





December 22, 2014

ALL COUNTY LETTER 14-101

REASON FOR THIS TRANSMITTAL

[] State Law Change

[] Federal Law or Regulation Change

[] Court Order

[] Clarification Requested by

One or More Counties

[X] Initiated by CDSS

TO: ALL COUNTY WELFARE DIRECTORS ALL CALFRESH PROGRAM SPECIALISTS ALL CONSORTIUM PROJECT MANAGERS

SUBJECT: CF 37: NEW FORM FOR CALFRESH RECERTIFICATION (RC)

REFERENCE: MANUAL OF POLICIES AND PROCEDURES (MPP) SECTIONS 63-504.6, 63-300.3, 63-504.25, ALL COUNTY LETTER (ACL) No. 12-25, 13-75, and 13-96

The purpose of this letter is to transmit instructions on implementing a new form for the RC of Nonassistance CalFresh (NACF) household (HH) in which no member receives a CalWORKs grant. It is anticipated that this administrative change will improve program access, decrease churn (cases discontinued that reapply within 30-90 days), simplify RC requirements and decrease the administrative burden on County Welfare Departments (CWDs).

The CF 37 replaces the CF 285 as the form for completing RCs and must be utilized by the CWD as soon as the form is programmed in the county's respective consortia, but no later than October 1, 2015. The CF 37 is a shorter version of the CF 285 and only asks the HH for new or changed information the CWD has not already gathered or received. Throughout this letter, the CF 37 will be referred to as the mechanism for completing CalFresh RCs.

The CalWORKs Program will release a separate ACL shortly to provide instruction on the use of a new short form currently being developed to take the place of the SAWS 2 Plus for the purposes of redeterminations (RD).

All County Letter No. 14-101 Page Two

BACKGROUND

In September 2013, the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) provided instruction in ACL 13-75 on the use of the CF 285, a revised CalFresh application. The CF 285 replaced a number of forms in the CalFresh application process and reduced the number of required signatures to a single signature. In addition, it was developed to be a more user friendly application for applicants and CWDs. Subsequently, ACL 13-96 provided instruction to CWDs to use the CF 285 as the designated form for the purpose of completing RCs.

CDSS CalFresh policy began the process of developing a simplified form to be used in lieu of the CF 285 in 2014 with the intent of improving program access, decreasing churn, simplifying RC requirements and decreasing the administrative burden on CWDs. The revisions to the form were based upon indications that RCs were negatively impacted by the use of the CF 285 full application for CalFresh, including gathering unneeded information, longer administrative processing time, and churn. In addition, a newly released Food and Nutrition Services (FNS) November 2014 report "Understanding the Rates, Causes, and Costs of Churning in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)" found that for a very high proportion of churning cases, the precipitating exit occurs at the time of a scheduled RC. The most frequently cited example was nonresponse to a RC notice. The findings suggest that changes in RC policy or procedure could reduce churn and client burden at RC. Furthermore, the report found that churn imposes added RC costs as reapplications for HHs returning to the CalFresh program take more staff time than RCs.

In an effort to improve RCs, CDSS CalFresh policy worked to develop the CF 37 to collect <u>only</u> new or changed information needed for the purpose of RCs that the CWD did not already have for NACF HHs in which no member receives a CalWORKs grant.

RC PROCESSES AND PROCEDURES

As soon as the form is programmed in the county's respective consortia, but no later than October 1, 2015, the CF 285 should no longer be used at RC for NACF HHs in which no member receives a CalWORKs grant. Like the CF 285, the CF 37 is a single signature form. The only information needed from HHs to submit a CalFresh application to the CWD is a name, address, and signature. Use of the CF 37 should not change the process and procedures for RC for NACF HHs in which no member receives a CalWORKs grant. CWDs should continue to follow the RC process for all CalFresh HHs as indicated in MPP sections 63-504.6, 63-300.3, and 63-504.25. CWDs should also continue to use the guidance provided in ACLs 12-25, 13-75, and 13-96. The only exception to the guidance provided in ACL 13-96 is after October 1, 2015, the CF 37 will

All County Letter No. 14-101 Page Three

be used in lieu of the CF 285 for purposes of RCs for NACF HHs in which no member receives a CalWORKs grant.

