

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA Basic Needs, 2021-22, Legislative Report

Introduction

The Budget Act of 2019 (Assembly Bill 74) included \$15 million to address food and housing insecurity at the University of California (UC), to be referred to as “basic needs” throughout this report. This legislative report provides information regarding the distribution of funds, program efforts, and impact on students from July 1, 2020, through June 30, 2021. Appendix I includes the relevant text from the Budget Act of 2019.

Distribution of Funds Across the University of California

In 2019, UC distributed \$15 million across its ten campuses, based proportionally on the number of food-insecure undergraduate and graduate students on each campus. These estimates were informed by data collected during the 2020 UC Undergraduate Experience Survey and the 2016 UC Graduate Student Wellbeing Survey (the most recent data available). Figure 1 includes an overall breakdown of funding by campus.

Figure 1: Distribution of funding by campus for 2021–22			
Campus	Permanent Base	Innovation Awards 21-22	Total Campus Allocation
Berkeley	1,396,000	220,000	1,616,000
Davis	1,477,000	292,000	1,769,000
Irvine	1,445,000	279,000	1,724,000
Los Angeles	1,350,000	245,000	1,595,000
Merced	791,000	209,000	1,000,000
Riverside	1,240,000	371,000	1,611,000
San Diego	1,403,000	245,000	1,648,000
San Francisco	549,000	14,000	563,000
Santa Barbara	1,262,000	242,000	1,504,000
Santa Cruz	1,087,000	183,000	1,270,000
UCDC	50,000		50,000
UC Research and Assessment		200,000	200,000
UCOP	450,000		450,000
TOTAL	12,500,000	2,500,000	\$15,000,000

Of the \$15 million the State of California allocated to UC to address basic needs insecurity, the UC Office of the President (UCOP) distributed \$5 million equally across campuses (\$500,000 per campus, to provide a common, baseline level of support); \$7 million in proportion to the estimated number of students who are food and/or housing insecure at each campus (based on systemwide survey findings); \$2.5 million in innovation and research efforts; and \$50,000 for the UC Washington Center (UCDC) to provide services for study-away programs. Amidst the pandemic, the University allocated the 2021–22 portion of the basic needs innovation awards across all ten campuses to support basic needs services and supports. UCOP retained \$450,000 to provide technical assistance, technology innovation, and coordination of the Systemwide Basic Needs Committee. Appendix II includes a comprehensive breakdown of the distribution of funds for academic year 2021–22.

Campus Efforts

Across all campus basic needs services (food and housing), a total of 52,883 unique students were served, and a total of 226,790 student contacts were made as a result of State-funded programs from July 1, 2020 to June 30, 2021. Figure 2 includes a breakdown of students served by campus.

Campuses have sustained basic needs services for students amidst the COVID-19 pandemic. In the fall of 2021, campuses provided in-person services and supports to assist with COVID-19 prevention and mitigation efforts. As Omicron began to surge in January 2022, campuses quickly pivoted to provide increased virtual and in-person services across the system. Ongoing basic needs services, partnerships, and supports have continued to bolster student success amidst the pandemic. Appendix III provides a description of how campuses leveraged or coordinated with other State or local resources to address housing and food insecurity.

Figure 2: Total number of students using campus basic needs services during July 1, 2020–June 30, 2021		
Campus	Unique students served*	Total Student contacts**
Berkeley	3,799	24,408
Davis	4,962	59,190
Irvine	2,789	19,878
Los Angeles	7,126	26,437
Merced	690	6,853
Riverside	9,798	16,205
San Diego	5,997	17,924
San Francisco	1,598	11,051
Santa Barbara	14,307	29,673
Santa Cruz	1,817	15,171
TOTAL	52,883	226,790

* The number of unique (unduplicated) students served is calculated by gathering the number of individual student identification card “swipes” registered at all basic needs services. The swipes represent the total number of individual students served by State-funded basic needs programs.

** Student contacts represent the total number of student identification card “swipes,” or the total number of times students were served by State-funded basic needs programs.

