



**2023-24 REPORT**

# Basic Needs Centers

California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office | Sonya Christian, Chancellor





California  
Community  
Colleges

**SONYA CHRISTIAN**  
Chancellor

May 21, 2025

Secretary of the Senate  
Erika Contreras  
State Capitol, Room 305  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: Basic Needs Centers Legislative Report for Fiscal Year 2023-2024**

Dear Secretary Contreras,

Pursuant to California Education Code Section 66023.5, the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office and the Board of Governors for California Community Colleges are pleased to release the Basic Needs Centers legislative report for fiscal year 2023-2024.

The Budget Act of 2023 allocated \$43.5 million annually to the California Community Colleges for each college to establish and maintain a dedicated Basic Needs Center, and to designate at least one staff person as the campus Basic Needs Coordinator to provide holistic basic needs services and resources to support students. The trailer bill language accompanying this funding requires the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office to submit an annual report on the services provided by Basic Needs Centers, as well as the challenges faced, and best practices identified in establishing and operating them.

For any questions regarding this report, please contact Allison Beer, Dean, Educational Services and Support, at [abeer@cccco.edu](mailto:abeer@cccco.edu).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sonya Christian". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Sonya Christian, Chancellor

Enclosure: Report

CC:  
Sue Parker, Chief Clerk of the Assembly  
Office of Legislative Counsel  
Department of Finance

**Chancellor's Office**

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# 2023-2024 BASIC NEEDS CENTERS REPORT

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Prepared By

**California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office**  
Educational Services and Support Division



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## INTRODUCTION

The Budget Act of 2023 allocated \$43.5 million annually to the California Community Colleges system for each college to establish and maintain a dedicated Basic Needs Center, and to designate at least one staff person as the campus Basic Needs Coordinator to provide holistic basic needs services and resources to support students. The trailer bill language accompanying this funding requires the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office to submit an annual report on the services provided by Basic Needs Centers, as well as the challenges faced, and best practices identified in establishing and operating them.

According to the 2023 Real College California Survey conducted by the RP Group and the Affordability, Food, and Housing Access Taskforce, two out of three California community college students face at least one basic needs insecurity. Further research, conducted by the National Center for Homeless Education, has demonstrated the connection between basic needs insecurity and diminished academic success, leading to outcomes such as lower grade point averages, greater likelihood of dropping out, and longer time to degree completion.<sup>1</sup> The persistent rates of basic needs insecurity reflect the need for ongoing basic needs services for students to support them reach their academic and career goals.

During the Academic Year 2023-24, every California community college reported providing basic needs services to students, including food security, transportation, technology, health and mental health, housing security and childcare. Additionally, every college engaged in strategic conversations locally, and with students, and submitted a basic needs program plan that details their program implementation and priorities. This report includes data reflecting services and student outcomes during the 2023-24 academic year.

## SYSTEM LEVEL DATA COLLECTION AND REPORTING

To meet the reporting requirement of the statute and maximize the impact of this investment, the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office (Chancellor's Office) developed a new data set to capture system level data and implemented data collection in 2022-2023. Since the introduction of the new data collection, colleges have increased their capacity for reporting, though some have faced delays and challenges with data collection. Of the 115 colleges receiving Basic Needs funding, 80% are now reporting student-level data to the Chancellor's Office. The Chancellor's Office will continue to monitor data submissions and provide additional guidance to colleges to improve compliance with data reporting requirements, including through regular technical assistance webinars.

This report includes student-level data from the two primary terms of the most recently completed academic year: Fall 2023 (87 colleges reported) and Spring 2024 terms (94 colleges reported). In addition to student-level data, this report also includes data submitted through colleges' Basic Needs Centers program plans, which provide colleges with opportunities to engage in local planning and innovations to establish, improve and mature their program implementation and operations. All 115 community colleges receiving funding have completed their plans, which provides the Chancellor's Office with insight on effective system-level support.

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1 National Center for Homeless Education (2024). Support College Complete for Students Experiencing Homelessness. [link]

## CALFRESH DATA

The Basic Needs Centers statute directs the Chancellor's Office to report on the total number of students receiving CalFresh benefits across the system. In recent years, the Chancellor's Office has partnered with the California Policy Lab and California Department of Social Services (CDSS) to conduct research on CalFresh participation and eligibility rates across the system. The Chancellor's Office is currently working with CDSS to develop a new state-level data sharing agreement, which would provide our agency with more direct access to data on students' CalFresh participation. Coordination with CDSS has been facilitated by the recently passed AB 518, which directs CDSS to develop data sharing agreements with other state agencies, such as the Chancellor's Office, for the purpose of improving the administration of CalFresh benefits.