CHANGES MADE TO THE CALFRESH APPLICATION FOR RC

The goal of the CF 37 is to provide clients a shorter application for RC than the current CF 285 and to simplify the questions. The questions seek to gather only new or changed information regarding the HH circumstances. The CF 37 includes only questions that are federally required to be reported during the CalFresh RC process to improve program access, decrease churn, and decrease the administrative burden on CWDs.

Like the CF 285, the CF 37 includes a question that asks clients if they wish to be screened for Medi-Cal eligibility based on new Medi-Cal rules under the Affordable Care Act (ACA). If the applicant indicates that they are interested in applying for Medi-Cal, the information captured on the CalFresh application will be shared to assist in the completion of an eligibility determination for Medi-Cal.

AVAILABILITY OF THE REVISED RC FORMS

The CF 37 must be utilized by the CWD as soon as the form is programmed in the county's respective consortia, but no later than October 1, 2015. The CF 37 is a "No Substitute Permitted" form. As a reminder, changes to required forms, other than adding the county name, logo and contact information must be approved by the CDSS prior to making the change unless instructed otherwise. Upon implementation of the CF 37, the CF 285 should <u>only</u> be used for new applications for the CalFresh program.

CAMERA READY COPIES AND TRANSLATIONS

For camera-ready copies in English, contact the Forms Management Unit at <u>fmudss@dss.ca.gov</u>. If your office has internet access you may obtain these forms from the CDSS webpage at <u>http://www.dss.cahwnet.gov/cdssweb/FormsandPu_271.htm</u>.

When all translations are completed per MPP Section 21-115.2, including Spanish forms, they are posted on an on-going basis on the CDSS webpage. Copies of the translated forms can be obtained at

<u>http://www.dss.cahwnet.gov/cdssweb/FormsandPu_274.htm</u>. For questions on translated materials, please contact Language Services at (916) 651-8876. Until translations are available, recipients who have elected to receive materials in languages other than English should be sent the English version of the form or notice along with the <u>GEN 1365-Notice of Language Services</u> and a local contact number.

All County Letter No. 14-101 Page Four

CWDs shall ensure that effective bilingual services are provided. This requirement may be met through utilization of paid interpreters, qualified bilingual employees, and qualified employees of other agencies or community resources. These services shall be provided free of charge to the applicant/recipient. In the event that CDSS does not provide translations of a form, it is the county's responsibility to provide the translation if an applicant or recipient requests it. More information regarding translations can be found in MPP Section 21-115.

This ACL and other CDSS Letters and Notices are available on the internet at: http://www.dss.cahwnet.gov/lettersnotices/default.htm

Please direct questions regarding the CF 37 to your CalFresh county consultant or call the CalFresh Policy Bureau at (916) 654-1896.

Sincerely,

Original Document Signed By:

TODD R. BLAND Deputy Director Welfare to Work Division

Attachment

c: CWDA CSAC



RECERTIFICATION FOR CALFRESH BENEFITS

If you have a disability or need help with the recertification application, let the County Welfare Department (County) know and someone will help you.

If you prefer to speak, read, or write in a language other than English, the County will get someone to help you at no cost to you.

How do I keep getting CalFresh?

You must turn in this recertification application and be interviewed before the end of your certification period to continue receiving CalFresh. In many counties, you can complete this recertification application

online. To see if you can do this in your county, go to http://www.benefitscal.org/.

NOTE: If you do not currently have health coverage and are interested in the county using information from your CalFresh application to check your eligibility for Medi-Cal check the box on question 11, page 3 on the recertification application.

How do I complete the recertification application?

Answer all questions on the recertification application, if you can. You must at least provide your <u>name</u>, <u>address</u>, <u>and signature</u> to begin your recertification process. Read about your rights and your responsibilities <u>before</u> you sign this application. Turn in the signed application to the County in person, by mail, by fax, or on-line.

