



# 2018 #REALCOLLEGE SURVEY

## SCHOOL REPORT

APRIL 2019



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# **2018 #REALCOLLEGE SURVEY SCHOOL REPORT FOR THE COLLEGE OF NEW JERSEY**

**Report prepared by the Hope Center for College, Community, and  
Justice at Temple University**

**April 2019**

## **OVERVIEW**

\* Invitations to complete the questionnaire were sent by email to approximately 7,600 students from The College of New Jersey and 804 students participated. Thus, the estimated response rate is 10.6%.

\* Overall Basic Needs Insecurity Rates:

- 18% of respondents were food insecure in the prior 30 days
- 19% of respondents were housing insecure in the previous year
- 8% of respondents were homeless in the previous year

\* 31% of students at The College of New Jersey experienced at least one of these forms of basic needs insecurity in the past year.

\* There is substantial variation in basic needs insecurity across subgroups.

\* 6% of food insecure students utilize SNAP benefits and 4% of homeless students utilize housing benefits.

*For more information on the research methodology and survey participants, please refer to the appendices of the National 2018 #RealCollege Survey report.*

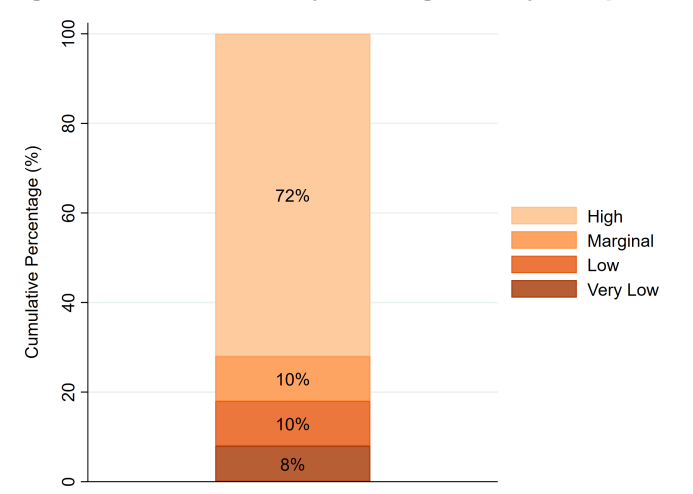
## **PREVALENCE OF BASIC NEEDS INSECURITY**

### **Food Insecurity**

Food insecurity is the limited or uncertain availability of nutritionally adequate and safe food, or the ability to acquire such food in a socially acceptable manner. The most extreme form is often accompanied with physiological sensations of hunger. We assessed food security among students using the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) 18-item set of questions.

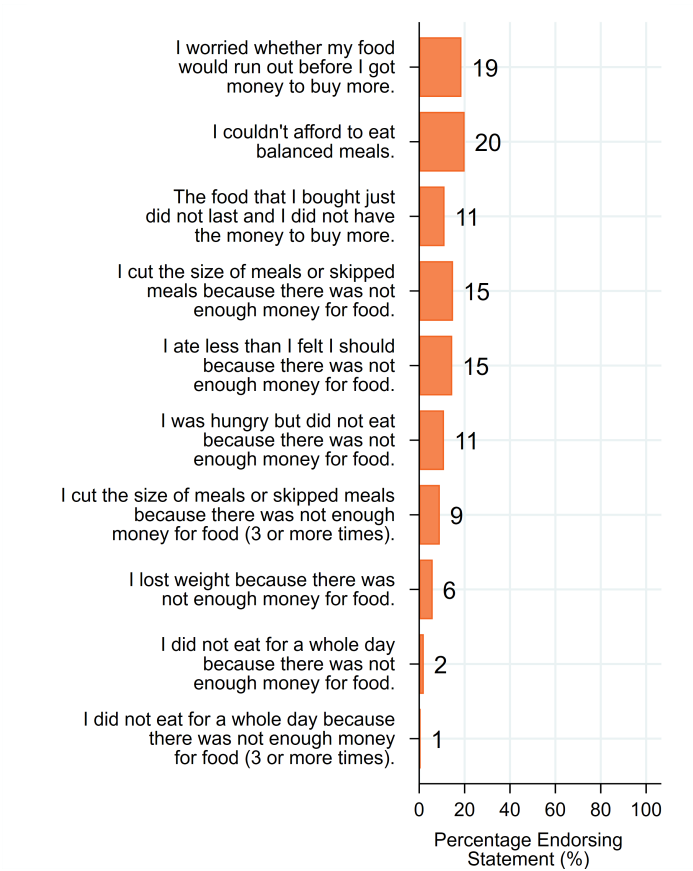
During the 30 days preceding the survey, approximately 18% of survey respondents at The College of New Jersey experienced low or very low levels of food security (Figure 1). Moreover, 19% of survey respondents at The College of New Jersey worry about running out of food before having money to buy more and 20% cannot afford to eat balanced meals.