Furthermore, the Chancellor's Office has encouraged and supported colleges to develop local partnership and data sharing agreements with social services agencies, to improve administration of public benefits programs, including CalFresh and MediCal.

Currently the Chancellor's Office is aware of two California community colleges that have fully executed data sharing agreements in place with their local CalFresh Agency. In the future, we plan to collect further information about colleges' local agreements, including through triennial program plans and surveys.

## PROGRAM DATA

Per statute, the Chancellor's Office is required to report on the number of students accessing Basic Needs Centers, the types of services provided, demographics of served students, and their educational outcomes.

### Services Provided and Students Served

In the Fall 2023 term, 98,577 unique students systemwide accessed basic needs services through the Basic Needs Center (an 84% increase in reported services accessed comparing Fall 2022 to Fall 2023). In the 2024 Spring Term 105,081 unique California community college students systemwide accessed basic needs services through the Basic Needs Centers (a 54% increase in reported services accessed comparing Spring 2023 to Spring 2024). The following table includes data regarding the number of students served by category. See Appendix A for a description of each category.

**Table 1. Number of students served through Basic Needs Centers, by category and term, systemwide**

Category	Students Served Fall 2023	Students Served Spring 2024
Food Security (including CalFresh assistance)	77,372	82,768
Housing Security	5,530	11,151
Transportation	17,031	23,285
Mental Health	3,535	9,664

Category	Students Served Fall 2023	Students Served Spring 2024
Physical Health	9,689	16,116
Technology Support	14,685	22,799
Childcare Support	1,734	2,429
<b>Total Unique Students Served</b>	<b>98,577</b>	<b>105,081</b>

The data reflects that from Fall 2023 to Spring 2024, there was an increased number of students served across all categories. This increase likely reflects increased capacity for colleges to offer services, more students accessing Basic Needs Centers, and expanded implementation of college data reporting efforts. During both Fall 2023 and Spring 2024, 9% of students enrolled accessed basic needs services. Additionally, during this timeframe, housing security services increased by over 100% and mental health services increased by over 170%.

Food security services continue to be the most common reported by Basic Needs Centers. While colleges provide a variety of food security services, such as food pantries and grocery vouchers, supporting access to CalFresh is a top priority for use of funds. Currently, the Chancellor's Office leverages data analysis conducted by the California Policy Lab, which estimates that 10% of California community college students are receiving CalFresh benefits. As described above, the Chancellor's Office is coordinating with CDSS to develop a new data sharing agreement which will allow us to more fully report on this requirement in the future.

## Student Demographics

Table 2 provides demographic information for students who were served by Basic Needs Centers during the Fall 2023 and Spring 2024 terms. The demographic characteristics of students served were similar across terms. Notably, most students served by Basic Needs Centers identified as Hispanic/Latino, as female, and between 18-24 years old. The demographic profile of students served was similar to the profile of the overall California Community Colleges student population.

**Table 2. Demographics of students served through Basic Needs Centers, by term, systemwide**

	Fall 2023	Spring 2024
<b>Race/Ethnicity</b>		
American Indian or Alaska Native	0%	1%
Asian	13%	14%
Black or African American	8%	7%
Hispanic/Latino	52%	51%
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	0%	0%
White	18%	19%

	Fall 2023	Spring 2024
Two or more races	5%	4%
Unknown/not reported	4%	4%
<b>Gender</b>		
Female	56%	56%
Male	40%	40%
Non-binary	1%	1%
Unknown/not reported	3%	3%
<b>Age</b>		
<18 years old	6%	5%
18-24	58%	54%
25+	36%	42%

## Student Outcomes

In addition to participation and demographic data, the Chancellor's Office has also analyzed data regarding student success in their course success, persistence, and degree attainment. Given that student-level data collection recently began in the 2022-23 academic year, this report includes participating students' average course success rate, which is an often-used short-term metric of student success that measures the percentage of courses attempted that a student successfully completes with a C or better within a given term. During both the 2023 Fall Term and the 2024 Spring Term, the systemwide average course success rate for students receiving basic needs services was 65%, just 1 percentage point lower than the systemwide average course success rate for all students (65% in the 2023 Fall Term and 66% in 2024 Spring Term).

Persistence rates, which reflect Fall to Spring term retention, for students receiving basic needs services, were 41%, compared to 61% for the overall student body. During the 2023-2024 academic year, 21% of students receiving basic needs services achieved a completion milestone through the attainment of an associate degree, bachelor's degree, and/or a certificate. In comparison, only 13% of the overall student body attained a degree or certificate in the same year.