What do I do next?

The County will send you an interview appointment letter to discuss this application. Most interviews are done by phone, but can also be done in person at the County office or other place if arranged with the County. If you need other arrangements because of a disability, let the County know. Your worker can help you complete this application during the interview if you did not fill out all sections or if you need to make changes.

What happens at the recertification interview?

During the interview, the County will go over the information on the application and will ask questions to recertify you for CalFresh and determine your benefits. To avoid a delay in recertifying, provide proof of any changes in circumstance at the time of the interview. Examples are change in income; change in people buying/eating together, change in housing costs, etc. Keep your interview even if you do not have the proof. The County may be able to help to get the proof needed to recertify.

What happens if I forget to turn in this recertification application?

You must turn in this application before your certification period ends to recertify for CalFresh. If it is late, you may have an interruption in your benefits. If you turn in this application more than 30 days past the end of your certification period, you will have to reapply using the full application.

CalFresh Program Rules Page 1 – Please take and keep for your records.

What happens after my recertification is approved?

If you reapply timely and get recertified before your certification period ends, you will continue to receive benefits on your Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) card. Continue to use your EBT card and the same Personal Identification Number (PIN) to buy food. If your EBT card is lost, stolen or destroyed, call (877) 328-9677 or the County right away. For a list of locations near you that accept EBT please go to: https://www.ebt.ca.gov or https://www.snapfresh.org.

Rights and Responsibilities

You have a responsibility to:

- Give the County all information needed to determine your eligibility.
- Give the County proof of the information you gave when it is needed.
- Report changes as required. The County will give you information about what, when, and how to report. If you don t meet your household's reporting requirements your CalFresh benefits may be lowered or stopped.
- Look for, get, and keep a job or participate in other work-related activities if the County tells you that it is required in your case.
- Fully cooperate with county, state, or federal personnel if your case is selected for review or investigation to ensure that your eligibility and benefit level were correctly figured. Failure to cooperate in these reviews could result in loss of your benefits.
- Pay back any benefits that you were not eligible to get.

You have the right to:

- Turn in an application for CalFresh giving only your name, address, and signature.
- Have an interpreter provided by the County at no cost if you need one.
- Have information given to the County and kept confidential, unless directly related to the administration of County programs.
- Withdraw your application at any time prior to the County determining eligibility.
- Ask for help to fill out your application for CalFresh and get an explanation of the rules.
- Ask for help to get proof that is needed.
- Be treated with courtesy, consideration and respect, and not be discriminated against.
- Be interviewed in a reasonable amount of time by the county when you apply and to have your eligibility determined within 30 days.
- Get CalFresh benefits within 3 days if you qualify for Expedited Service.
- Get at least 10 days to give requested proof to the County that is needed to make a determination
 of eligibility.
- Get written notice at least 10 days before the County lowers or stops your CalFresh benefits.
- Discuss your case with the county and to review your case when you ask to do so.
- Ask for a state hearing within 90 days if you do not agree with the County about any actions taken on your CalFresh case.
- If you ask for a hearing before an action on your CalFresh case takes place, your CalFresh benefits will stay the same until the hearing or the end of your certification period, whichever is earlier.

- Ask about your hearing rights or for a legal aid referral at the toll-free phone numbers 1-800-9525253 or for hearing or speech impaired who use TDD, 1-800-952-8349. You may get free legal help at your local legal aid or welfare rights office.
- Bring a friend or someone with you to the hearing if you do not want to go alone.
- Get assistance from the County to register to vote.
- Report changes that you are not required to report, if it may increase your CalFresh benefits.
- Give proof of your household's expenses that may help you get more CalFresh benefits. Not giving proof to the County is the same as saying that you do not have that expense, and you may not be able to get more CalFresh benefits.
- Let the County know if you would like someone else to use your CalFresh benefits for your household or help with your CalFresh case (Authorized Representative).