**Figure 1. Food Security Among Survey Respondents at The College of New Jersey**



Source: 2018 #RealCollege Survey  
Notes: According to the USDA, students at either low or very low food security are termed food insecure. For the full list of questions used to measure food security, see our full report available at [www.hope4college.com](http://www.hope4college.com). Cumulative percentage may not add up to 100 due to rounding error.

**Figure 2. Food Insecurity Among Survey Respondents at The College of New Jersey**



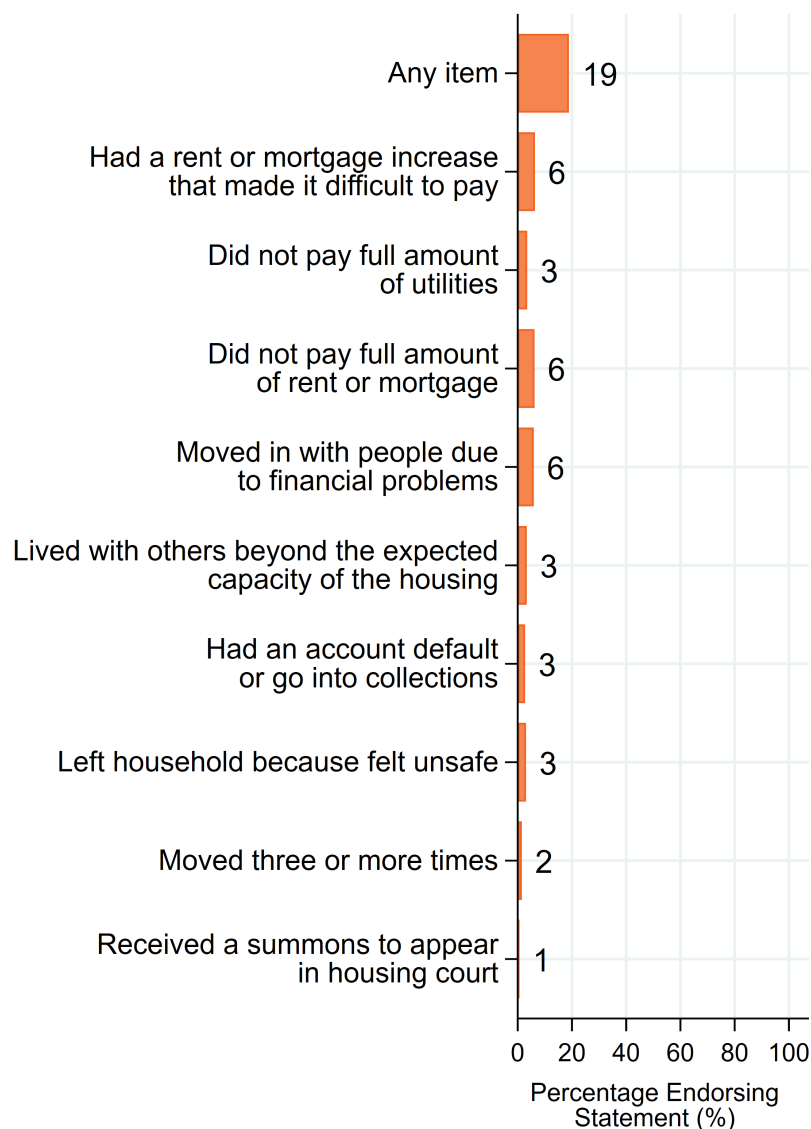
Source: 2018 #RealCollege Survey

## Housing Insecurity

Housing insecurity includes a broad set of challenges such as the inability to pay rent or utilities or the need to move frequently. All of these challenges affect students, and results suggest they are more likely to suffer some form of housing insecurity than to have all their needs met during college. Housing insecurity among students was assessed with a nine-item set of questions developed by the Hope Center. Students are classified as housing insecure if they answered affirmatively to experiencing at least one of those items in the previous year.

