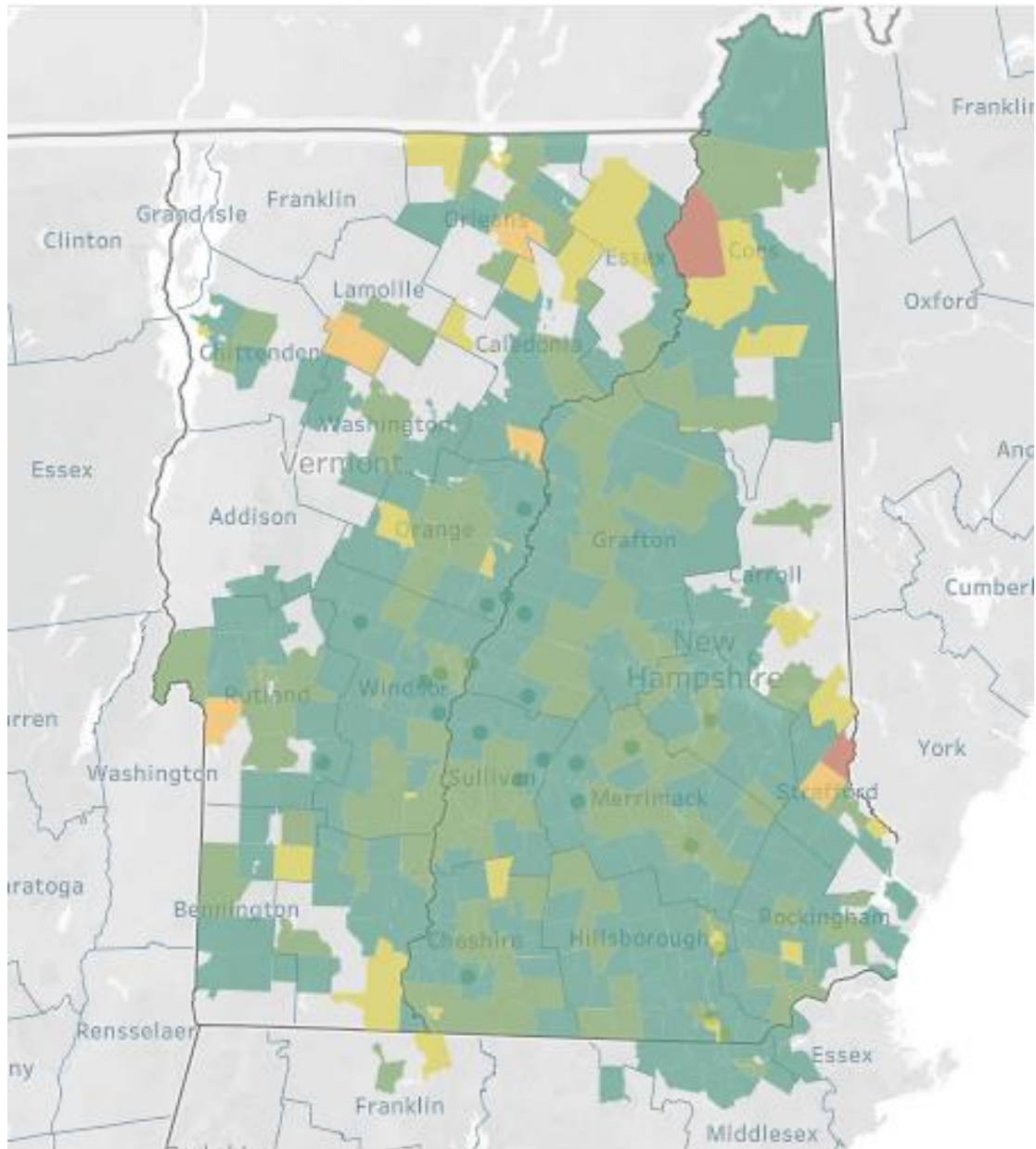




# Food Security Screening at Dartmouth Health



\* ages 0-6 and 12-18

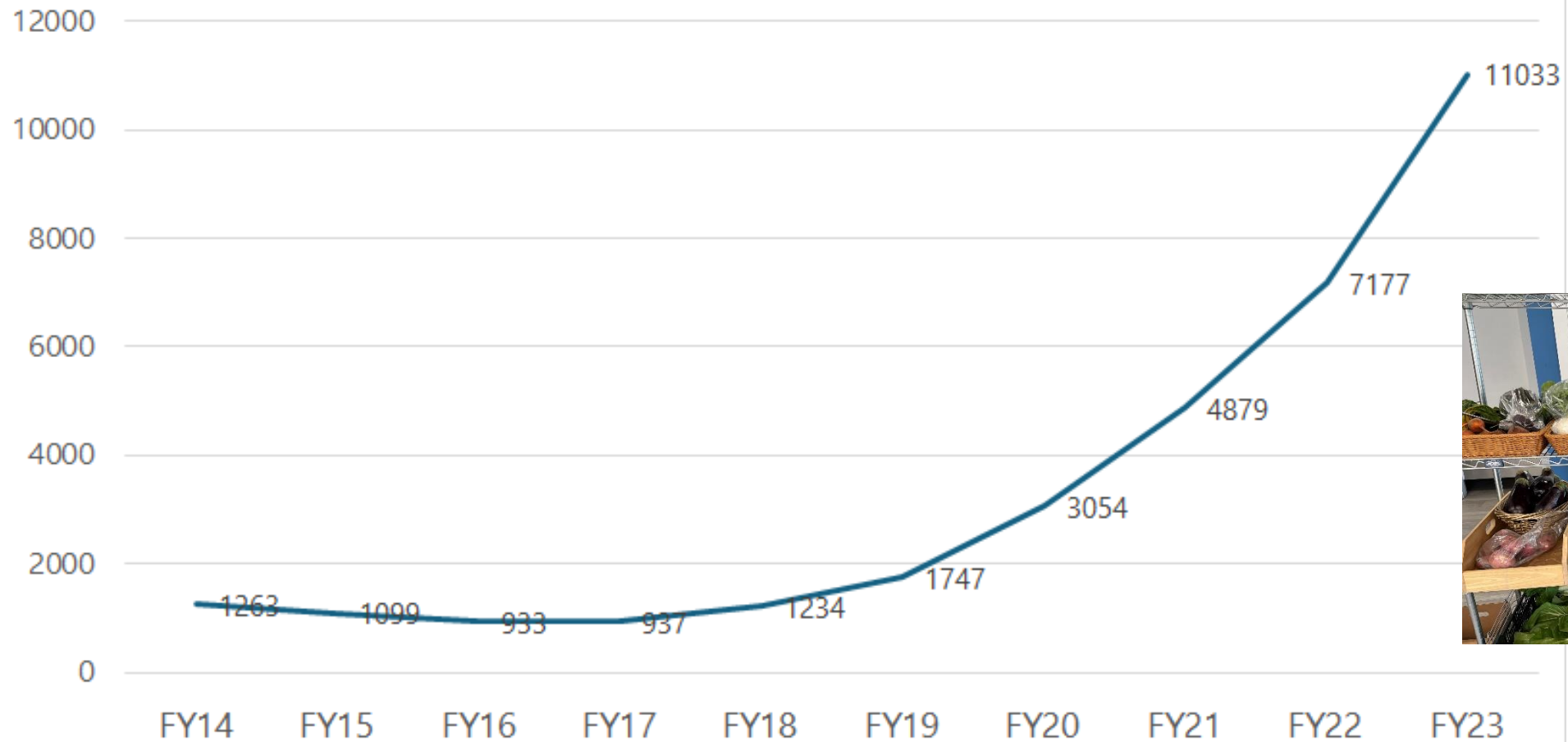


Pct Positive Food Insecurity  
 0.0% 41.7%

Food insecurity among adult DH primary care patients, by zip code, Feb 1 2024 – Jan 31 2025