Food Security Support

Since 2019, campuses have established critical food resources for students and continue to expand and sustain services to meet students' unique needs. According to the 2020 UC Undergraduate Experience Survey, 20 percent of students reported having very low food security, 18 percent reported having low food security, and 61 percent reported having food security. In addition, data from the 2021 Graduate Student Experience Survey show that 9 percent of students reported having very low food security, 11 percent reported having low food security, and 80 percent reported having food security.

Thanks to sustained funding, UC campuses have consistently offered resources to address food insecurity among students. As previously reported, campuses offer a variety of ongoing food assistance programs, educational workshops, and food operations. The considerable impact of the pandemic on family and individual finances underscores the importance of sustaining food services to support students. Food is primary to their health and ability to succeed in college. Figure 3 includes a summary of food services offered across the UC system. The following are campus efforts developed to address food insecurity:

Food Assistance

- Expanded food pantries and food distribution programs
- Expanded grocery card and meal voucher programs
- Provided food services and supports for isolation/quarantine
- Expanded CalFresh programs to assist students with applying for CalFresh benefits

Outreach

- Conducted CalFresh outreach in partnership with financial aid offices
- Offered workshops virtually and in person
- Provided basic needs awareness information

Operational

- Established basic needs centers
- Expanded campus case management support
- Created economic crisis response teams
- Hired staff and student staff to assist with outreach, education, and services

Figure 3: Summary of Food Services offered					
Campus	Grocery Card and Meal Vouchers	Food Pantry/ Distribution	EBT	Participates in RMP*	Plans to Participate in RMP**
Berkeley	✓	✓	✓		✓
Davis	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Irvine	✓	✓			✓
Los Angeles	✓	✓	✓		✓
Merced	✓	✓	✓		✓
Riverside	✓	✓	✓		✓
San Diego	✓	✓	✓		✓
San Francisco	✓	✓	✓		✓
Santa Barbara	✓	✓	✓		✓
Santa Cruz	✓	✓	✓		✓
TOTAL	10	10	9	1	9

*Campus participation in the restaurant meals program is contingent on county participation.

**Campuses who plan to participate in the restaurant meals program when the program becomes available within their county

Housing Support

Safe and secure housing is as vital to student success as proper nutrition. With ongoing State funding, UC campuses have sustained emergency assistance services for students experiencing housing insecurity. On-campus housing, distribution of housing vouchers, financial assistance, and emergency case management continue to be the primary forms of housing support offered by campuses. As shown in Figure 4, general housing efforts offered across all campuses include:

Housing Assistance

- Established on- and off-campus housing supports
- Established short- and long-term housing assistance
- Leveraged community partnerships

Education and Outreach

- Conducted workshops and outreach to raise awareness of services
- Established case management support to assist students with navigating housing challenges

Operational

- Developed economic crisis response teams to triage student housing needs
- Developed campus protocols and procedures to provide students with immediate housing
- Secured additional campus housing units in collaboration with student housing

Figure 4: List of housing supports offered by campuses

Campus	Emergency Supports				Long-term Supports		
	Campus Housing	Off-Campus Housing	Rental Assistance	Hotel Vouchers	Housing Security Deposit Assistance	Disaster Relief Fund	Case Management
Berkeley	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓
Davis	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Irvine	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓
Los Angeles	✓		✓				✓
Merced	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓
Riverside	✓			✓			✓
San Diego	✓			✓			✓
San Francisco	✓						✓
Santa Barbara	✓		✓				✓
Santa Cruz	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
TOTAL	10	4	7	5	2	4	10

Unexpected housing shortages have made housing a challenge for students to navigate. According to the 2020 UC Undergraduate Experience Survey, seven percent of students reported ever having lacked a safe, regular, and adequate nighttime place to stay and sleep for any length of time. In addition, data from the 2021 Graduate Student Experience Survey show that three percent of students reported ever having lacked a safe, regular, and adequate nighttime place to stay and sleep for any length of time.¹ Campuses have made efforts to take advantage of State housing grants to build more affordable housing options. In addition, campus basic-needs staff and peer educators offer workshops and trainings on navigating rental contracts and agreements.

