



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

REASON FOR THIS TRANSMITTAL

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

March 15, 2018

ALL COUNTY LETTER NO (ACL). 18-24

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

SUBJECT: CALFRESH RESTAURANT MEALS PROGRAM (RMP)
AND EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING (E&T) PROGRAM:
IMPLEMENTATION OF SENATE BILL (SB) 282

REFERENCE: [SB 282 \(CHAPTER 355, STATUTES OF 2017\)](#); MANUAL
OF POLICIES AND PROCEDURES (MPP), SECTION
[63-102\(e\)\(2\)\(H\)\(3\)](#); ALL COUNTY INFORMATION
NOTICE (ACIN) NO. [I-31-04](#) AND NO. [I-71-11](#); ACL
NO. [14-49](#) AND NO. [16-112](#).

The purpose of this ACL is to provide County Welfare Departments (CWDs) with guidance regarding new requirements for the CalFresh RMP and E&T Program under the provisions of SB 282 (Chapter 355, Statutes of 2017), also known as the Reducing Hunger Among Vulnerable Californians Act of 2017.

RMP Background

The Reducing Hunger Among Vulnerable Californians Act of 2017 seeks to address the multiple and often overlapping challenges of hunger, joblessness, and homelessness among low income Californians. SB 282's targeted program improvements seek to increase access to prepared food for low income homeless, elderly, or disabled Californians through the RMP, and create job opportunities for low-income Californians who are childless or non-custodial parents.

The CalFresh RMP is a voluntary county program that allows CalFresh recipients who are 60 years of age or older, disabled, or homeless to use their CalFresh benefits to purchase low cost prepared meals at approved participating restaurants in certain counties. Currently nine counties, Alameda, Los Angeles, Orange, Sacramento, San Diego, San Francisco, San Luis Obispo, Santa Clara, and Santa Cruz operate the RMP. Fresno and Riverside counties are in the final stages of implementing and launching an RMP.

Annual RMP ACL

SB 282 mandates that the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) issue an annual ACL providing a list of counties or regions that participate in the RMP, instructions for how a CWD may elect to participate in the RMP, and guidance regarding how a CWD may appeal a non-eligible determination made by CDSS. The annual RMP ACL is forthcoming.

Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) System Coding for RMP Recipients

SB 282 also mandates that California's EBT system automatically, upon issuance of an EBT card, allow all CalFresh recipients who are eligible for RMP to utilize their benefits in all RMP approved restaurants statewide, regardless of whether the eligible CalFresh recipient's county of residence is an RMP participating county. Currently, all three Statewide Automated Welfare Systems (SAWS) are complying with this mandate.

Authorized Restaurants/Vendors Under the RMP

The CWDs are responsible for selecting restaurants that will participate in the RMP. SB 282 requires that selected RMP restaurants and vendors allow in-store purchases, except for direct farm purchasing programs or a certified farmer's market. In-store purchases are defined as "any purchase that is not delivered to the purchaser". The bill further requires that selected restaurants and vendors maintain a current public health license, and comply with all federal, state, and local health and safety laws, regulations, and ordinances.

CWDs Flexibility to Determine Program Parameters

To the extent permitted by federal law, SB 282 does not preclude a CWD that is participating in RMP from determining the number, type, and location of selected restaurants/vendors. Selection may be based on the CWDs administrative capacity or other factors. These factors may include, but are not limited to, location of participating restaurants/vendors and recipient demand in the service area.

CalFresh E&T Background

The federal Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) E&T Program provides a limited amount of 100 percent federal funds, as well as an uncapped amount of 50 percent federal reimbursement funds, to states that offer E&T to SNAP recipients. One hundred percent funding is allocated nationally based on the number of work registrants in each state. California then distributes the 100 percent federal funds to CWDs that offer CalFresh E&T based on their CalFresh caseload. Fifty percent federal reimbursement funds are available to CWDs and E&T service providers based on costs paid for the provision of allowable E&T components such as job search/job club, workfare, work experience, vocational training, education, and job retention.

Federal E&T Waiver Request

As a result of SB 282, CDSS is directed to seek approval from the United States Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service, to waive regulations that limit the use of 50 percent federal reimbursement funds for subsidized employment. Currently, states are not allowed to request 50 percent federal reimbursement funds for costs paid in the provision of subsidized employment as part of an E&T Program. If approved, the waiver would allow California CWDs and E&T service providers to use 50 percent federal reimbursement funds to provide a wage subsidy for Able Bodied Adults Without Dependents (ABAWDs) subject to the ABAWD time limit participating in CalFresh E&T. The CDSS will inform CWDs and other E&T stakeholders of the outcome of this waiver request as soon as possible.

If you have any questions regarding this letter, please contact your CalFresh county consultant or call the CalFresh Policy Bureau at (916) 651-8047.

Sincerely,

Original Document Signed By:

TODD R. BLAND
Deputy Director
Family Engagement and Empowerment Division