

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES
744 P Street, Sacramento, CA 95814



August 15, 1990

ALL COUNTY LETTER NO. 90-77

TO: ALL COUNTY WELFARE DIRECTORS

SUBJECT: THE HUNGER PREVENTION ACT OF 1988, RDB PACKAGE 0798-27:
AFDC AND FOOD STAMP PROGRAMS' INFORMING REQUIREMENTS

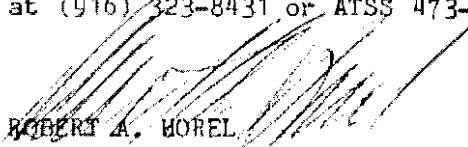
This letter provides County Welfare Departments (CWDs) a copy of the English and Spanish June 1990 versions of both the Food Stamp Important Information (FS 9) and the Aid to Families With Dependent Children (AFDC) Important Information (CA 1030) forms. These forms were developed to facilitate compliance with the informing provisions contained in MPP Section 40-107.15 which became effective on July 1, 1990. These regulations specify that all AFDC applicants be informed of the rules and benefits of the AFDC and Food Stamp Programs. These forms supplement the information on the SAWS 1 (4/90) Coversheet, SAWS 2A (4/90) Important Information, and the FS 8 (4/90). When used together, compliance with MPP Section 40-107.153 is assured.

The regulations specify that the FS 9 and CA 1030 be provided to each AFDC applicant. However, they can be given to anyone wanting information about the programs. They can also be given to current recipients as a reminder of program rules.

During the review of these forms, several CWDs asked if there was a requirement to note in the case record that one or both of the forms were given out. There is no such requirement. However, we do recommend that CWDs develop some mechanism to show that client informing requirements have been met. This may include a notation that the appropriate form was provided.

For those CWDs that print their own stock, a camera-ready copy of the English and Spanish language versions of the FS 9 and CA 1030 may be obtained by calling the State Department of Social Services (SDSS), Forms Management Unit, at (916) 322-8738 or ATSS 492-8738. A camera-ready copy of these forms in Cambodian, Chinese, Lao and Vietnamese has been sent to the county Forms Coordinators under separate cover by the Language Services Bureau. Supplies of the English and Spanish language forms should be available in mid August 1990, and may be ordered from the SDSS Warehouse according to the forms ordering procedures contained in the County Forms Catalog.

If you have any questions regarding these forms, please contact Joe Carleton at (916) 323-8431 or ATSS 473-8431.


ROBERT A. HOREL
Deputy Director

Attachments

cc: CWDA

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

AID TO FAMILIES WITH DEPENDENT CHILDREN (AFDC)

WHAT IS AFDC?

It's a program that gives money for the care of needy children when one or both of the parents are absent, disabled, dead or unemployed (working less than 100 hours in a month). The money comes from the Federal, State and County governments. AFDC rules come from Federal and State laws and regulations. The County Welfare Department uses these rules to run the program.

HOW DO I ASK FOR AFDC?

You ask for AFDC by filling out an application form at the closest County Welfare Department office in the County where you live. You can also ask for Food Stamps and medical benefits at the same time by using the same form. After you turn in your application form, the County will set up a time for you to talk to a worker. If you are asking for both AFDC and Food Stamps, you will be able to talk to the same worker.

If you have little or no cash and need housing, food, utilities, clothing, or medical care, you can ask for help right away. If you meet the rules for "Immediate Need" or "Homeless Assistance," you can get some aid in a day or so.

WHAT WILL THE COUNTY ASK ME TO DO?

Your worker will need to know certain facts to find out if you meet all of the rules. Your worker will need your help in getting these facts. If you don't help, as best you can, your worker may have no choice but to deny or stop your AFDC until you do help or have a good reason why you can't.

If you need help because you can't get all of the facts or proof needed, you can give your worker permission to get it for you. But first, you must do all you can to get them.

WHAT ARE SOME OF THE RULES THAT I HAVE TO MEET TO GET AFDC?

Here are some of the rules that everyone has to meet to get AFDC. There are others, but your worker will tell you about them. How many of these other rules apply to you will depend on your situation.

- * **Social Security Number (SSN):** Everyone, even babies, must have a SSN. If someone doesn't have one, you must do all you can to help get one for that person.
- * **Live In California:** All of the people asking for aid must be living in or plan on living in California.
- * **Citizenship:** Everyone asking for AFDC must either be a U.S. citizen or be in this country with permanent resident alien status. You will need to give to your worker proof that everyone is a citizen or a permanent resident alien. In some cases your status may be checked by a computer.

