Policy Refresher: CalFresh Eligibility Rules for Authorized Representatives

Hosted by the CalFresh and Nutrition Branch
Tuesday, March 5, 2019

Expanding CalFresh to People with SSI Policy Webinar Series
How to Listen In

• This webinar will be held in “listen only” mode.
• There are two ways to connect to audio:
  1. Via phone
  2. Via computer
How to Ask Questions

• On-line
  – Type your questions into the question pane on your control panel anytime during the presentation.

• We will address as many questions as possible.

• We will follow-up on questions that we cannot get to during the live presentation.
Expanding CalFresh to People with SSI Policy Webinar Series

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday, March 19th, 2019 10:00 AM – 11:00 AM</td>
<td>Introduction to ADA and Reasonable Accommodations</td>
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Register for future webinars and more at our webpage: http://www.cdss.ca.gov/CalFreshSSI
Agenda

• Expanding CalFresh to People with SSI Refresher
• General Info on Authorized Representatives (AR)
• Designating an AR
• AR Restrictions and Disqualifications
• Household and County Responsibilities
• Emergency AR for Obtaining Benefits
• Application Assistors
• Resources
Expanding CalFresh to People with SSI

• People receiving Supplemental Security Income and California State Supplementary Payment (SSI/SSP) have been ineligible to receive CalFresh due to the eligibility policy known as “cash-out”.

• Due to a recent policy change, people receiving SSI/SSP will be eligible to apply for CalFresh on or after June 1, 2019.
  – There is NO change or reduction to SSI/SSP amount

• After implementation, SSI/SSP recipients will be considered elderly and/or disabled for the purpose of determining CalFresh eligibility.

For more information on the policy change, visit the Reversing SSI Cash-Out webpage at: http://www.cdss.ca.gov/CalFreshSSI
Authorized Representatives
Authorized Representative: Definition

An Authorized Representative (AR) is an adult non-household member who may be authorized to act on behalf of a household:

- To apply for CalFresh benefits.
- To obtain and to use benefits on behalf of the household.
Group Living Arrangements and Drug Addiction and Alcohol Treatment Centers

• There are special rules for employees of institutions, such as Group Living Arrangements (GLAs) and Drug Addiction and Alcoholic Treatment Centers (DAA Treatment Centers), designated to serve as ARs.

• If you reside in a DAA Treatment Center and receive CalFresh, you must have an employee of the center as your AR.

• For more information, see previous webinar on Policy Refresher: Eligibility Rules for Residents of Institutions.
  – Find that webinar and more on http://www.cdss.ca.gov/CalFreshSSI
What Can ARs Do?

• ARs may act on behalf of a household to:
  – Apply for CalFresh and complete the interview
  – Complete and submit work registration, periodic reporting (i.e. SAR 7), recertification, and other required forms
  – Receive CalFresh notices
  – Report changes in the household’s income or other circumstances
  – Use the household’s Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) card to purchase food for the household

• Multiple ARs may be designated to fulfill different responsibilities for the household.
Who Can Be an AR?

An AR may be any of the following:

- An adult, non-household member designated by the head of the household, the spouse, or other responsible household member, who has **sufficient knowledge of relevant household circumstances**.
- A disqualified individual who is the only adult living in the household.
- An individual representing more than one household.
- An AR does **not** need to be a formal guardian of any kind.
Authorized Representative Designation
AR Designation

- A household may designate an AR:
  - In person, over the phone, or online (e.g. when submitting an online application)
- The AR must provide proof of identity.
- The county cannot require a household to designate an AR.
- An AR remains designated for the remainder of the CalFresh certification period.
- At recertification, a household may maintain the same designated AR or may decide to change the AR to a different person.
- If needed at any time, the household may contact the county to make changes to the AR designation.
AR Designation Forms

The following forms may be used to designate an AR:

- Initial Application for CalFresh, Cash Aid, and/or Medi-Cal/Health Care Programs (**SAWS 1** and **SAWS 2 Plus**)
- Application for CalFresh Benefits (**CF 285**)
- Recertification for CalFresh Benefits (**CF 37**)
Example: Designating an AR on SAWS 2 Plus

### 2. HOUSEHOLD’S AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE

You may authorize someone 18 years of age or older to help your household with your CalFresh benefits. This person can also speak for you at the interview, help you complete forms, shop for you, and report changes for you. You will have to repay any benefits you may get by mistake because of information this person gives the County and any benefits you didn’t want them to spend will not be replaced. If you are an Authorized Representative you will need to give the County proof of identity for yourself and the applicant.