¹ Data pulled from the Institutional and Academic Planning Student Basic Needs Dashboard <https://www.universityofcalifornia.edu/infocenter/student-basic-needs>

Overall Insights and Updates

Basic-needs services are essential to students. As campuses continue to respond to the pandemic and to plan for long-term recovery efforts, the State's investment in basic needs has been a pillar of stability for students. Food assistance programs, housing support programs, and wraparound case management have carried many students through the economic uncertainty of the pandemic.

A critical step in establishing support for students is to identify upstream approaches—specifically, addressing systemic barriers in higher education at the State and federal level that perpetuate equity gaps. For example, the University of California Student Association (UCSA) has embarked on a campaign to *Double the Pell*, which would increase federal investment in the Pell Grant. Apart from adequate food and housing, students need access to childcare, technology, and other resources that make their pursuit of higher education possible. Increased federal investment in the Pell Grant, together with the significant investments in financial aid by the California Legislature in 2021 through the expansion of the Cal Grant and Middle Class Scholarship Programs and increased financial aid funded by the University through its Tuition Stability Plan, will be available to help students address these needs.

Another critical area of need is the coordination of public safety net benefits like CalFresh. The University is working closely with the Center for Healthy Communities at Cal State University Chico to ensure that every campus has the tools for enrolling and connecting eligible students to this public benefit. Access to sustainable sources of support can ensure that students' needs are met. While short-term resources are essential, long-term resources provide students with the economic stability to continue their education. The University also is committed to partnering with the California Department of Social Services to ensure continuity of support as students navigate public safety net programs and services. Appendix III includes a breakdown of campuses participation in the CHC CalFresh outreach contract and other county and local partnerships.

Conclusion

The Budget Act of 2019 (Assembly Bill 74) has enabled campuses to respond effectively to basic-needs crises amidst the COVID-19 pandemic and has allowed campuses to support more than 52,000 students. In addition, funding has assisted students in enrolling for CalFresh, accessing essential food support, and receiving housing both on and off campus. These comprehensive efforts are critical as the State continues to develop student safety net programs.

Appendix I

Text from the Budget Act of 2019

From Senate Bill 106, Chapter 55, Statutes of 2019, including the following subsections of provision 5.2 of the University's appropriation:

“5.2

- (a) Of the funds appropriated in this item, \$15,000,000 shall be available to support meal donation programs, food pantries serving students, CalFresh enrollment and other means of directly providing nutrition assistance to students. The funds shall be used assist homeless and housing-insecure students in securing stable housing.
- (b) The University of California shall report to the Department of Finance and relevant policy and fiscal committees of the Legislature by March 1, 2020, and each year thereafter regarding the use of funds specified in this provision. The report shall include, but not necessarily be limited to, all of the following information:
 - (1) The amount of funds distributed to the campuses, and identification of which campuses received funds.
 - (2) For each campus, a programmatic budget summarizing how the funds were spent. The budget shall include any other funding used to supplement the General Fund.
 - (3) A description of the types of programs in which each campus invested.
 - (4) A list of campuses that accept or plan to accept electronic benefit transfer.
 - (5) A list of campuses that participate or plan to participate in the CalFresh Restaurant Meals Program.
 - (6) A list of campuses that offer or plan to offer emergency housing or assistance with long-term housing arrangements.
 - (7) A description of how campuses leveraged or coordinated with other state or local resources to address housing and food insecurity.
 - (8) An analysis describing how funds reduced food insecurity and homelessness among students, and, if feasible, how funds impacted student outcomes such as persistence or completion.
 - (9) Other findings and best practices implemented by campuses.”