How prevalent is housing insecurity at The College of New Jersey? As displayed below, 19% of survey respondents are housing insecure (Figure 3).

**Figure 3. Housing Insecurity Among Survey Respondents at The College of New Jersey**



Source: 2018 #RealCollege Survey

## Homelessness

Homelessness means that a person does not have a stable place to live. Students were identified as homeless if they responded affirmatively to a question asking if they had been homeless or they experienced living conditions that are considered signs of homelessness in the previous year. Homelessness among students was assessed with a tool developed by California State University researchers.

How prevalent is homelessness at The College of New Jersey? As displayed below, 8% of survey respondents experience homelessness (Figure 4).

**Figure 4. Homelessness Among Survey Respondents at The College of New Jersey**

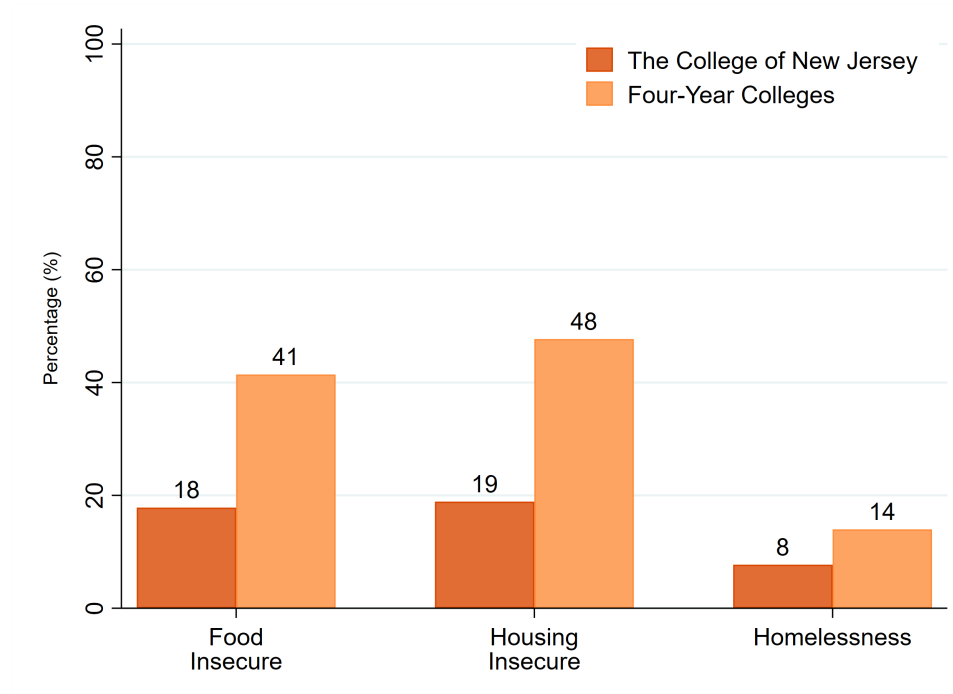


Source: 2018 #RealCollege Survey

## COMPARISON TO FOUR-YEAR COLLEGES

In comparison to the overall rates for students attending a four-year college in 2018, The College of New Jersey has a lower rate of food insecurity, a lower rate of housing insecurity, and a lower rate of homelessness (Figure 5).