- * **Work With the District Attorney:** All families that do not have both of the parents living with the children who get AFDC must help the District Attorney find and get child support from the parent that does not live with them.
- * **Age:** When children turn 18 years of age, they can get AFDC only if they are in school full time and expect to finish school before they turn 19. When children turn 19 years of age, they cannot get AFDC.
- * **Monthly Report:** All families getting AFDC must send in a report to the County each month. This report is called the "Monthly Eligibility Report" (CA 7). If it is not turned in on time, your AFDC could be lowered or stopped.
- * **Property Limit:** State law sets a \$1000.00 limit on the amount of property (e.g., bank accounts, stocks, real estate, etc.) that a family can have and still get AFDC. Your car's value under \$1500.00 will not be counted as part of this limit. Your home is not part of this limit as long as you are living in it. If you go over the limit, your family's AFDC may be stopped.
- * **Aid Payment:** State law sets a limit on the amount of AFDC you can get each month. This amount depends on the size of your family able to get AFDC and any special needs you can get. If you have income, the amount of income left after giving you certain deductions will be used to figure out how much of this limit you can get each month. You will not be able to get AFDC if your family's income is more than the AFDC payment limit. If you get a lot of money at one time (lump sum), you may have to go off of AFDC and live off of that money for some period of time.

AFDC is paid by check. In most Counties your payment will be made in two checks each month. If a check is lost, stolen or destroyed, call your worker right away. You may be able to get it replaced.

If you are paid too much AFDC, you may have to pay back the amount you should not have gotten. This is called an overpayment. Overpayments have to be paid back even if it wasn't your fault that it happened. In most cases, a part of the overpayment will be taken out of your AFDC payment each month until it is all paid back.

There are other rules which your worker will tell you about. If you do not understand a rule, ask your worker to explain it to you. It is important that you understand all the rules so that you will get the right amount of AFDC.

SEE OTHER SIDE FOR MORE INFORMATION

HOW CAN AFDC HELP ME?

First, you will get money every month to help you pay for your housing, food, and other things that you need to live on. There are many other programs and benefits you can get by being on AFDC. Some of these are:

- * **Medical Coverage:** In most cases, each member of your family getting AFDC will also get Medi-Cal. Medi-Cal will pay for most of their medical costs. In some areas, you may be able to pick a health care provider.
- * **Child Support:** If you have a child whose father or mother or both are not living with you, your worker will have to talk to the District Attorney. The District Attorney will try to get child support from this person for you. If you don't know who the child's legal father is, the District Attorney's Office will also try to find out with you. There are many reasons why it is important to know who the father is. If the father is known, the child could get inheritance, pension money or Social Security benefits.
- * **Work or Training Programs:** The **GAIN** (Greater Avenues for Independence) Program can help you get the skills needed to get a job. Your worker will tell you if you have to be in this program. If you don't, you can ask to be in it.
- * **Family Planning:** You or any member of your family can get information that can help limit family size, decide when to have children and prevent unwanted pregnancies.
- * **Child Health and Disability Prevention (CHDP):** You can get regular checkups to help protect those members of your family under the age of 21 who are getting AFDC. Your worker can tell you how you can get more information about this program.
- * **Social Services:** If you need help with family problems, child care or problems with the law you can talk to a Social Worker. Your worker can give you a telephone number to call 24 hours a day.
- * **Transitional Child Care (TCC):** When you stop getting AFDC because of your job, you may be able to get help in paying for your child care costs for a year.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

FOOD STAMPS

WHAT IS THE FOOD STAMP PROGRAM?

It's a program that helps low-income households get more and better food than they could buy with just their money. The food stamps come from the Federal government. The Food Stamp Program rules come from Federal law and regulations. The County Welfare Department uses these rules to run the program.

HOW DO I ASK FOR FOOD STAMPS?

You ask for food stamps by filling out an application form at the closest County Welfare Department office in the County where you live. The application will be for everyone in your Food Stamp household. In most cases, your Food Stamp household will be all of the people who live with you. Sometimes, people who live with you buy and fix their own food. If they do, they may be able to be in their own Food Stamp household. They would have to fill out their own application form if they want food stamps.

You can also ask for medical benefits and most types of cash aid at the same time by using the same form. If you are asking for your County's local cash aid (i.e., General Relief or General Assistance), you will need to use a different application form. After you turn in your application form, the County will set up a time for you to talk to a worker. Most of the time, you will be able to talk to the same worker about cash aid.