Relative to the larger California Community Colleges student body, students accessing basic needs services face significant challenges to educational success--many experiencing ongoing food and/or housing insecurity, and some experience homelessness. Within the context of the challenges that many basic needs insecure students face in their educational journey, it is significant that their course success rates are similar to the overall student body and that degree/certificate attainment rates surpass the overall population. The Chancellor's Office will continue to work with colleges to better understand why participating students' term to term persistence rates are lower than the overall population, and how Basic Needs Centers can coordinate with other campus support services to promote continuity in students' enrollment. Overall, positive outcomes data reflect that students experiencing basic needs

insecurities can succeed academically with the appropriate support in place, and the importance of basic needs services for advancing equity in student success.

## **INCREASING CAPACITY, CHALLENGES, AND BEST PRACTICES**

Through triennial program plans and other surveys, the Chancellor's Office has regularly collected information from colleges regarding ongoing implementation efforts, their ability to expand capacity for offering services, challenges, and best practices.

Results of a 2023 Chancellor's Office survey indicate that 100% of colleges reported offering basic needs services. Furthermore, 67% of colleges report having a fully operational basic needs center; 29% report having a fully operational basic needs center and are currently building larger centers; and 4% report having a basic needs center and are investigating the option to expand their centers.

Through triennial program plans, colleges have reported challenges including::

- Identifying adequate space on campus to co-locate all basic needs services
- Identifying creative support mechanisms for parenting students
- Maximizing access to public benefit resources for students
- Locating and securing affordable housing options for students

Despite challenges, colleges have also reported best practices including:

- Implementing local campus-level student basic needs surveys to identify need
- Outreach to students likely experiencing basic needs insecurities by leveraging data collected through sources such as the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) and CCCApply
- Implementing co-location of county social services and local data sharing agreements, to determine students' eligibility for programs such as CalFresh and MediCal; and
- Expanding the availability of mental health services through referrals to campus and telehealth services.

## **CONCLUSION**

As highlighted in the legislative priorities articulated by the California Community College Student Senate, basic needs security remains the top concern for students, affecting their equitable enrollment, persistence and completion. As reflected in the data above, the number of reported basic needs services accessed across the California Community Colleges system has increased. The data also reflects the high value of this ongoing investment as basic needs insecure students are successfully completing their courses and meeting completion milestones. Colleges, many of which began building out their Basic Needs Centers and expanding services in 2022, are seeing students who previously may have dropped courses or fully disenrolled due to basic needs insecurity thrive academically.

Since the inception of this investment, the Chancellor’s Office has focused on strengthening the enabling conditions for colleges to quickly ramp up capacity to support student basic needs. In addition to providing field guidance on funding allocations, program implementation and data collection and reporting, the Chancellor’s Office also introduced the [California Community Colleges Basic Needs Center Toolkit](#) to provide practical action steps, innovative practices and research-supported strategies to accelerate college level implementation of the Basic Needs Centers. Simultaneously, the California Community Colleges continues to invest in professional development activities for basic needs practitioners by partnering with the other two segments of public higher education through the California Higher Education Basic Needs Alliance (CHEBNA) biennial Basic Needs Summit, to provide best practices and insights on various basic needs topics ranging from CalFresh to housing to mental health to basic needs research. The California Community Colleges system will continue to promote continuous improvement and engage in the design of basic needs services delivery to meet the diverse needs of our student population and support our students’ journey towards economic and social mobility.

## **APPENDIX A: DESCRIPTION OF BASIC NEEDS SERVICES CATEGORIES**

- I. Food security services include CalFresh application assistance and referral, accessing the on-campus food pantry, drive-thru food distribution, on-campus meal vouchers and grocery store gift cards, partnering with on-campus student support programs and community organizations that provide food security resources or other types of services designed to improve food security.
- II. Housing security services include rapid rehousing, rental vouchers, eviction assistance, emergency funds for rent payments, referrals to available affordable housing within the county housing authority, or other types of services designed to improve housing security.
- III. Transportation services include free or discounted public transit vouchers, gas gift cards, waived or reduced on-campus parking fees, and partnering with local transit authority to increase public transportation options.
- IV. Mental health services include Medi-Cal application assistance, early intervention and suicide prevention support, incorporating trauma-informed principles into service delivery models, providing peer-to-peer mental health support programs, partnering with county behavioral mental health service providers, and contracting with third-party mental health service providers.
- V. Physical health services include Medi-Cal and Covered California application assistance, providing basic on-campus preventative health appointments, providing healthy cooking demonstrations.

- VI. Technology support services include access to on-campus high-speed internet, providing laptops and tablets, Wi-Fi hotspots, and referrals to discounted internet service providers.
- VII. Childcare support services include priority access to on-campus childcare facilities, awarding grants to cover the cost of childcare, providing play areas near computer/study labs for student-parents, and providing lactation rooms.



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Evergreen Valley

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