

January 27, 2023

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 about CalFresh Awareness Month for May 2023. 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

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**DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES**  
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January 27, 2023

TO: ALL COUNTY WELFARE DIRECTORS

FROM: JENNIFER TROIA, CHIEF DEPUTY DIRECTOR  
CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

SUBJECT: **MAY IS CALFRESH AWARENESS MONTH**

The California Department of Social Services (CDSS) issues this year's CalFresh Awareness Month 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 focusing on:

- Racial equity, and
- Access for:
  - College students,
  - Immigrant communities and mixed status families, and
  - Veterans.

The CDSS has worked to expand program awareness in order to address equity and inclusivity in the CalFresh program. New outreach resources and materials have been developed and informed by in-depth research gathered in focus groups made up of individuals from each of these target audiences.

The third annual CalFresh Awareness Month 2023 kick-off webinar will be hosted on **Thursday, March 9, 2023 (10:00am – 12:00pm)**. Counties and community-based organizations (CBOs) are encouraged to attend and explore the current CalFresh landscape of innovative approaches to outreach, access, and awareness. If your organization is interested in presenting during this webinar, please reach out to the CDSS CalFresh Outreach team using the contact information below. The CDSS has partnered with Rescue Agency to host a webinar on **April 5, 2023** providing county partners and CBOs with guidance and information on hosting a CalFresh Awareness Month event.

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We encourage CalFresh partners to host a CalFresh Awareness Month event in the month of May, either in-person or virtually, to engage with their communities and provide information to individuals and families who may be eligible for CalFresh benefits. This year, CDSS and Rescue Agency are preparing a CalFresh Awareness Month website with valuable resources for hosts and attendees. For event hosts, the website will contain event planning resources and materials, including event boxes that can be ordered to help facilitate a virtual or in-person event. Event box materials can be ordered in multiple languages including English, Spanish, Traditional Chinese, Simplified Chinese, Korean, Vietnamese, and Russian. For attendees, there will be a virtual events map, as well as other CalFresh Awareness Month activities and information to learn more about CalFresh benefits. Event boxes will be available while supplies last.

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, Manager, CalFresh Outreach Unit, at (916) 651-0441 or email [CalFreshAccess@dss.ca.gov](mailto:CalFreshAccess@dss.ca.gov).