

February 14, 2022

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

ALL COUNTY WELFARE DIRECTORS LETTER

The purpose of this letter is to inform County Welfare Departments (CWDs) and community-based organizations (CBOs) who provide CalFresh Outreach and application assistance in California information about CalFresh Awareness Month for May 2022. This year, CalFresh Awareness Month will provide another opportunity to ensure eligible individuals and families across the state are aware of the food and nutrition resources available to them.



KIM JOHNSON
DIRECTOR

STATE OF CALIFORNIA—HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES AGENCY
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES
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February 14, 2022

TO: ALL COUNTY WELFARE DIRECTORS

FROM: JENNIFER HERNANDEZ, Deputy Director
Family Engagement and Empowerment Division

SUBJECT: **MAY IS CALFRESH AWARENESS MONTH**

As California continues to navigate the Coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic emergency, the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) issues this year's CalFresh Awareness letter to share how impactful CalFresh has been in the lives of individuals and families by providing supplemental nutrition assistance and nutrition education to millions of California households within the last year.

In partnership with counties and other stakeholders, the CDSS continues to target outreach efforts toward California's underrepresented and vulnerable populations by addressing:

- Racial equity
- Students
- Immigrant communities and mixed status families
- Veterans

Furthermore, the CDSS has implemented continued COVID-19 administrative flexibilities to meet the needs of Californians and while some waivers are set to expire at the end of March there is potential for them to be extended as the CDSS works to implement as many flexibilities as allowed.

Emergency Allotments

All CalFresh households are receiving a minimum emergency allotment of \$95 per month. Emergency allotments are approved by the United States Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service on a month-by-month basis.

Telephonic Signature Adjustment

This administrative flexibility waives the requirement to capture an audio recording of a telephonic signature; instead counties can document in the case file that a client verbally attested to the information provided on the application. This flexibility helps ensure that households can submit a CalFresh application and other required reports by phone. Currently, this waiver is approved through March 31, 2022.

Elimination of the Interview Requirement at Certification and Recertification

This administrative flexibility waives the interview requirement at initial application and recertification, provided that the applicant's identity has been verified and all other mandatory verifications at 7 Code of Federal Regulations 273.2(f)(1) are complete. Currently, this waiver is approved through March 31, 2022.

Expansion of Student Eligibility

This temporary provision introduced two changes to the CalFresh student eligibility rule by expanding eligibility to students who are eligible for federal or state work study or who have an Expected Family Contribution of zero dollars. Currently, this provision is effective through the end of the public health emergency.

Quality Control (QC) Interview Adjustment

This administrative flexibility waives the requirement to conduct a face-to-face interview for QC active case reviews. QC interviews may be conducted via telephone, regardless of sample month. Currently, this waiver is approved through June 30, 2022.

As the pandemic emergency continues to impact California, community partners continue to demonstrate their creativity and innovation with virtual and socially distanced outreach. That said, the CDSS is excited to present the second annual [CalFresh Awareness Month 2022: CalFresh into the Future](#) webinar on **Wednesday, March 16, 2022 from 10:00 am – 12:00 pm**. Counties and community-based organizations are encouraged to attend to explore in the current CalFresh landscape and innovative approaches on topics that involve language access, students, and ongoing general outreach efforts. Thank you in advance for your proactive efforts in addressing hunger and food insecurity in your community for the betterment of all Californians.

If you would like to learn more about opportunities to replicate and build upon the CalFresh Awareness Month efforts undertaken by other counties, or about state CalFresh outreach efforts, please contact Danielle Wilson, Acting Manager, CalFresh Outreach Unit, at (916) 651-0441 or email CalFreshAccess@dss.ca.gov.