



**Saint Francis**  
SERAPH MINISTRIES  
*Caring for Community | Advancing Change*



University of  
**CINCINNATI**  
COLLEGE OF MEDICINE

# Addressing Food Insecurity in the Over-The-Rhine Community

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Learning Community 5 - University of Cincinnati College of Medicine

# Background

- St. Francis Seraph Ministries (SFSM) is located in the heart of Over the Rhine (OTR) with a mission to nurture and nourish people in need. SFSM addresses the social determinant of health of food insecurity. The population SFSM serves is predominantly composed of low-income individuals.
- Evidence shows that low-income status may lead to food insecurity and that food insecurity can exacerbate poverty. While they serve the community in many ways, the largest aspect of SFSM is the food service, distributing approximately 350 meals daily and 84,291 meals annually.<sup>1</sup>
- Resources for SFSM arise from Amazon wish lists, Kroger Community Rewards, in-person donations, and many volunteers. Funding mainly comes from foundations, grants, and donors.

# Social Determinant of Health Examined: *Food Insecurity*

St. Francis Seraph Ministries (SFSM) is located in the heart of Over the Rhine (OTR) with a mission to nurture and nourish people in need by addressing the social determinant of health of food insecurity. SFSM distributes approximately 350 meals daily and 84,291 meals annually. The goal of our service project was to provide comprehensive information about the clientele visiting SFSM to support decision-making about resource allocation and training of staff and volunteers.

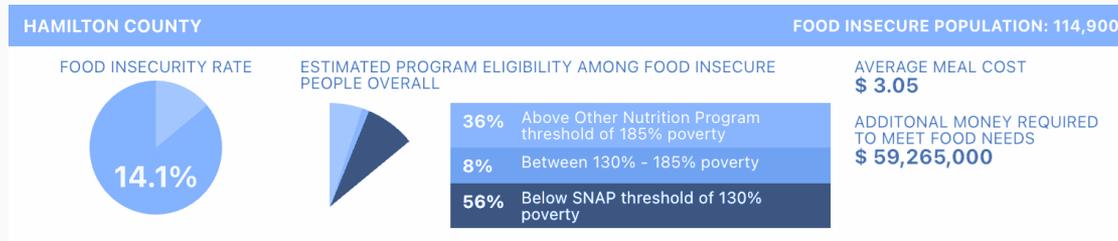


Image from Feeding America

# Overview of our Project

The lack of post-pandemic resource allocation data at SFSM proved a potential point of improvement, which LC 5 decided to gather information on in the form of a survey about health, community resource utilization, and accessibility. We administered the survey to 94 clients and subsequently analyzed the data. The results were then presented to our community partner so that they can better understand the needs of their clients for resource allocation and grant applications.

Results from our survey revealed that:

1. 50% of clients found the dining room as the most helpful resource offered by SFSM
2. The top 3 resources clients desired from SFSM to offer in the future include increased food, housing, and transportation resources
3. The biggest obstacles to accessing prescribed medications are cost (40.5%) and transportation/distance (23.8%)

# Relevance to the Citizens of Cincinnati

- Food insecurity is an important social determinant of health in the Cincinnati metropolitan area
- SFSM distributes over 300 meals daily and over 80,000 meals annually
- Non-profit organizations are a strength and essential asset of the community
- Many Cincinnatians are affected by financial challenges in the wake of the pandemic

# What can the Cincinnati Government do?

- Common concerns of community members surveyed included: housing insecurity, need for more social services in general, transportation, health insurance, and assistance with access to prescription medication.
- In our conversations with SFSM, we learned that they (plus other OTR agencies) are interested in addressing these needs of community members but lack the funding to do so.
- In addition to our community partner SFSM, we would like to advocate for other food banks in OTR including Our Daily Bread, Tsa Emergency Pantry, Over the Rhine Soup Kitchen, Prince of Peace, Freestore Foodbank, and Society of Saint Vincent Depaul - Choice Food Pantry. Additional funding and staffing would be helpful for all of these agencies in helping them to better support their clients.

# Our specific ask on behalf of SFSM

- Consider additional funding/resource allocation to St. Francis Seraph Ministries to support the dining program and other services they provide.
- Additional fundings would be utilized to balance out the loss of partnerships with individual and private sector donors, as SFSM relied heavily on these relationships to fund their dining program.

# Questions?

# Thank you for your time!