Program Rules and Penalties

You are committing a crime if you give false or wrong information, or do not give all the information <u>on</u> <u>purpose</u> to try to get CalFresh benefits that you are not eligible to receive, or to help someone else get benefits that they are not eligible receive. You must pay back any benefits you get that you were not eligible to receive.

I understand that if I	I may
 Commit an intentional program violation by doing any of the following: hide information or make false statements use EBT cards that belong to someone else or let someone else use your card use CalFresh benefits to buy alcohol or tobacco trade, sell, or give away CalFresh benefits or EBT cards 	 lose CalFresh benefits for 12 months for the first offense and be required to repay all CalFresh benefits overpaid to me lose CalFresh benefits for 24 months for the second offense and be required to repay all CalFresh benefits overpaid to me lose CalFresh benefits permanently for third offense and be required to repay all CalFresh benefits overpaid to me lose CalFresh benefits permanently for third offense and be required to repay all CalFresh benefits overpaid to me be fined up to \$250,000.00, imprisoned up to 20 years or both
 trade CalFresh benefits for controlled substances, such as drugs 	 lose CalFresh benefits for 24 months for the first offense lose CalFresh benefits permanently for the second offense
 give false information about who I am and where I live so I can get extra CalFresh benefits 	 lose CalFresh benefits for 10 years for each offense
 have been convicted of trading or selling CalFresh benefits worth more than \$500, or trading CalFresh benefits for firearms, ammunition, or explosives 	 Iose CalFresh benefits permanently

Important Information for Noncitizens: You can apply for and get CalFresh benefits for people who are eligible, even if your family includes others who are not eligible. Getting food benefits <u>will not</u> <u>affect you or your family's immigration status</u>. Immigration information is private and confidential. The immigration status of noncitizens that are eligible and apply for benefits will be checked with the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS). Federal law says the USCIS cannot use the information for anything else except cases of fraud.

Opting Out: You do not have to give immigration information, social security numbers, or documents for any noncitizen family member(s) who are not applying for CalFresh benefits. However, the County will need to know their income and resource information to correctly determine your household's CalFresh benefits. The County will not contact USCIS about the people who do not apply for CalFresh benefits.

Use of Social Security Numbers (SSN): Everyone applying for CalFresh benefits needs to provide a SSN, if you have one, or proof that you have applied for a SSN (such as a letter from the Social Security Office). The county may deny CalFresh benefits for you or any member of your household who does not give us a SSN. Some people do not have to give SSN's to get help such as, victims of domestic abuse, crime prosecution witnesses, and trafficking victims.

Overissuance: This means you got more CalFresh benefits than you should have gotten. You will have to pay it back even if the county made an error or if it was not on purpose. Your benefits may be lowered or stopped. Your SSN may be used to collect the amount of benefits owed, through the courts, other collection agencies, or federal government collection action.

Reporting: Your household must continue to report the changes the county told you to report. If you do not report, your benefits may be lowered or stopped. You can also report if things happen that may increase your benefits, such as receiving less income.

State Hearing: You have the right to a state hearing if you do not agree with any action taken regarding your recertification for ongoing benefits. You can request a state hearing within 90 days of the County's action and you must tell why you want a hearing. The approval or denial notice you receive from the County will have information on how to request a state hearing.

Nondiscrimination: It is the State and County's policy that all people be treated equally, with respect and dignity. In accordance with federal law and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Policy, discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, religion, political beliefs, or disabilities is strictly prohibited. To file a complaint of discrimination, either contact the County's Civil Rights Coordinator, or contact the USDA or California Department of Social Services (CDSS):

USDA Director, Office of Civil Rights Room 326-W, Whitten Building 1400 Independence Ave., S.W. Washington D.C. 20250-9410 1-202-720-5964 (voice and TDD) CDSS Civil Rights Bureau P.O.BOX 944243, M.S. 8-16-70 Sacramento, CA 94244-2430 1-866-741-6241 (Toll Free)

USDA is an equal opportunity employer.

CalFresh Program Rules Page 4 – Please take and keep for your records.

