

# GUIDELINES FOR HEALTH PROFESSIONALS

## HOUSEHOLD FOOD INSECURITY

Household Food Insecurity (HFI) occurs “when a household worries about or lacks the financial means to buy healthy, safe, and personally acceptable food.” Below are three steps healthcare professionals can take to support food insecure clients<sup>1</sup>.

1. **Screen for HFI** in various settings (e.g. primary care visits, prenatal check-ups). Revisit at subsequent visits. [Poverty intervention tools](#) can assist in screening.
2. **Engage with the interdisciplinary team:** Primary care nurses, social workers, dietitians, [Aboriginal Patient Liaisons](#), and mental health clinicians can help.
3. **Link food insecure clients to financial and community supports.** See below.

**Financial Supports** – assist clients in identifying additional sources of income<sup>2</sup>.

Provincial Financial Resources	Federal Financial Resources
<a href="#">BC Income Assistance</a>	<a href="#">Federal Income Assistance</a>
<a href="#">General Supplements and Programs</a>	<a href="#">Canadian Benefits Finder</a>
<a href="#">Health Supplements and Programs</a>	<a href="#">Service Canada</a>
<a href="#">Disability Services BC</a>	<a href="#">Disability Credit Canada</a>
<a href="#">Nutrition Benefits Programs</a>	<a href="#">Canada Child Benefit; Child Disability Benefit</a>

Support clients in filling out [Income Tax forms](#)

**Community Supports** – link clients to local community programs. Some examples include:

Community Support Inventories <sup>3</sup>	Community Food Programs	Emergency Food Relief
<a href="#">BC211</a>	<a href="#">BC Farmers' Market Nutrition Coupon Program</a>	Food Banks
<a href="#">FETCH Database</a> (Pacific NW)	Community Gardens	Soup Kitchens
<a href="#">Terrace Food Resources</a>	Good Food Box Programs, Meals on Wheels	Food Hampers
<a href="#">PovNet</a>	<a href="#">Pregnancy Outreach Programs</a>	

<sup>1</sup> Please refer to [Household Food Insecurity: Guidelines for Health Professionals](#), for more information.

<sup>2</sup> Additional supports for Indigenous families – Consider linking Indigenous clients with their bands, communities, and/or friendship houses for supports. The [First Nations Health Authority Benefits Program](#) also offers supports for eligible BC First Nations peoples.

<sup>3</sup> If creating resources, consider inviting stakeholder review to ensure they are respectful, accessible, and inclusive of a variety of lived experiences.

