

# MY

## Who faces hunger in Arizona?

# STORY

My partner Murphy and I have two children, a 4-year-old and a 16-year-old. We moved here from the Navajo Nation, most recently living in the villages of Lukachukai and Dilkon.

My partner works at Subway full-time and also has a part-time job at Walmart. I recently lost my job and I'm looking for work. Winter is the slow season here in Winslow, so I will probably be out of a job for a couple of months.

Each month we receive \$115 in SNAP because, at the time we applied, both of us were working. Hopefully, our SNAP will go up now that I am unemployed. While I was working, our "take-home" pay was around \$1,800 a month. Now our money is cut in half.

We supplement the \$115 with food from the senior center every two weeks. SNAP allows us to buy meat and fresh vegetables. We have learned to budget well. Living expenses are high here in Winslow, and we have transportation expenses as well. By the end of the month we are always low on food.

The process to apply for SNAP in Winslow is frustrating. The interview alone takes almost two hours. They ask for lots of paperwork and insist that I send it by fax. It's a small town, why do they need the information faxed to them when I can basically walk down the street and hand it to them?

The process is also very slow and sometimes depends on if a former employer bothers to send in the paperwork. Once they insisted that they receive verification from a job four years ago, finally after a month they said it would be okay for me to just write a statement. What was the point? There is also a constant cycle of "insufficient paperwork".

We came to Winslow, not so much for better jobs, but because in our Dilkon community on the Navajo Nation, there are only four places to work; the grocery store, the school district, a gas station and a Head Start. We had no choice, but to travel to Winslow 45 minutes away. We were spending \$100 a week on gas commuting to Winslow. We only have one car, so we were commuting 4 times a day making a near 100-mile round trip to Winslow each time. This lasted for nearly six months until we were able to get into the low-



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