**Figure 5. Comparison of Basic Needs Insecurity**

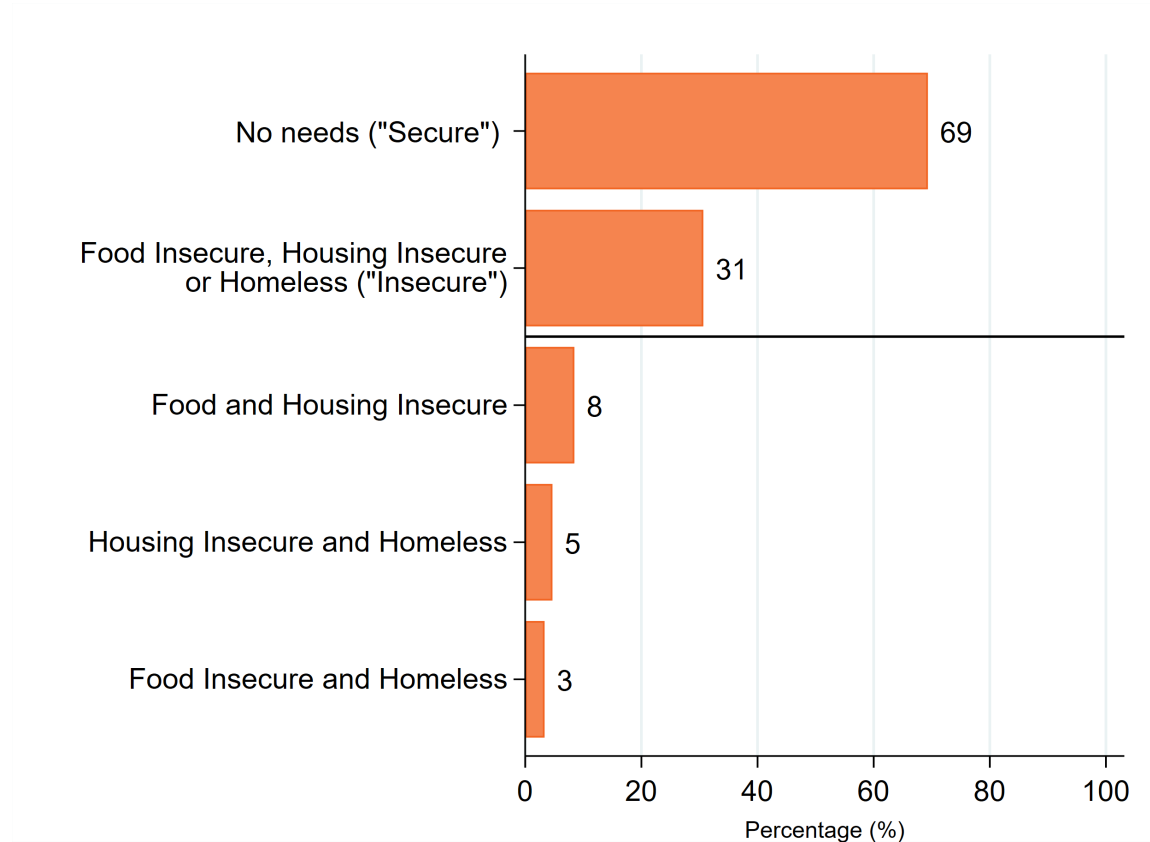


*Source: 2018 #RealCollege Survey*

## OVERLAPPING CHALLENGES

Food insecurity, housing insecurity, and homelessness are overlapping concerns, with 31% of students at The College of New Jersey experiencing at least one of these forms of basic needs insecurity in the past year (Figure 6).

**Figure 6. Intersections of Food Insecurity, Housing Insecurity, and Homelessness Among Survey Respondents at The College of New Jersey**



Source: 2018 #RealCollege Survey

## DISPARITIES IN BASIC NEEDS INSECURITY

Some students are at higher risk of basic needs insecurity than others. The tables in this section present rates of food insecurity, housing insecurity, and homelessness according to students' demographic, academic, and economic circumstances, as well as their life circumstances.

