Policy Overview: Reversing SSI Cash-Out and New State Funded Nutrition Programs

Hosted by the CalFresh and Nutrition Branch
Tuesday, January 22, 2019
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.
## Reversing the CalFresh SSI/SSP Cash-Out Policy Webinar Series

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Register for future webinars and more at our webpage: [http://www.cdss.ca.gov/calfreshssi](http://www.cdss.ca.gov/calfreshssi)
Agenda

• Background: SSI/SSP & Cash-Out
• Reversing SSI Cash-Out: Policy Overview & Household Impact
• New State Nutrition Programs: SNB & TNB
• Resources
• Questions and Answers
Background

SSI/SSP & Cash-Out
Background: SSI/SSP

**Supplemental Security Income (SSI)** – is a federal income supplement program for eligible individuals who are aged (65 or older), blind or disabled and have little or no income. It provides cash assistance to meet basic needs, such as shelter.

- SSI is **NOT** Social Security

**State Supplementary Payment (SSP)** – is the state program that augments SSI. If an eligible individual qualifies for SSI, then they qualify for SSP.
In 1974, California opted to increase the SSP grant instead of administering what was then known as the Food Stamp Program.

This option is known as “cash-out”.

Over time, the value of CalFresh benefits has increased, while the “cash-out” amount has remained flat and lost relative value.

California is the only state still using the “cash-out” option.

Client Need (video): [http://ca4ssi.org/living-on-ssi/](http://ca4ssi.org/living-on-ssi/)
Reversing SSI Cash-Out
Policy Overview and Household Impact
Policy Change Overview

Assembly Bill (AB) 1811, the Fiscal Year 2018-2019 Human Services Omnibus Trailer Bill

• Reverses the SSI Cash-Out policy.

• Creates two new state-funded nutrition benefit programs:
  – The Supplemental Nutrition Benefit (SNB) Program.
  – The Transitional Nutrition Benefit (TNB) Program.

• For parity with SSI/SSP recipients, provides for a Cash Assistance Program for Immigrants (CAPI) grant increase of $10 per individual.
Policy Change Overview: Reversing SSI Cash-Out

The **Reversal of SSI Cash-Out** will allow seniors and people with disabilities receiving SSI/SSP to apply for CalFresh food assistance beginning summer 2019.

| SSI/SSP | There is **NO** change or reduction to SSI/SSP amount |
Policy Change Overview:
New State Nutrition Benefit Programs

Two new state-funded food programs will “hold harmless” those households negatively impacted by the change:

• Supplemental Nutrition Benefit (SNB) Program
  Will provide supplemental state-funded nutrition benefits to CalFresh households that experience a CalFresh benefit reduction at the time of implementation of the reversal of SSI cash-out.

• Transitional Nutrition Benefit (TNB) Program
  Will provide transitional state-funded nutrition benefits to CalFresh households that experience a CalFresh eligibility loss at the time of implementation of the reversal of SSI cash-out.
Policy Change Overview: Anticipated Impact

- Newly Eligible for CalFresh Food Benefits
  - Most SSI recipients and couples living on their own, will be newly eligible for CalFresh. If approved, you will receive an EBT card with CalFresh food benefits loaded monthly. Average food benefits for a household of one is estimated to be $130 per month.

- Still Eligible for CalFresh, More Food Benefits
  - If adding the SSI recipient increases a household’s CalFresh food benefits, they will simply receive more CalFresh food benefits on their existing EBT card.

- Still Eligible for CalFresh, Less Food Benefits
  - If adding the SSI recipient reduces a household’s CalFresh food benefits, they will be eligible to receive a state-funded nutrition benefit called the Supplemental Nutrition Benefit (SNB) on their existing EBT card.

