Expanding CalFresh to Seniors & People with Disabilities Receiving SSI
Implementation Update – January 2019

Mission: Reducing hunger and poverty in California for seniors and people with disabilities.
Vision: Excellent customer service and access for all.

SUMMARY
For the first time ever in California, hundreds of thousands of seniors and people with disabilities who receive SSI benefits will also be able to apply for CalFresh food benefits beginning June 1, 2019. This historic change, once successfully implemented, will increase nutrition and health and reduce hunger and poverty among California’s seniors and people with disabilities. California will finally join the rest of the nation in providing CalFresh food benefits to low-income seniors and people with disabilities.

The CalFresh food program is the State’s number one defense against hunger and malnutrition. Nearly 4 million people a month – half of them children – receive an average of $130 on a debit card to purchase food at grocery stores and farmers’ markets. Employment and training services and healthy living programs are also available. No other social service program lifts more people out of poverty than CalFresh.

With this change, eligible seniors and people with disabilities will be able to receive a monthly CalFresh food benefit to help meet their basic needs. Some who are part of households already receiving CalFresh food benefits may receive new state funded Supplemental Nutrition Benefits (SNB) or Transitional Nutrition Benefits (TNB). There is no change or reduction to SSI/SSP. CAPI recipients will receive a $10 per person grant increase. For more background information on the reversal of the SSI cash out policy, visit www.cdss.ca.gov/CalFreshSSI.

GOALS
• Enroll an estimated 369,000 SSI recipients who are newly eligible for CalFresh.
• Enroll SSI recipients who are excluded members of 125,100 current CalFresh households, and, in order to mitigate any loss of CalFresh benefits, provide SNB and TNB as eligible.
• Provide equal access to all Californians.
• Preserve accuracy and timeline standards.
• Integrate healthy living (nutrition education) and employment and training services as appropriate.

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<tr>
<th>CF SSI Population</th>
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<tr>
<td>Total CF Recipients (Jun 2018)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total CA SSI Recipients (Jun 2018)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Newly Eligible HH</td>
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<tr>
<td>CF HH Advantaged</td>
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<td>CF HH Disadvantaged</td>
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<td>CF HH Discontinued</td>
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*Estimated

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<th>CF SSI Language Breakout June 2018</th>
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<td>Russian</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sign</td>
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<td>Other*</td>
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*See MEDS definition
FOUR IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

1. **Engage and Empower Clients**
   - Client stakeholders
   - Client stories
   - Client journey mapping
   - Client data dashboard

2. **Target Outreach for Awareness and Assistance**
   - Comprehensive partner network for outreach/in-reach
   - Outreach kits and campaign
   - Application assisters serving seniors and people with disabilities
   - Application assistance tools: on-line, in-person, and by phone

3. **Streamline Customer Experience at Initial Application and Beyond**
   - County “Framework of Solutions” for successful implementation
   - County technical assistance, peer trainings, and resource kits
   - Statewide service enhancements

4. **Develop Policy, Automation, and Training Foundation**
   - Policy guidance, notices, and forms
   - SAWS automation
   - USDA, SSA, and Tribal partnerships
   - Policy webinar training series

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**Sandi’s Story**

I am a person with significant physical and mental disabilities who at this time is homeless. I live in my car. I have no friends and no family who can help me with my needs. Due to one of my many disabilities, I have to stay on a diet high in vegetables, and low in carbs and fats. One of my issues include running out of money for food. The food banks locally can give a lot of canned foods, breads, and pastas. I find it is very expensive to eat at fast food places. I seek local social service organizations for resources that help me with my mental health and getting food.

*Provided by Jorge Ruiz*
Case Manager
Central Coast Center for Independent Living (CCCIL)

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**STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT**

- All Stakeholder Advisory Group meets bi-monthly: next is March 13, 2019
- Four advisory groups (invite only with summaries posted on project webpage): Outreach, Customer Experience, Data Technical, and Automation Technical
- All in partnership with [County Welfare Directors Association of California](https://www.cwdaofca.org) and [Californians for SSI](https://www.californiansforssi.org)
POLICY OVERVIEW

- Policy guidance issued for implementation and automation of the reversal of SSI cash-out, the SNB Program, and the TNB Program: All County Letter (ACL) 18-90, ACL 18-91, ACL 18-92, and ACL 18-131.
- Policy guidance issued for implementation of the SNB and TNB Program: ACL 18-107 and ACL 18-108. Additionally, SNB and TNB notices issued in 17 threshold languages.
- Consultation with California Tribal Leadership on reversal of SSI cash-out and impact on CalFresh and Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR).
- Claiming instructions issued for the reversal of SSI cash-out and implementation of SNB and TNB Program: County Fiscal Letter (CFL) 18/19-40, and CFL 18/19-40E.
- Allocation for the administration of the SNB and TNB Program: CFL 18-19-43.

PROGRESS WINTER 2018-19

OUTREACH:

- Leveraging current application assisters and tools:

- Proposing new application assisters: CDA/ Area Agencies on Aging; DOR/ Independent Living Centers; CDPH/ County Nutrition Action Plan; SSA

- Leveraging current communications partners for new Outreach kits and campaign:

CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE:

- County “Framework of Solutions” for successful implementation and Resource Tool Kit 1.0 developed

POLICY:

- Policy Webinar Series launched January 2019
- SSA/CDSS Data Sharing Agreement updates in progress with SSA
- SNB Program and TNB Program Quarterly Question and Answer released January 2019

TIMELINE

Winter 2019
- All County Welfare Directors Letter on Outreach Coordination (Jan)
- County Operations Roundtable on Readiness for Reversal of SSI Cash-Out (Feb)
- Policy webinar series on CalFresh seniors and people with disabilities (Jan-March)
- Access for All Guest Speaker webinar series (March-May)
- SSA/CDSS Plan (February)
- County and State Readiness Plans (March)

Spring 2019
- Outreach kits and campaign kick-off (April)
- Application Assister onboarding (April)
- SSI/SSP mailer to clients from CDSS (May)
- CalFresh Data Dashboard Demo Webinar (May)

Summer 2019
- IMPLEMENTATION beginning June 1, 2019
- Continuous Quality Improvement: active monitoring and technical assistance with counties, partners, assisters, and all implementation strategies
Lorraine’s Story

I am a 68 year old female SSI recipient. I have limited mobility and am sight impaired. I live alone and have no family in the area or any other support from friends so I depend on public transportation to access vital services and needs. I mainly buy my groceries and other household necessities at a dollar store or grocery outlet. A food truck from the local food bank delivers food to my apartment complex once a month. I am thankful for the food I receive and take advantage of this which allows me to manage daily expenses. I recently started using a mobile application to order groceries online. Although I like this service and it is very convenient, the foods are also more expensive than where I regularly shop.

Provided by Maria Alcantar
Case Manager
Central Coast Center for Independent Living (CCIL)

IMPORTANT DATES

Expanding CalFresh/Reversing SSI Cash-Out All-Stakeholder Implementation Meeting #5
Date: Wednesday, March 13, 2019
Time: 1:00pm – 2:30pm
Location: CDSS Headquarters, 744 P Street, Sacramento, CA 95814; OB8, Room 0235/0237
Register via WEBINAR or IN-PERSON meeting

Outreach Campaign Kick-Off: Expanding CalFresh to Seniors & People with Disabilities Receiving SSI
Save the Date: Thursday, April 25, 2019 afternoon, by webinar and in-person in Sacramento

More information, including meeting materials: www.cdss.ca.gov/CalFreshSSI
Questions? Email: CalFreshSSI@dss.ca.gov