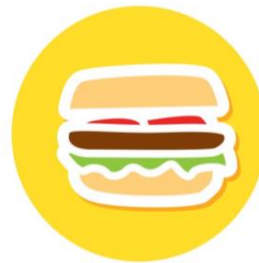
Hispanic/Latino: 17.3%  
 Black/African American: 18.2%

## LISTEN Food Pantry Demand, FY2014 to FY2023



# What does food insecurity look like?

- Choosing between food and other basic needs
- Eating less; less frequently
- Prioritizing food among household members
- Cheap, highly processed and fast foods



# Health impacts



Food insecurity affects **dietary quantity and quality** for adults and children



Low-income, food-insecure households spent less on food, purchased **fewer calories** overall, and had **lower nutritional quality** food purchases than low-income, food-secure households

# For children, living in a food insecure household:

- Increased risk for poor **physical and mental health outcomes**:
  - Emergency department use
  - Asthma
  - Iron deficiency anemia
  - More frequent stomachaches, headaches, colds
  - Obesity (among some children)
  - Depression
  - Anxiety
  - Suicidal ideation, attempted suicide (in adolescence)
- Can negatively impact **developmental outcomes**:
  - Cognitive/academic outcomes (vocab, math, memory, etc.)
  - Behavioral outcomes (hyperactivity, self-control, internalizing/externalizing etc.)
  - Socio-emotional outcomes (interpersonal/social skills)



Get to know  
these food  
resources



# Other public nutrition programs

- Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP)  
Healthy meals and snacks in child care centers, family child care homes, after school programs, emergency shelters, and adult day care programs
- National School Lunch Program & Breakfast Program  
Low-cost or free food for children at school
- Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP)  
A monthly package of foods for low-income adults age 60+
- Old Americans Act / Meals on Wheels  
Daily meals for adults 60+ through congregate feeding or at home (MOW)



# Food Banks

- Tons of resources
- Maps of member locations
- Mobile food pantry schedule
- SNAP assistance
- Job training
- Cooking Matters
- And more!

The screenshot shows the website for the New Hampshire Food Bank, a program of Catholic Charities New Hampshire. The page features a navigation bar with links for 'SEARCH', 'AGENCY PORTAL', and 'FIND FOOD'. Below the navigation bar, there are links for 'Get to Know Us', 'What We Do', 'Get Involved', 'In the Know', 'Agency Portal', and 'Acc'. The main heading is 'Food Map', followed by a descriptive paragraph: 'The NH Food Bank distributes food to more than 400 partner agencies across New Hampshire including food pantries, homeless shelters, soup kitchens, children's programs, senior centers and more. Search our list of partner agencies to find a food assistance program near you.' Below this text is a search bar with fields for 'Address or Zip Code', 'Agency Name', and 'SUBMIT', along with a 'Select a County' dropdown. The search results are displayed on a map of New Hampshire, showing various locations marked with blue pins. A detailed view of the 'Henniker Food Pantry' is shown on the right, including its address (21 Western Avenue, Henniker, NH 03242), phone number (603-428-7474), distance (9.52 miles), and a link for 'Directions'.

New Hampshire  
**FOOD BANK**  
A Program of Catholic Charities NH

CATHOLIC CHARITIES  
NEW HAMPSHIRE  
**FEEDING AMERICA**

SEARCH AGENCY PORTAL **FIND FOOD**

Get to Know Us What We Do Get Involved In the Know Agency Portal Acc

## Food Map

The NH Food Bank distributes food to more than 400 partner agencies across New Hampshire including food pantries, homeless shelters, soup kitchens, children's programs, senior centers and more. Search our list of partner agencies to find a food assistance program near you.

