

MY

Who faces hunger in Arizona?

STORY

I am a victim of domestic violence. I wish I would qualify for SNAP, but I don't because even though I haven't been with my husband for four years, we are still legally married.

My ex-husband is a stalker, I do whatever it takes to hide from him, including moving every few months. Right now, I am living in a converted garage. I would do anything to have a real kitchen and a bathroom with a tub, but I'm ok, at least I am safe.

I come to the food pantry here in central Phoenix, at least once a month. I pick up canned items that I can use along with the few vegetables I grow in a makeshift garden. Vegetables like tomatoes, cucumbers, pepper and herbs.

My hunger is real. I simply skip meals and don't think about eating. I've lost 70 pounds.

My life is surreal. I'm a smart woman and once held a job as a trainer at a prestigious company. These days, I know what age discrimination feels like, I've applied for lots of jobs, but never get called back. I'm lucky to work part-time, but my earnings barely cover my \$400 rent payment. I have diabetes and another serious medical condition, which gets expensive.

I'm stuck in a vicious cycle of trying to get along in this world. The food pantry has been my only source of food, but I do have hope. With the help of my domestic violence support group, I am being connected to more resources. Today, we even talked about getting me a bus ticket, so I can leave town and put this all behind me.



Yvonne
Phoenix, Arizona