Do you want to name someone to help you with your CalFresh case? [ ] Yes [ ] No

If yes, complete the following section:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE NAME</th>
<th>AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE PHONE NUMBER</th>
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Do you want to name someone to receive and spend CalFresh Benefits for your household? [ ] Yes [ ] No

If yes, complete the following section:

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<tr>
<th>NAME</th>
<th>PHONE NUMBER</th>
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<th>ADDRESS</th>
<th>CITY,</th>
<th>STATE,</th>
<th>ZIP CODE</th>
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AR Designation Forms Continued …

More options to designate an AR:

• A separate form developed by the county may also be used.
  – The form must be sent to CDSS for approval before it can be used.

• The household may also provide a written signed statement.
Authorized Representative
Restrictions & Disqualification
AR Restrictions: County Employees

County employees who work in determining CalFresh eligibility or issuing CalFresh benefits may not act as an AR.

Unless:

• There is specific, written approval of a designated county official, and

• That official determines that no one else is able to serve as an AR.
AR Restrictions: Employees of Authorized Retailers

People who work for grocery stores, meal service providers, or other authorized retailers may not act as ARs.

Unless:

• The county determines that no one else is available to act as an AR.
AR Restrictions: Individuals with an Intentional Program Violation

An individual disqualified from CalFresh for an Intentional Program Violation (IPV) cannot act as an AR during the period of disqualification.

Unless:

• The individual is the only adult member of the household, and

• The county determines that no one else is available to act as an AR.
AR Restrictions: Homeless Meal Service Providers

A homeless meal service provider, such as a soup kitchen or shelter, cannot act as an AR under any circumstance.
AR Disqualification

An AR may not be allowed to act as an AR for up to one year if the AR:

− Knowingly provides false information to the county;
− Misrepresents the household’s circumstances; or
− Misuses the household’s benefits.
AR, Household & County Responsibilities
AR Responsibilities

• An AR must be knowledgeable about the household’s circumstances.

• An AR’s responsibilities include, but are not limited to: knowledge of the household’s income, resources, expenses, and household composition.

• ARs are responsible for providing accurate information and must maintain confidentiality of information provided.
Household Responsibilities

- A household is responsible if they receive an overissuance of CalFresh benefits due to information provided or not provided by an AR.
- There are exceptions for AR’s that are employees of institutions designated to act as an AR on behalf of residents.
  - See the previous webinar on Eligibility Rules for Residents of Institutions for more information
CWD Responsibilities

• Ensuring that ARs are properly designated
• Retaining the name of the AR in the household’s case file
• Ensuring limits are not placed on the number of households an AR may represent
Emergency Authorized Representatives
Emergency AR for Obtaining Benefits

• A household may designate an emergency AR to obtain the household’s benefits for a particular month.

• Both the signature of the emergency AR and the signature of a responsible household member are needed to authorize.

• Even if a household member is able to apply and obtain benefits on their own at the time of certification, households may name an emergency AR in case of illness or other unforeseen circumstances.
CalFresh households may use the following forms to designate an Emergency AR for Obtaining Benefits:

- An authorization form such as the Cash Aid/CalFresh Electronic Benefit Transfer-EBT Request for a Designated Alternate AR (TEMP 2201)
- A separate form developed by the county and approved by CDSS
- A written and signed statement
Application Assistors

• Application assistors serve as a bridge between the community and the county by helping individuals and families better understand the benefits of participating in CalFresh, and for those who need help, providing assistance in completing the application process.

• Application assistors cannot be ARs.
Reminders/Take Home

• On June 1, 2019, a large influx of newly eligible SSI/SSP recipients are expected to apply for CalFresh.

• As all SSI/SSP recipients are aged, blind or disabled, all tools and best practices to provide service to this population, including use of Authorized Representatives, should be considered.

• You can find more information, and review these rules on our website: http://www.cdss.ca.gov/CalFreshSSI

• You can email questions to: calfreshssi@dss.ca.gov
Resources
Resources: Policy Webinar Series

Next Webinar: Introduction to ADA and Reasonable Accommodation

March 19, 2019, 10:00 am to 11:00 am
Resources: All Stakeholder Meetings

All are invited to join. The group meets bi-monthly, in-person and via webinar.

Next Meeting: All Stakeholder #5
March 13, 2019, 1:00 pm – 2:30 pm
CDSS Headquarters and Webinar

More info, including meeting materials:
http://www.cdss.ca.gov/CalFreshSSI

Email: CalFreshSSI@dss.ca.gov
Resources: Policy Guidance

- CalFresh SSI Cash-Out CDSS Webpage
- Assembly Bill 1811 (Chapter 35, Statutes of 2018)
- ACL 18-90: CalFresh Reversing Cash-Out Policy
- ACL 18-131: CalFresh Reversing Cash-Out Policy, Supplemental Nutrition Benefit Program, And Transitional Nutrition Benefit Program Quarterly Question And Answer
- Coming soon! ACL on CalFresh Authorized Representatives
Question and Answer