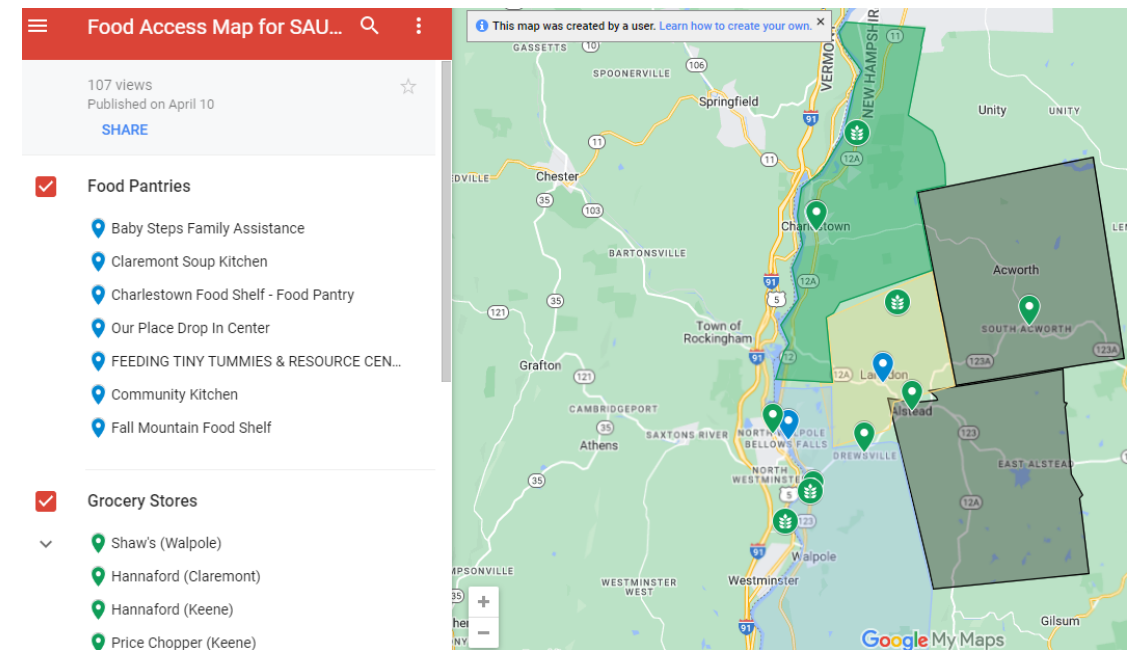
Address or Zip Code Agency Name **SUBMIT** Select a County

Satellite

Henniker Food Pantry  
21 Western Avenue  
Henniker, NH 03242  
603-428-7474  
9.52 miles  
Directions

# Other resources

- Local food pantries and food shelves
- Senior Centers
- Local school district
- NH Hunger Solutions
- Hunger Free VT





# What else?

Make **brochures/materials** available to everyone & easy to access.

Help **normalize the conversation**:  
*“A lot of people are having a hard time right now with these high food prices.”*

Consider **capacity to host** a food shelf, food drive, etc.

Host or promote **community gardens**.

