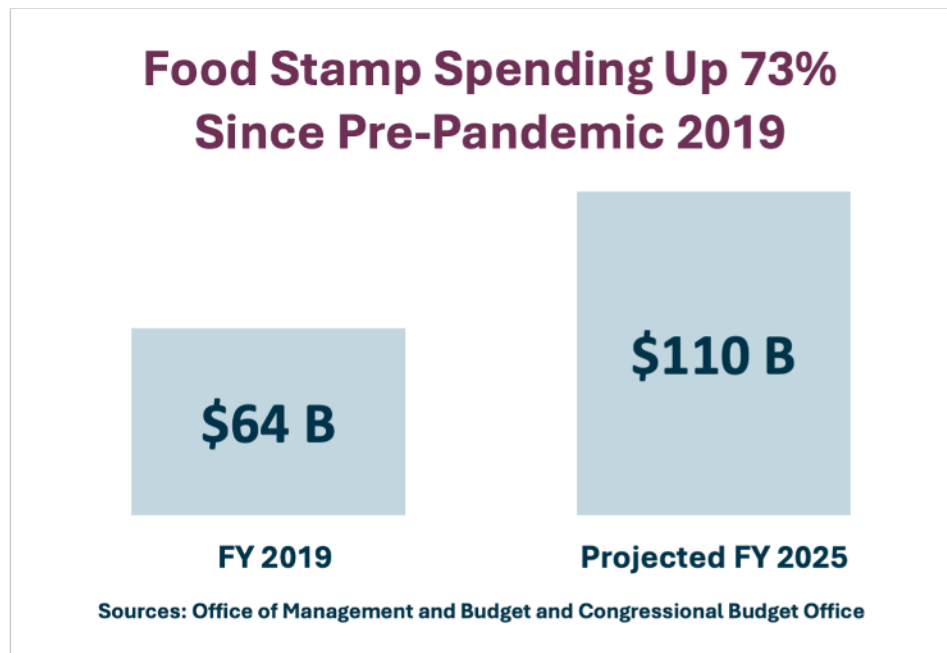


FOOD STAMP SPENDING STILL 73 PERCENT HIGHER THAN BEFORE PANDEMIC

Amelia Kuntzman, Research Assistant
March 18, 2025

Federal spending on food stamps continues to skyrocket after the COVID-19 pandemic, despite economic recovery.

The federal government is projected to spend \$110 billion on food stamps in fiscal year (FY) 2025 under current policy – a 73 percent increase from FY 2019.

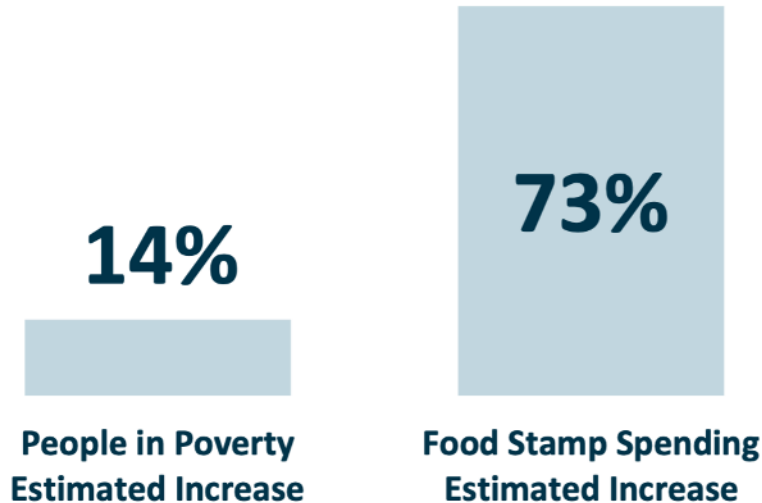


Food stamp spending figures were taken from the [Office of Management and Budget](#) and the [Congressional Budget Office](#).

In theory food stamp spending should coincide with national poverty levels, yet here they do not come close.

The number of impoverished people from [FY 2019](#) – FY 2025 is expected to increase by 14 percent, while food stamp spending will increase by a drastic 73 percent.

Food Stamp Spending Soars Beyond Poverty: Pre-Pandemic 2019 - 2025



Sources: Congressional Budget Office, Office of Management and Budget, and U.S. Census Bureau

The rise in poverty was estimated using the U.S. Census Bureau's most [recent poverty rate](#) along with the Congressional Budget Office's 2025 [demographic projections](#).

The main issue here is not simply that we have yet to return to pre-pandemic spending levels – it is that the money is going to a program that discourages independence and human dignity.

According to EPIC's Director of Budget Policy, Matthew Dickerson, the percentage of people on food stamps [skyrocketed](#) in recent years along with the amount of time spent in the program, all while work requirements slipped.

Dickerson also found that between 2017 and 2019, [62 percent](#) of work-capable recipients did not work.

Congress should stop pouring billions of more taxpayer dollars into a system that traps able-bodied people in cycles of dependency.

It should instead use these resources to provide [healthier food options](#) to those who genuinely cannot provide for themselves and reinvent the system to ultimately encourage independence for those who need a short-term safety net.