Privacy Act and Disclosure: You are giving personal information in the application. The County uses the information to see if you are eligible for benefits. If you do not give the requested information, the County may deny your application. You have a right to review, change, or correct any information that you gave to the county. The County will not show your information or give it to others unless you give there permission or federal and state law allows them to do so. The County will verify this information through computer matching programs, including the Income and Earnings Verification System (IEVS). This information will be used to monitor compliance with program regulations and for program management. The County may share this information with other federal and state agencies for official examination, to law enforcement officials for the purpose of arresting persons fleeing to avoid the law, and to private claims collection agencies for claims collection action. Information the County gets from these agencies may affect your eligibility and level of benefits.

Case File Reviews: Your case may be selected for additional review to ensure that your eligibility was correctly figured. You must cooperate fully with the county, state, or federal personnel in any investigation or review, including a quality control review. Failure to cooperate in these reviews could result in loss of your benefits.

Work Rules for CalFresh: The County may assign you to a mandatory work program. If you do not participate when required by the County, your benefits could be reduced or stopped. Also, you may not be eligible to CalFresh if you have recently quit a job.

EBT Usage: Any use of your EBT card by you, a household member, your authorized representative, or anyone you voluntarily give your EBT card and PIN to will be considered approved by you and any benefits taken from your account will **not** be replaced.

NOTES



RECERTIFICATION APPLICATION - CALFRESH ONLY HOUSEHOLDS

____. To keep your benefits coming on time without a break, please fill out, sign, date, and You certification ends on the return this form to the county and provide proof of your circumstances before the end of your certification period. We need the information by this date because we will need to interview you to finish the recertification. We only want to know about changes your household has had from the last time you gave information to the county. We need at least your name, signature, address, and dated form to begin the CalFresh recertification.

Case Name: _____ Case Number: _____

1. Has anyone moved into or out of your home (including newborns)? Yes No (If yes, complete the section below)

	Date of M (mm/dd			Name (First, Middle, Last	t)	Date 0	Of Birth	Relationship To You		Purchase And ood Together?
In	Out	/	/			/	/		Yes	No
In	Out	/	/			/	/		Yes	No
In	Out					/	/		Yes	No
2. Have	e there be	en an	y char	nges to your address?	□Yes □] No (If	yes, cor	mplete the section	below)	
New Address:						Date Moved	:			

Mailing Address (if different from above) _____

3a. If you have moved or have new/changed housing costs, please fill out the information below:

lf p	Your rent or mortgage per month now? \$ If paid separately, your property taxes and home insurance per month now? \$				
3b	. Do you have utility c	osts that ar	re not included in your housi	ng costs? If so, check	which ones:
	☐ Phone	□ Trash	□ Water	☐ Electric/Gas	Other heating or cooling costs
4.	Are you homeless?	□ Yes	□ No If yes , do you pay s	helter costs?	□ No
5.	5. Students: Is anyone who is applying for benefits including you attending a college or vocational school? \Box Yes \Box No				

If yes, please provide the information below. If no, skip to the next question.

Case Name: ____

Case Number:

Name of Person	Name of School/Training	Enrolled Status (✓ check one)	Is this person Working?
		 ☐ Half-time or more ☐ Less than half-time ☐ Number of units: 	□ NO □ YES, Average work hours per week:
		□ Half-time or more □ Less than half-time □ Number of units:	□ NO □ YES, Average work hours per week:

6a. Is anyone currently receiving income from employment? \Box Yes \Box No

If **yes**, complete the section below and attach proof. List each job for each person who works. If you need more space, attach a separate piece of paper and identify which question you are writing about. Examples include babysitting, salary, self-employment, sick pay, tips, etc.

	Job #1	Job #2	Job #3
Name of Person who gets income:			
Employer Name:	Self-employed, check \Box	Self-employed, check \Box	Self-employed, check \Box
How often paid:	Weekly Biweekly Other Monthly Twice Monthly	Weekly Biweekly Other Monthly Twice Monthly	Weekly Biweekly Other Monthly Twice Monthly
Monthly Gross Amount of Income:	\$	\$	\$
Hours worked per month:			
Will this income continue?			