### By Demographic Background

**Table 1. Demographic Disparities in Rates of Food Insecurity, Housing Insecurity, and Homelessness Among Survey Respondents at The College of New Jersey**

|                           | Number of Students | Food Insecurity (%) | Housing Insecurity (%) | Homelessness (%) |
|---------------------------|--------------------|---------------------|------------------------|------------------|
| <b>GENDER ORIENTATION</b> |                    |                     |                        |                  |
| Male                      | 137                | 16                  | 14                     | 10               |
| Female                    | 464                | 17                  | 19                     | 6                |
| Transgender               | .                  | .                   | .                      | .                |
| Other                     | .                  | .                   | .                      | .                |

| <b>SEXUAL ORIENTATION</b>                                |     |    |    |    |
|--|-----|----|----|----|
| Heterosexual or straight                                 | 495 | 15 | 16 | 7  |
| Gay or lesbian   | 20  | 30 | 25 | 25 |
| Bisexual   | 65  | 23 | 28 | 5  |
| Other  | 31  | 32 | 23 | 13 |
| <b>RACIAL OR ETHNIC BACKGROUND</b>                       |     |    |    |    |
| White or Caucasian                                       | 423 | 15 | 17 | 6  |
| African American or Black                                | 32  | 47 | 41 | 16 |
| Hispanic or Latinx                                       | 82  | 22 | 24 | 15 |
| American Indian or Alaskan Native                        | .   | .  | .  | .  |
| Middle Eastern or North African or Arab or Arab American | 12  | 25 | 25 | 8  |
| Southeast Asian  | 32  | 22 | 28 | 13 |
| Pacific Islander or Native Hawaiian                      | .   | .  | .  | .  |
| Other Asian or Asian American                            | 66  | 11 | 8  | 8  |
| Other  | 12  | 8  | 17 | 17 |
| Prefers not to answer                                    | 12  | 25 | 8  | 8  |
| <b>STUDENT IS A U.S. CITIZEN OR PERMANENT RESIDENT</b>   |     |    |    |    |
| Yes  | 600 | 17 | 18 | 7  |
| No   | .   | .  | .  | .  |
| Prefers not to answer                                    | .   | .  | .  | .  |
| <b>HIGHEST LEVEL OF PARENTAL EDUCATION</b>               |     |    |    |    |
| No high school diploma                                   | 19  | 47 | 47 | 26 |
| High school diploma                                      | 55  | 31 | 29 | 11 |
| Some college   | 140 | 22 | 24 | 12 |



|                  |     |    |    |   |
|------------------|-----|----|----|---|
| Bachelors degree | 393 | 12 | 13 | 5 |
| Does not know    | .   | .  | .  | . |
| <b>AGE</b>       |     |    |    |   |
| 18 to 20         | 394 | 12 | 13 | 7 |
| 21 to 25         | 204 | 27 | 26 | 8 |
| 26 to 30         | .   | .  | .  | . |
| Older than 30    | .   | .  | .  | . |

Source: 2018 #RealCollege Survey

Note: Results from any category with fewer than 10 participants are not shown in the table.

### By Student Academic, Economic, and Life Experiences

**Table 2. Rates of Food Insecurity, Housing Insecurity, and Homelessness by Student Life Experiences Among Survey Respondents at The College of New Jersey**

|  | Number of<br>Students | Food<br>Insecurity (%) | Housing<br>Insecurity (%) | Homelessness<br>(%) |
|--|-----------------------|------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------|
| <b>COLLEGE ENROLLMENT STATUS</b>       |                       |                        |                           |                     |
| Full-time (at least 12 credits)        | 644                   | 18                     | 18                        | 8                   |
| Part-time (fewer than 12 credits)      | 18                    | 12                     | 33                        | 0                   |
| <b>YEARS IN COLLEGE</b>                |                       |                        |                           |                     |
| Less than 1                            | 176                   | 11                     | 11                        | 9                   |
| 1 to 2                                 | 231                   | 15                     | 18                        | 9                   |
| 3 or more                              | 227                   | 27                     | 26                        | 7                   |
| <b>DEPENDENCY STATUS</b>               |                       |                        |                           |                     |
| Dependent                              | 466                   | 18                     | 18                        | 9                   |
| Independent                            | 144                   | 15                     | 19                        | 5                   |
| <b>STUDENT RECEIVES THE PELL GRANT</b> |                       |                        |                           |                     |
| Yes                                    | 125                   | 27                     | 28                        | 10                  |
| No                                     | 537                   | 16                     | 17                        | 7                   |
| <b>STUDENT HAS CHILDREN</b>            |                       |                        |                           |                     |
| Yes                                    | 80                    | 28                     | 18                        | 8                   |
| No                                     | 582                   | 17                     | 19                        | 8                   |
| <b>RELATIONSHIP STATUS</b>             |                       |                        |                           |                     |
|  |                       |                        |                           |                     |

