



CDSS

WILL LIGHTBOURNE
DIRECTOR

STATE OF CALIFORNIA—HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES AGENCY
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES
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EDMUND G. BROWN JR.
GOVERNOR

April 12, 2016

TO: ALL COUNTY WELFARE DIRECTORS

FROM: WILL LIGHTBOURNE
Director

SUBJECT: CALFRESH AWARENESS MONTH IN MAY 2016

During the month of May, I hope all counties will join me in highlighting the benefits of the CalFresh program (known federally as Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program—SNAP) by hosting a CalFresh Awareness Month in your county.

This year the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) is encouraging counties to focus CalFresh Awareness Month activities on alleviating childhood hunger and enrolling eligible families in CalFresh, through partnerships with WIC, school meals, First 5, and Medi-Cal. These partnerships are the critical foundation in developing coordinated plans to connect children to all available nutrition and medical services. We are also encouraging counties to continue to increase overall program participation by expanding access through the use of online applications, telephonic services, and new technologies such as geo-coding.

For the past several years the CDSS has, in association with many counties, celebrated May as CalFresh Awareness Month. The CDSS is committed to supporting public and private partnerships that work together to reduce food insecurity in our state. CalFresh plays an important role in decreasing hunger and improving health by providing nutrition assistance to low income households.

Together we can increase the number of families that receive assistance to purchase the food they need and improve the health and wellbeing of our children. I encourage all counties to work with their local community-based organizations, including food banks, faith-based organizations, schools, and health clinics, to promote and enroll families in CalFresh. For information on agencies in your community that provide CalFresh Outreach application assistance please visit the CalFresh Outreach website at:

http://www.cdss.ca.gov/calfreshoutreach/res/Prime_Contractor_Contact_List.pdf

Thank you in advance for your proactive efforts to address hunger and food insecurity through collaboration with other agencies for the betterment of all of California. If you would like to learn more about opportunities to replicate and build upon the CalFresh Awareness Month efforts undertaken by other counties, or about state CalFresh Outreach efforts, please contact Caryn Rizell, Chief, CalFresh Nutrition Education and Outreach Bureau at (916) 654-1896.