6b. Will there be any changes to your job or income in the near future? \Box Yes \Box No

Examples: Stopping, starting, increase or decrease of income, change in hours, quitting a job, going on strike, change in how often you are paid.

If yes, explain here and attach any proof: _____

7a. Is anyone currently receiving money from any other source? \Box Yes \Box No

If **yes**, complete the section below and **attach proof**. Examples include: Social Security, Unemployment Compensation, Veteran's Benefits, State Disability Insurance (SDI), Child/Spousal Support, Worker's Compensation, Loan/Gifts, Earned/Unearned Housing, Utilities, Food, etc.

Name	Source of Income	One-time or ongoing payment	How much/How often

7b. Will there be any changes to this income in the near future? \Box Yes \Box No

If yes, explain here: _____

Case Name:	Case Number:
	yone who gets CalFresh and is 60 years old older, or disabled, have an increase or begin paying I No (If yes, complete the section below)
Who had the cost?	Type of cost
Amount paid?	How often?
	yone who gets CalFresh have to pay child support?
	·
What is the current amount	t they have to pay? \$ Who paid support?
	Care: Does anyone pay for care of a child, disabled adult, or other dependent so you or the other chool, or look for a job? \Box Yes \Box No
	amount you or anyone in your household pays out of pocket.
	Who paid:List dependent/child:
11. Are you interested in	applying for Medi-Cal? 🛛 Yes 🖓 No
If you answer "yes", the Co	ounty will use your information to find out if you can get Medi-Cal.
12. Duplicate Benefits	
	of your household been convicted of fraudulently receiving duplicate SNAP (federal name for food assistance
	sh in California) benefits in any state after September 22, 1996? Ves No
IT yes , who?	
13. Trafficking Benefits	
-	of your household ever been convicted of trafficking (allowing use of or selling EBT cards to others) SNAP
	tter September 22, 1996? Ves No
If yes , who?	
14. Trading Benefits for D	-
	of your household been found guilty of trading SNAP benefits for drugs after September 22, 1996? yes, who?
	yes, who:
15. Trading Benefits for Fi	irearms or Explosives
Have you or any member o September 22, 1996? \Box	of your household been found guilty of trading SNAP benefits for guns, ammunition, or explosives after
If yes , who?	
16. Fleeing Felon	
	your household hiding or running from the law to avoid prosecution, being taken into custody, or going to jail oted felony crime? Ves No
If yes , who?	
17. Probation/Parole Viola	ation
	If your household been found by a court of law to be in violation of probation or parole?
If yes , who?	

Case Name:

Case Number:

CERTIFICATION

Please read carefully, sign, and date. By signing this form:

I understand that by signing this recertification application under penalty of perjury (making false statements), that:

- I read, or had read to me, the information in this recertification application and my answers to the questions in this recertification application.
- My answers to the questions are true and complete to the best of my knowledge.
- Any answers I may give for my recertification process will be true and complete to the best of my knowledge.
- I read or had read to me the Rights and Responsibilities (Program Rules Page 1) for the CalFresh Program and the CalFresh Program Rules and Penalties (Program Rules Pages 2 through 3).
- I understand that giving false or misleading statements or misrepresenting, hiding or withholding facts to establish eligibility for CalFresh is fraud. Fraud can cause a criminal case to be filed against me and/or I may be barred for a period of time (or life) from getting CalFresh benefits.
- I understand that Social Security Numbers or immigration status for household members applying for benefits may be shared with the appropriate government agencies as required by federal law.

TO CONTINUE RECEIVING BENEFITS, YOU MUST SIGN AND DATE THIS APPLICATION AND BE INTERVIEWED BEFORE THE LAST DAY OF YOUR CERTIFICATION PERIOD.

WHO MUST SIGN BELOW: Adult household member/Authorized Representative/Guardian

Signature or Mark of Applicant

Date

Contact email/phone