

May 28, 2020

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

ALL COUNTY WELFARE DIRECTORS LETTER

The purpose of this All County Welfare Directors Letter is to provide County Welfare Departments with guidance regarding three federal waivers that, in response to the coronavirus emergency pandemic, have been extended until June 30, 2020: a waiver of the initial application and recertification interview (if certain criteria are met), a waiver of the requirement to conduct a face-to-face interview if requested by the household, and a waiver of the recording requirement for telephonic signatures (if certain criteria are met).



KIM JOHNSON
DIRECTOR

STATE OF CALIFORNIA—HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES AGENCY
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES
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May 28, 2020

ALL COUNTY WELFARE DIRECTORS LETTER

TO: ALL COUNTY WELFARE DIRECTORS

FROM: JENNIFER HERNANDEZ, DEPUTY DIRECTOR
FAMILY ENGAGEMENT AND EMPOWERMENT DIVISION

SUBJECT: CALFRESH EXTENSION OF WAIVERS TO SUPPORT TIMELY
PROCESSING OF APPLICATIONS IN RESPONSE TO
CORONAVIRUS: INTERVIEW AND TELEPHONIC SIGNATURE

REFERENCE: [ACWDL APRIL 2, 2020](#); [TITLE 7 OF THE CODE OF FEDERAL REGULATIONS \(CFR\) SECTION 273.14\(b\)\(3\)](#)

Waiver Extension

The purpose of this All County Welfare Directors Letter (ACWDL) is to provide County Welfare Departments (CWDs) with guidance regarding the extension of three federal waivers in response to the coronavirus pandemic emergency. These waivers, requested by the California Department of Social Services and approved by the US Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service (FNS), support the timely processing of CalFresh applications. The following waivers are **extended until June 30, 2020**:

- a waiver of the initial application and recertification interview (if certain criteria are met);
- a waiver of the requirement to conduct a face-to-face interview if requested; and
- a waiver of the recording requirement for telephonic signatures (if certain criteria are met).

Importantly, the waiver of the interview now applies at both initial application and recertification. Originally this waiver was limited to initial application because all CalFresh recertifications had been postponed for the months of March, April and May. For CalFresh recertifications with a June submit month, the interview may now be

waived if certain criteria are met, as detailed in the original guidance linked above and below.

For detailed guidance on implementation of these waivers refer to the [ACWDL issued on April 2, 2020](#).

Transitional Nutrition Benefit Program

In June, CWDs will begin processing recertifications for the state-funded Transitional Nutrition Benefit (TNB) Program. While the TNB recertification process does not require an interview, a complete [Notice of Recertification For Transitional Nutrition Benefit \(TNB\) Program \(TNB 4\)](#) must be received including a signature, in order for the household to continue receiving TNB benefits. If a CWD receives an incomplete TNB 4, the CWD may contact the household to complete the TNB 4 over the phone. This may include collection of an electronic signature over the phone.

Because the TNB Program is a state-funded program, it is not subject to federal waiver approval. Therefore, the CDSS is extending the same signature flexibility granted for CalFresh by FNS to the TNB Program.

If a CWD must collect a signature over the phone to complete the TNB recertification process and the CWD does not have existing technology to capture an electronic signature over the phone, the CWD may document in the case record the:

- Applicant's name;
- Date and time of recertification;
- Summary of the information to which the applicant verbally assents; and
- Applicant's response indicating agreement or disagreement (i.e. Yes or No)

If you have questions or need additional guidance regarding the information in this letter, contact the CalFresh Policy Bureau at (916) 651-8047.

Sincerely,

Original Document Signed By:

JENNIFER HERNANDEZ, Deputy Director
Family Engagement and Empowerment Division