

Food insecurity rates increase in LaRue

BY VICTORIA COX
EDITOR

One in four children in LaRue County do not have access to enough food.

One in six residents in LaRue County do not have access to enough food.

These statistics, derived from Feeding America's most recent Map the Meal Gap report, reveal that food insecurity for members of the local community is a significant problem, and one that is continuing to rise.

The U.S. Department of Agri-

culture defines food insecurity as a lack of consistent access to enough food for an active, healthy life. Food insecure households are not necessarily food insecure all the time, Feeding America states, but may reflect a household's need to make trade-offs between important basic needs, such as housing or medical bills, and purchasing nutritionally adequate foods.

According to the 2026 report, 18.2% of LaRue Countians lack access to adequate food; this is equal to 2,750 individuals, or one in six residents, and is 3.8% higher

than the national average. The deficit is even higher for local youth, with food insecurity affecting 890 children, equal to 26.2% or approximately one in four kids. These numbers demonstrate an increase of the local food insecurity rate by 120 individuals and 90 children over the past year, and by 720 individuals and 440 children over the past four years.

Of those who have been identified as food insecure, 34% of individuals and 41% of children are not eligible for major federal nutrition

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County proposes retained, lower tax rates

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EDITOR

The LaRue County Fiscal Court has proposed retaining its tax rate for real property, and lowering its rate for personal property, on the 2026 property tax bills.

Meeting in regular session on Tuesday, Aug. 25, members of the court were technically presented with three options for the Fiscal Year 2026-27 tax rates: they could accept the compensating rate, which would produce no new revenue over 2025; retain last year's real property rate, which would subsequently lower the personal property rate; or accept the 4% rate, which would generate 4% more revenue than last year.

A public hearing regarding the county's proposal to take the 4% rate was advertised and hosted prior to the regular meeting; it supplied no in-person, call-in or write-in comments from the community. Finding no opposition to the proposal, the court proceeded as planned and conducted a first reading of the ordinance at Tuesday's meeting. The second reading – and official vote – of the 2026 tax rates will occur at the fiscal court's Tuesday, Sept. 8 meeting.

The 2026 compensating rate is 21.9 cents per \$100 in assessed value. It would produce a revenue of \$2,106,128 before Sheriff's commissions, delinquencies, exonerations, etc.

The proposed real property tax rate of 22.3 cents per \$100 in assessed value is expected to produce a total revenue of \$2,144,596; this is an increase of approximately

\$117,000 over the revenue garnered in 2025 and does not include revenue generated from new property. The proposed rate is just under the potential 4% rate of 22.7 cents.

The personal property tax rate is determined based on the real property rate. As it is proposed, the tax rate for personal property is actually required to be lowered – dropping from 28.54 cents per \$100 in value to 27.90 cents. This is expected to generate \$443,749 – an approximate \$24,000 increase.

Motor vehicle and watercraft rates will remain unchanged at 25.15 cents, which will provide revenues of \$377,210 and \$10,475, respectively.

Tax rates for the LaRue County Board of Health and LaRue County Public Library were also accepted.

Sara Jo Best, Lincoln Trail District Health Department Public Health Director, provided the court with an overview of the LaRue County Health Department and its annual statistics.

She began with an update to the proposed LaRue County Health Center that is to be located at the corner of Railsplitter Road and Lincoln Drive in Hodgenville, across from the LaRue County Public Library. The approximately 3,600 square feet, single-story public health facility will feature a lobby with a separate breastfeeding room; a registration area with two workstations; a lab; four exam rooms for clinical services; a staff breakroom and a conference room with storage. Space for the LaRue County Environmental Service, including three staff offices, an entry space, two offices and a workspace, is also

required. According to Best, the health department is currently working on an application for the Community Development Block Grant, which could provide up to \$850,000 towards the construction of the new facility; the LaRue County Fiscal Court will be the entity that actually submits the application, a responsibility that was unanimously approved by the court at the meeting.

Best also reported that the board of health is retaining its tax rate of 2.9 cents for real and personal property and 3 cents for motor vehicles and water craft.

Marian Carlson, LaRue County Public Library Director, also offered the court an overview of the library's 2025 happenings, including nearly 48,000 patron visits, increased circulation numbers and the participation of 65% of the county's children in Dolly Parton's Imagination Library. Carlson also reported that the library board has decided to adopt the compensating rate of 5.3 cents for real property, 5.54 cents for personal property and 2.8 cents for motor vehicles and watercraft.

Representatives from the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet District 4 provided the court with an overview of this year's Rural Secondary Program funding. The funding is awarded to all Kentucky counties, incorporated cities and unincorporated urban places each fiscal year. Amounts received by each area are determined utilizing the Fifth's Formula, which allocates 1/5 of funds equally among all

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Submitted photo

The LaRue County Public Library's September Artist of the Month April Whaley, right, is pictured with her daughter, Taylor Krauser, at a craft vendor event.

Handmade accessories featured throughout Sept.

BY VICTORIA COX
EDITOR

Radcliff resident April Whaley, the LaRue County Public Library's September Artist of the Month, has always been crafty.

An army brat who eventually settled down on the west coast, Whaley spent the majority of her adult life as the owner/operator of a hair salon in California. After more than two decades in the state, she and her husband decided to retire to Kentucky in 2020 so they could be closer to their children and grandchildren.

Shortly after the move, Whaley received devastating news – health issues that she originally thought were symptoms of COVID-19 actually led to a cancer diagnosis. Fortunately, the kind of cancer she had had a 98% cure rate; however, the prognosis still prompted a nine-month-long fight. She has now been cancer free for the past five years.

Whaley did not let the diagnosis or battle stop her. Instead, less than a year after learning she had beaten the disease, she

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Lincoln Days Art Show now accepting entries

It's almost time for the 55th annual Lincoln Days Art Show, and organizers are asking for your submissions.

This year's Art Show entries will be accepted through Sunday, Sept. 27 at The Lincoln Museum, located at 66 Lincoln Square in Hodgenville. The Lincoln Museum is open Monday through Saturday from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. (ET) and Sunday from 12:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Visit the Lincoln Days Art Show Page to download forms, read show rules and get other art show information, or call the museum at 270-358-3163.

Winners will be announced at the Art Show Opening at 5 p.m. on Thursday, Oct. 1 at the

Lincoln Museum Community Room.

CATEGORIES

Lincoln Division: Entries in this division are open to artist's original concept of any phase of Abraham Lincoln's life or legacy.

\$1,000 – First Place Purchase Award
\$300 – Second Place Award

The Purchase Winner will become part of the Lincoln Days Collection on permanent display at The Lincoln Museum. There are currently 52 pieces in this unique collection. Lincoln Days gains all reproduction rights to the Purchase Winner. There is a \$10 entry fee per work.

Open Division: Any medium, any subject,

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Country Music Icon Parton dies at 80

BY KRISTIN M. HALL
AND ANDREW DALTON
ASSOCIATED PRESS

Music star Dolly Parton dies of cancer

NASHVILLE, Tenn. — Dolly Parton, the country music icon whose soaring vibrato vocals, poignant

songwriting and sparkling costumes defined her rise from a log cabin in the Tennessee mountains to the height of stardom and acclaim, died in Nashville on August 25, 2026. She was 80 years old.

"After bravely facing a brief battle with cancer, Dolly departed her Earthly life today at the Vanderbilt-Ingram Cancer Center

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Dolly Parton poses at the Carnegie Medal of Philanthropy Ceremony in New York on Oct. 13, 2022.

Andres Kudacki | Associated Press

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Danny Leroy Cobb, 72
Dorothy Lynn Kinyon, 71

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