|  |     |    |    |    |
|--|-----|----|----|----|
| Single   | 372 | 16 | 15 | 6  |
| In a relationship  | 230 | 19 | 23 | 10 |
| Married or domestic partnership                              | .   | .  | .  | .  |
| Divorced   | .   | .  | .  | .  |
| Widowed  | .   | .  | .  | .  |
| <b>STUDENT HAS BEEN IN FOSTER CARE</b>                       |     |    |    |    |
| Yes  | .   | .  | .  | .  |
| No   | 605 | 17 | 18 | 8  |
| <b>STUDENT HAS BEEN IN MILITARY</b>                          |     |    |    |    |
| Yes  | .   | .  | .  | .  |
| No   | 610 | 17 | 18 | 8  |
| <b>EMPLOYMENT STATUS</b>                                     |     |    |    |    |
| Employed   | 393 | 22 | 23 | 9  |
| Not employed, looking for work                               | 85  | 20 | 19 | 9  |
| Not employed, not looking for work                           | 169 | 6  | 8  | 3  |
| <b>STUDENT HAS BEEN CONVICTED OF A CRIME</b>                 |     |    |    |    |
| Yes  | .   | .  | .  | .  |
| No   | 626 | 17 | 18 | 8  |
| <b>DISABILITY OR MEDICAL CONDITION</b>                       |     |    |    |    |
| Learning disability (dyslexia, etc.)                         | 26  | 19 | 19 | 12 |
| Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD)              | 43  | 35 | 26 | 12 |
| Autism spectrum disorder                                     | .   | .  | .  | .  |
| Physical disability (speech, sight, mobility, hearing, etc.) | 25  | 12 | 16 | 12 |
| Chronic illness (asthma, diabetes,                           | 84  | 21 | 26 | 7  |

|  |     |    |    |    |
|--|-----|----|----|----|
| autoimmune disorder, cancer, etc.)                 |     |    |    |    |
| Psychological disorder (depression, anxiety, etc.) | 181 | 23 | 27 | 13 |
| Other  | 14  | 0  | 21 | 14 |
| No disability or medical condition                 | 342 | 14 | 13 | 5  |