If you need food stamps right away because you do not have much money or a place to live, you can get "Expedited Service." If you meet the rules for Expedited Service, you can get food stamps within three (3) days from the date you turned in your application form.

WHAT WILL THE COUNTY ASK ME TO DO?

Your worker will need to know certain facts to find out if you meet all of the rules. Your worker will need proof of some of these facts. You will need to give to your worker new proof anytime the facts change and of your earnings each month. Your worker will tell you which facts need proof. If you don't give your worker the facts or proof, your worker may have no choice but to deny or stop your food stamps until you do all that you can to get them.

If you need help in getting the proof, your worker will help you get it or tell you if there is another way you can show proof.

WHAT ARE SOME OF THE RULES THAT I HAVE TO MEET TO GET FOOD STAMPS?

Here are some of the rules that everyone has to meet to get food stamps. There are others, but your worker will tell you about them. How many of the other rules apply to you will depend on your situation.

- * **Social Security Number (SSN)** Everyone, even babies, must have a SSN. If someone in your household doesn't have one, you must do all you can to help that person get one.
- * **Live in the County:** You must live in the County where you are asking for food stamps. If you move to a different County and still want food stamps, you will have to ask for them again in the new County.
- * **Citizenship:** To get food stamps, you must be either a U.S. citizen or be in this country under an approved alien status. If you are not a U.S. citizen, you will need to give your worker proof of your alien status.
- * **Register for Work:** Most household members between the ages of 18 and 60 who are able to, but are not working must register for work. A single parent with children under six does not have to register. Some 16 and 17 year old household members may need to register. The entire household could have their food stamps stopped if someone who has to register doesn't do it.
- * **Monthly Report:** Most households getting food stamps must send in a report to the County each month. This report is called the "Monthly Eligibility Report" (CA 7). It must be all filled in and turned in on time or your food stamps could be lowered or stopped.

If your household does not have to turn in a CA 7, you still have to report within 10 days any changes in your situation or any change of \$25.00 or more in income. These changes can be reported by either calling or writing to your worker. If all of these changes are not reported, your food stamps can be stopped.

- * **Property Limit:** There is a \$2000.00 limit on the amount of property (e.g., bank accounts, stocks, etc.) that your household can have and still get food stamps. If someone in your household is at least 60 years old, the limit goes up to \$3000.00. If you have only one car and it has a value of less than \$4500.00, it will not be counted as part of the limit. Your house and furniture are not part of the limit as long as you live in your home.

SEE OTHER SIDE FOR MORE INFORMATION

RULES (Cont.)

- * **Amount of Food Stamps:** Federal law sets a limit on the amount of food stamps a household can get each month. This amount depends on the size of your household. If your household has income, the amount of that income left after giving certain deductions will be used to figure out how much of the limit you can get. A household cannot get food stamps if it has income that is more than the limit set for its size.

If you ever get too many food stamps, you may have to pay back the extra amount that you should not have gotten. This is called an "overissuance." Overissuances may have to be paid back, even if it wasn't your fault that it happened. In most cases, you will have some food stamps taken away each month until the overissuance is all paid back.

- * **College or Junior College Students:** Only students who are working, are parents of young children, or who are getting cash aid can get food stamps.

There are other rules which your worker will tell you about. If you do not understand a rule, ask your worker to explain it to you. It is important that you understand all of the rules so that you can get all of the food stamps your household should be getting.

HOW DO I GET THE FOOD STAMPS?

Some Counties mail the food stamp coupon books to you. Other Counties will send you a "plastic issuance card" or an "authorization form" to be used with an identification card to get the food stamp coupon books from an issuance outlet. Your worker will tell you which method is used and how you will be able to get your food stamp coupon books. If your authorization form or coupon books are lost, stolen or destroyed call your worker right away. You may be able to get them replaced.

HOW DO I USE THE FOOD STAMPS AFTER I GET THEM?

Sign the food stamp books when you get them. This will make it easier to trace if they are lost and turned in. Keep the food stamps in the books until you are ready to pay for your food. Some stores will not take \$5 or \$10 food stamps if they are not in the book that has the same serial number that is on the food stamps. Stores will take loose \$1 food stamps.

You can use food stamps to buy almost all foods, even seeds or plants to grow your own food. Sales tax will not be added to the price of any item you buy with food stamps.

You cannot use food stamps to buy alcohol or tobacco products, pet food, some already cooked food, or non-food items (like toothpaste, soap, or paper towels).