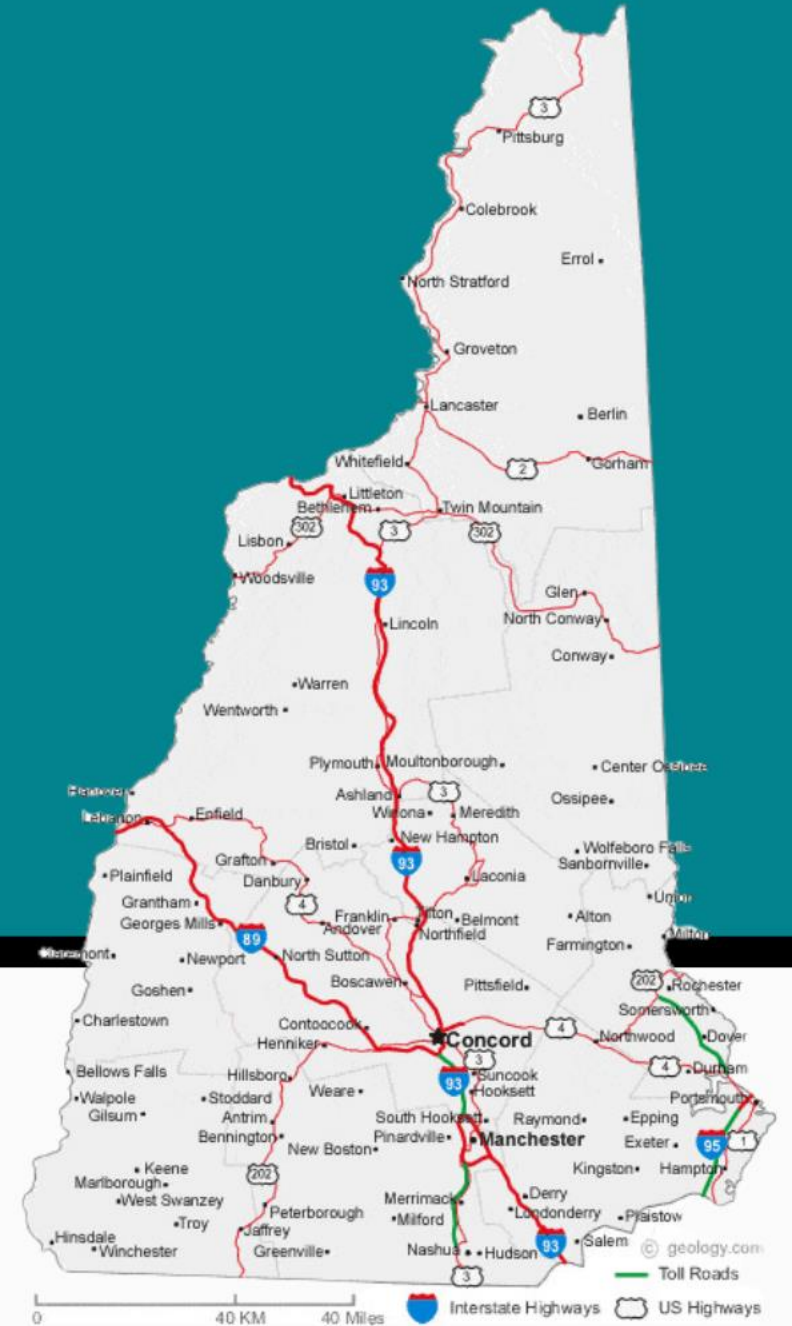
Consider **books/events/activities** related to healthy eating for adults and children.

# Solving Hunger in The Granite State

The Problems, Policy Solutions, and Impacts

**NH HUNGER**  
SOLUTIONS

ENDING HUNGER IN NEW HAMPSHIRE



# WHO WE ARE

NH Hunger Solutions is a policy and advocacy non-profit that advocates to end food insecurity, improve equitable access to nutritious food, and address hunger's root causes for all people in New Hampshire.



**Tiffany Brewster**

Policy Development & Advocacy

Director

# Food and Nutrition Supports



Our system of food and nutrition supports is like a power grid that moves healthy food through communities. In New Hampshire, the grid is well developed in some areas and patchy or non-existent in others

# Where are the weak connections in NH?

47th

School Breakfast Participation

Only 46% of children who eat free lunch also eat breakfast

10.5k

Eligible children not enrolled in Free and Reduced Meals

31%

Eligible people receive SNAP

54%

Eligible people receive WIC

# Our Work

Close the gap  
between eligible and  
enrolled in Federal  
Nutrition Programs

**Close the Gap**

Increase participation  
in school and  
summer meals

**Feed Children**

Increase public and  
policymaker  
understanding of  
hunger in NH and how  
to solve it

**Raise Awareness**

Support and build  
food access  
coalitions

**Build Coalitions**

**NH HUNGER**  
SOLUTIONS

ENDING HUNGER IN NEW HAMPSHIRE





# School Meals in New Hampshire

NH Hunger Solutions supports schools and communities to increase participation in school meals.