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Appendix II

Summary of Campus Programmatic Budgets (including updated 2021-2022 basic needs innovation awards and systemwide coordination budget)												
Funding Categories	Berkeley	Davis	Irvine	Los Angeles	Merced	Riverside	San Diego	San Francisco	Santa Barbara	Santa Cruz	UC Systemwide	Totals
Basic Needs Center	\$59,000	\$61,000	\$126,000	\$150,000	\$96,000	\$35,000	\$59,000	\$64,000	\$40,000	\$82,000	\$0	\$772,000
Pre-College Outreach and Preparation	\$80,000	\$13,000	\$30,000	\$30,000	\$23,000	\$18,000	\$78,000	\$14,000	\$20,000	\$0	\$0	\$306,000
1st-Year Student Experience	\$31,000	\$29,000	\$3,000	\$160,000	\$20,000	\$18,000	\$3,000	\$5,000	\$14,000	\$30,000	\$0	\$313,000
Housing Services and Support	\$0	\$583,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$583,000
Direct Student Awards	\$441,000	\$145,000	\$358,000	\$345,000	\$234,000	\$234,000	\$0	\$111,000	\$313,000	\$106,000	\$0	\$2,287,000
CalFresh	\$41,000	\$26,000	\$7,000	\$65,000	\$0	\$10,000	\$43,000	\$4,000	\$16,000	\$0	\$0	\$212,000
Basic Needs Skills Development	\$54,000	\$131,000	\$11,000	\$12,000	\$7,000	\$100,000	\$151,000	\$42,000	\$16,000	\$0	\$0	\$524,000
Emergency Relief/Crisis Resolution	\$106,000	\$93,000	\$340,000	\$223,000	\$52,000	\$0	\$632,000	\$4,000	\$333,000	\$36,000	\$0	\$1,819,000
Career Staff Coordination (FTE)	\$375,000	\$273,000	\$425,000	\$276,000	\$276,000	\$595,000	\$335,000	\$284,000	\$276,000	\$552,000	\$0	\$3,667,000
Student Staff Coordination	\$207,000	\$93,000	\$125,000	\$66,000	\$80,000	\$160,000	\$70,000	\$17,000	\$195,000	\$185,000	\$0	\$1,198,000
Evaluation and Reporting	\$1,000	\$30,000	\$20,000	\$23,000	\$2,000	\$70,000	\$33,000	\$5,000	\$39,000	\$96,000	\$0	\$319,000
Innovation Awards	\$220,000	\$292,000	\$279,000	\$245,000	\$209,000	\$371,000	\$245,000	\$14,000	\$242,000	\$183,000	\$200,000	\$2,500,000
UC Systemwide	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$500,000	\$500,000
Totals	\$1,616,000	\$1,769,000	\$1,724,000	\$1,595,000	\$1,000,000	\$1,611,000	\$1,648,000	\$563,000	\$1,504,000	\$1,270,000	\$700,000	\$15,000,000

(Rounded to the nearest 1,000)

Appendix III

Partnerships with State or local resources to address housing and food insecurity			
Campus	CHC CalFresh Outreach Contract	County and Local Partnerships	Detail
Berkeley	✓	✓	Berkeley Food Network, Alameda County Community Food Bank, Berkeley Outreach Coalition, 211, Door Dash
Davis	✓	✓	Yolo County Food Bank, Tandem Organic Farm, PERIOD, Sunlight Foods, Peet’s Coffee
Irvine		✓	United Way, StandUp for Kids, Orange County Asian and Pacific Islander Community Alliance
Los Angeles	✓	✓	Westside Food Bank, Local grocery stores, United Way, Semel Healthy Campus Initiative
Merced	✓	✓	Farm Fresh to You, Daylight Foods, Merced Community College, Merced County Human Service Agency, Merced County Community Action Agency
Riverside	✓	✓	United Way, Feeding America, TruEvolution, County Department of Public and Social Services
San Diego	✓	✓	United Way, 211 San Diego, Door Dash, Berry Good Foods, San Diego Food Bank, National League of Cities, San Diego Youth Homelessness Consortium
San Francisco		✓	San Francisco/Marin Food Bank, San Francisco Dept. of Homelessness and Supporting Housing.
Santa Barbara	✓	✓	Santa Barbara County Food Bank, Santa Barbara County Food Action Network, United Way, Isla Vista Coalition
Santa Cruz	✓	✓	Second Harvest Food Bank, New Leaf Community Markets, Santa Cruz Farmers Market Association, Tenant Sanctuary

The Center for Healthy Communities (CHC) at California State University Chico serves as a prime CalFresh Outreach contractor with the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) to help more clients apply or become aware of CalFresh Food benefits. Eight UC campuses are part of the Cal Fresh Outreach contract.