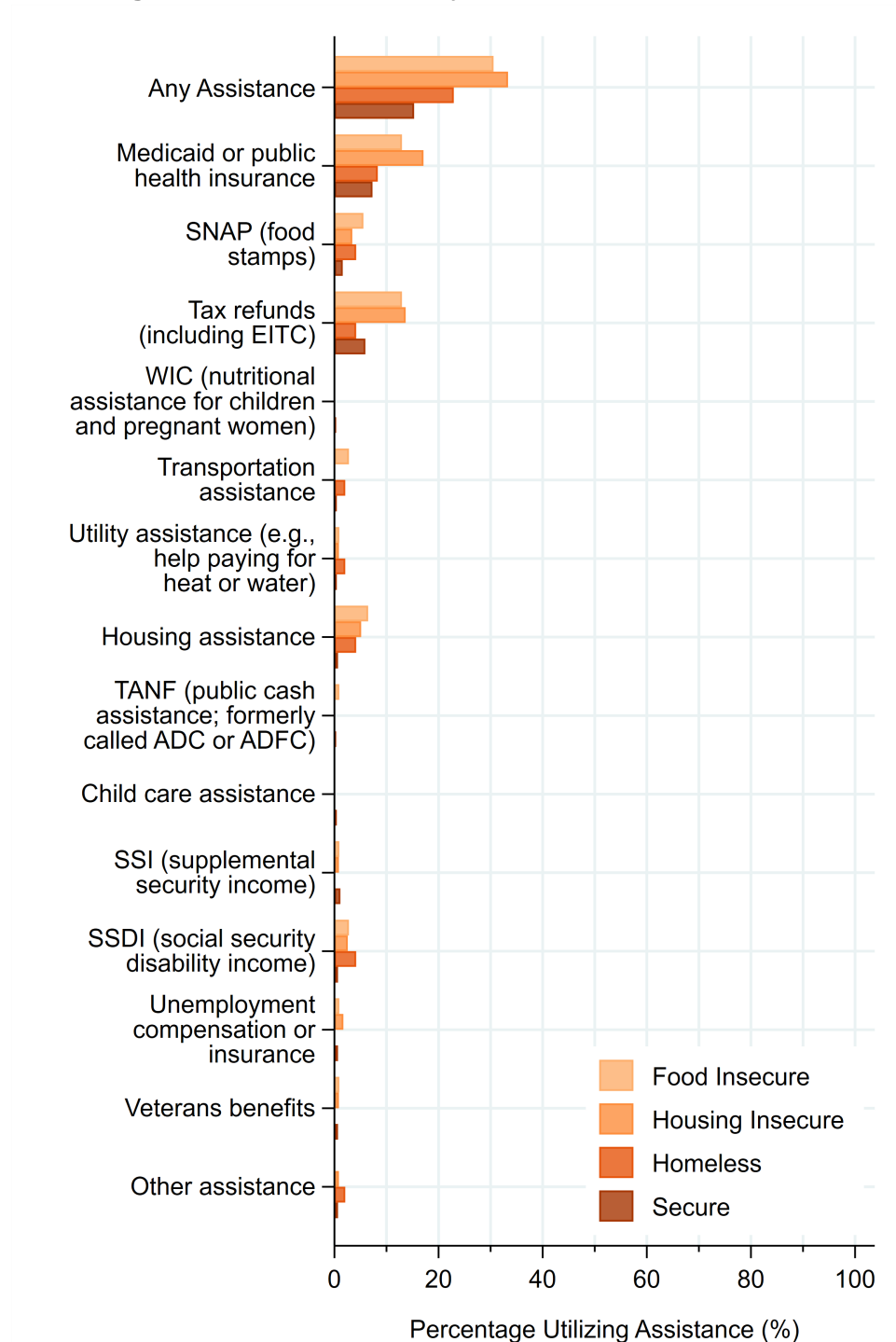
Source: 2018 #RealCollege Survey

Note: Results from any category with fewer than 10 participants are not shown in the table.

## UTILIZATION OF SUPPORTS

Many students at The College of New Jersey who experience basic needs insecurity do not receive public assistance (Figure 7). Fully 6% of food insecure students receive SNAP. In addition, 4% of students who experience homelessness receive housing assistance. It is also worth noting that students who are secure in their basic needs are still accessing public benefits, albeit at lower rates (15%) than their peers.

**Figure 7. Use of Assistance Among Survey Respondents at The College of New Jersey According to Basic Needs Security**



Source: 2018 #RealCollege Survey

## **CONCLUSION**

The #RealCollege survey affirms what has been evident to many college administrators, faculty, staff, and students for years: basic needs insecurity is a condition challenging many undergraduates pursuing credentials. The scope of the problem described here is substantial and should be cause for a systemic response.

## **ABOUT US**

The Hope Center for College, Community, and Justice at Temple University is home to an action research team using rigorous research to drive innovative practice, evidence-based policymaking, and effective communications to support #RealCollege students. For more information, visit <https://www.hope4college.com>.

## **CONTACT INFORMATION**

If you have questions about this report, please contact the Hope Center Research Team at [hopesrvy@temple.edu](mailto:hopesrvy@temple.edu).