# Nutrition is Fundamental to Child Health

For Children



**Food is the Foundation for**



For Children



**Living in Food-Insecurity**



## Hunger Hurts Learning

**Children with food insecurity are more likely to:**

- Experience overall poor health
- Have higher rates of communicable disease, obesity, asthma
- Need more health care services and emergency room care

**Food insecurity disrupts student:**

- concentration
- memory
- mood
- motor skills

# Access to School Meals, Especially School Breakfast, Makes a Difference

## Children who eat school breakfast have:

- Improved attention and cognition
- Stronger academic performance
- More engagement in the classroom
- Fewer behavioral issues
- Reduced rates of obesity and chronic disease later in life
- Higher test scores
- Higher graduation rates

**Building a solid future for New Hampshire**



# Many families above the eligibility level for free or reduced school meals are having trouble making ends meet

As a result, children are hungry at school and schools are experiencing high levels of school meals debt



Current Eligibility for <b>Free meals</b> 130%FPL	Current Eligibility for <b>Reduced meals</b> 185%FPL	<b>Living Wage</b> (MIT Living Wage Calculator)
\$34,645 Family of 3	\$49,302 Family of 3	\$97,876 Family of 3

# FEED NH KIDS



To foster the health and well being of New Hampshire Children, we need to connect more communities to the grid. It is possible to ensure that no children go hungry and are plugged into federal nutrition programs in the granite state.



# Medicaid Direct Certification (MDC)

## HB 583

### An Innovative Solution To Childhood Hunger in New Hampshire

Automatically enrolls children in Free/Reduced-Price Meals (F/RM) who are on Medicaid and whose family's income qualifies them for school meals, without another application.

MDC is a **win** for kids, a **win** for schools, and a **win** for a healthy New Hampshire. It's an innovative solution that conserves our public resources





# Medicaid Direct Certification (MDC)

## Benefits to Schools:

- Reduced Administrative costs
- Fewer errors
- Less student meal debt
- USDA Community Eligibility Provision

## Benefits to Children:

- Academic performance
- Fewer behavior problems
- Better attendance
- Better graduation rates

## Benefits to Towns and Cities

- School Funding
- Accurate Poverty Measure

**Federal Dollars  
Leveraged**

**\$11,719,566**

of federal school breakfast and lunch  
dollars to the state per year

**\$Millions**

in additional child care subsidy dollars  
(Child Care and Development Fund  
Discretionary Grant)

# For Schools that Qualify, Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) Feeds all Children

## When schools participate in CEP:

- Free and Reduced School Meal application forms are difficult to collect
- Schools risk losing funding

**\*AND\***

- More children eat school breakfast
- Less children experience hunger
- Children get the fuel they need to learn

**MDC makes it easy for more schools to participate in CEP**







# Medicaid Direct Certification (MDC)

## HB 583



The Bill is being voted on by the full House today.

The **majority voted**

**Inexpedient to Legislate (10-8)**

The **minority recommends an amendment** that would make the bill budget neutral until SFY28

### Minority Amendment

Freezes F/R levels for two years.

Allows us to Feed Kids Today while letting legislators evaluate the impact and effectiveness of MDC over this period.

It's a **smart, conservative, data-driven** approach that will ensure the legislature can make decisions informed by real data on participation and costs, rather than projections.



# Priorities in the 2025 Legislative Session:



## Medicaid Direct Certification

Automatically enrolling eligible children on Medicaid for free or reduced-price school meals.



## Increase Eligibility for School Meals

Ensure more low-income children can eat free meals at school by increasing eligibility.



## Leave Children Out of School Meal Debt Collection

Help schools end the stigma around Free and Reduced lunch and reduce school meal debt.



## Ensure All Children Have Access to Breakfast & Lunch

Require all schools to offer both breakfast and lunch, ensuring no child is left hungry at school.



## Create an Online F/R School Meal Application

Create an online application for free and reduced-price meals to streamline the process for families and schools.

# Stay Connected

**Tiffany Brewster**

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WWW.NHHUNGERSOLUTIONS.ORG

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**NH HUN**  
SOLUTI  
ENDING HUNGER IN NEW