



CDSS

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DIRECTOR

STATE OF CALIFORNIA—HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES AGENCY
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

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EDMUND G. BROWN JR.
GOVERNOR

February 28, 2018

ALL COUNTY LETTER 18-17

REASON FOR THIS TRANSMITTAL

- ☒ State Law Change
- ☐ Federal Law or Regulation Change
- ☐ Court Order
- ☐ Clarification Requested by One or More Counties
- ☐ Initiated by CDSS

TO: ALL COUNTY WELFARE DIRECTORS
ALL CALFRESH PROGRAM SPECIALISTS
ALL CalWORKs PROGRAM SPECIALISTS
ALL CONSORTIA REPRESENTATIVES
ALL QUALITY CONTROL PROGRAM COORDINATORS

SUBJECT: CALFRESH AND CALWORKS IMPLEMENTATION OF
ASSEMBLY BILL 607

REFERENCES: [ASSEMBLY BILL 607 \(CHAPTER 501, STATUTES OF 2017\)](#)

The purpose of this All County Letter (ACL) is to provide guidance to County Welfare Departments (CWDs) regarding the implementation of Assembly Bill (AB) 607, also known as the Community Resiliency and Disaster Preparedness Act of 2017. The bill outlines new requirements regarding Disaster CalFresh (D-CalFresh) for the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) and CWDs alike, as well as codifies existing disaster-related policy in practice statewide for both the CalFresh and CalWORKs programs.

Requirement to Operate D-CalFresh

If the President of the United States issues a major disaster declaration for individual assistance, CDSS and the CWD in the affected county or counties shall request to operate D-CalFresh. The request shall include, if not previously requested prior to the declaration for individual assistance, a waiver request to provide automatic, mass replacement of CalFresh benefits to eligible, ongoing CalFresh households affected by disaster, as well as a waiver request to allow households to purchase hot, prepared foods at authorized retailers with their D-CalFresh benefits. (Note: An automatic/mass replacement waiver can be requested without a Presidential Declaration for Individual Assistance.)

Requirement to Submit CalFresh Disaster Plans & Develop Mutual Aid Regions

The CDSS, in consultation with CWDs and additional stakeholders, shall identify the necessary elements of a county disaster plan and shall issue guidance to CWDs informing them of the requirement to submit a CalFresh disaster plan. Please note, under the provisions of AB 607, all CWDs must submit an updated CalFresh disaster plan annually. This provision is effective January 1, 2018. Therefore, all CWDs must submit an updated CalFresh Disaster Plan beginning in Federal Fiscal Year 2019.

In addition to CalFresh disaster plan criteria already required by the United States Department of Agriculture Food and Nutrition Service, all CalFresh disaster plans shall include the identification of mutual aid regions consisting of two or more counties. Mutual aid regions will ensure there are sufficient resources necessary to continue adequate access to benefits during a disaster. Each CalFresh disaster plan will list all cooperating counties included in the corresponding mutual aid region, as well as detail the level of support that will be provided by, and to each cooperating county in the event of a disaster.

Requirement to Provide D-CalFresh Training

The CDSS shall offer a D-CalFresh training to all CWDs, organizations, and institutions receiving federal reimbursements. This includes any private nonprofit organization, public postsecondary educational institution, or other state or local agency who secures funds for CalFresh outreach activities that are allowable for partial federal reimbursement.

Requirement to Maintain D-CalFresh Materials

The CDSS shall maintain updated D-CalFresh materials, including, but not limited to, state and county disaster plans, the D-CalFresh application, a CDSS D-CalFresh webpage, and D-CalFresh outreach flyers; all outreach flyers shall be made available in all required languages.

Requirement to Provide D-CalFresh Logistical Support and Technical Assistance

The CDSS shall maximize the capacity of counties to maintain timely, adequate, and safe access to all applicable benefits during a disaster. In order to ensure that people impacted by the disaster are not required to travel through dangerous routes to apply for, and to receive their electronic benefit transfer (EBT) card, CDSS shall do both of the following:

- (1) If requested by an affected county, provide to the county, and its contracted county consortium staff, the support necessary for out-stationed D-CalFresh application intake locations to support timely, adequate, and safe access to D-CalFresh benefits during or following a disaster.

- (2) Maintain and make available to affected counties, free of charge, technology and equipment to support the mobile issuance of EBT cards to recipients of D-CalFresh.

Requirement to Authorize CalWORKs Assistance to Recipients Displaced Due to a Disaster

The AB 607 codifies existing disaster-related policy in practice statewide for the CalWORKs program. Prior law allowed for a recipient of aid to be out of the state for more than 60 days, if return was prevented by illness or other good cause. AB 607 expands allowable reasons a recipient of aid may be out of state for more than 60 days to include displacement due to a disaster declared by the Governor or the President of the United States.

This ACL, and other CDSS Letters and Notices, are available online at: <http://www.cdss.ca.gov/inforesources/Letters-and-Notices>. If you have any questions regarding this letter, please contact the CalFresh Policy Bureau at (916) 651-6669.

Sincerely,

Original Document Signed By:

TODD R. BLAND
Deputy Director
Family Engagement and Empowerment Division