- Ineligible for CalFresh Food Benefits
  - If adding the SSI recipient leads to a total loss of CalFresh food benefits, they will be eligible to receive a state-funded nutrition benefit called the Transitional Nutrition Benefit (TNB) on their existing EBT card.
Policy Change Overview: Anticipated Impact

Total Households Impacted: 494,100

- Newly Eligible and Expected to Participate: 369,000 households
- Experience an Increase in Benefits: 44,800 households
- Experience a Decrease in Benefits/SNB Eligible: 73,200 households
- Experience a Loss of Eligibility/TNB Eligible: 7,100 households
Policy Change Overview: Impact on Newly Eligible Households

A Newly Eligible Household is defined as a household in which all members are SSI/SSP recipients.
Policy Change Overview: Impact on Newly Eligible Households

Starting on, June 1, 2019…

• Counties will determine CalFresh eligibility for newly eligible households.
  – Recipients of SSI/SSP benefits will be considered elderly and/or disabled for the purpose of determining CalFresh eligibility.
  – Existing CalFresh rules for elderly and/or disabled apply.

• Households where all members are SSI/SSP recipients are categorically eligible (CE) for CalFresh.
Policy Overview: Impact on Newly Eligible Households

Categorical Eligibility Refresher

- Households receiving benefits from certain low-income assistance programs, including SSI, are considered categorically eligible (CE) for CalFresh.

- Preliminary CalFresh eligibility factors do not apply to the household because they have already been determined by the other assistance program.

- CWDs must still determine the household’s benefit level.

- Categorical eligibility does not result in automatic CalFresh eligibility, but does mean a household is VERY likely eligible.
Policy Change Overview: Impact on Newly Eligible Households

Certification Periods for Newly Eligible Households

• Newly eligible households that apply between 6/1/2019 and 11/30/2019 will be assigned a shortened certification period.

Remember: Usually…

• Households with at least one elderly and/or disabled household member are certified for 24 months.

• Households with only elderly and/or disabled members and no earned income are certified for 36 months.
  – Available due to California’s Elderly Simplified Application Project (ESAP)
Policy Overview: Impact on Newly Eligible Households

- Shortened certification period assigned by last digit of household case number.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Last Digit of Case Number</th>
<th>E/D Households</th>
<th>E/D Only No Earned Households</th>
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<td>0</td>
<td>19 months</td>
<td>31 months</td>
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Policy Overview: Impact on Ongoing Households

- An **Ongoing household** is defined as an ongoing CalFresh household that includes a mix of included members and at least one excluded member who is an SSI/SSP recipient.
Policy Change Overview: Impact on Ongoing Households

Rolling Implementation

Starting on June 1, 2019….

– Ongoing households will implement the reversal of SSI cash-out at their next periodic report or recertification.

– Ongoing households can also make a voluntary request to implement the reversal of SSI cash-out.

– This rolling implementation date is called the “household effective date”.

Policy Change Overview: Impact on Ongoing Households

A Note On Voluntary Requests

- The voluntary request will be treated like a voluntary report of a household composition change.

- Therefore, any voluntary mid period report of a household composition change made by an ongoing household anytime after June 1, 2019 will be considered a request to implement the reversal of SSI cash-out.
Policy Change Overview: Impact on Ongoing Households

Income, Resources and Deductions

• Following an ongoing household’s effective date, the formerly excluded SSI/SSP recipient’s income, resources, and deductions must be considered when evaluating CalFresh eligibility for the household.

• CalFresh households cannot exclude an SSI/SSP recipient member they purchase and prepare food with just because they receive SSI/SSP.
Policy Change Overview: Impact on Ongoing Households

Still Eligible for CalFresh, More Food Benefits
If adding the SSI recipient increases a household’s CalFresh food benefits, they will simply receive more CalFresh food benefits on their existing EBT card.

Still Eligible for CalFresh, Less Food Benefits
If adding the SSI recipient reduces a household’s CalFresh food benefits, they will be eligible to receive a state-funded nutrition benefit called the Supplemental Nutrition Benefit (SNB) on their existing EBT card.

Ineligible for CalFresh Food Benefits
If adding the SSI recipient leads to a total loss of CalFresh food benefits, they will be eligible to receive a state-funded nutrition benefit called the Transitional Nutrition Benefit (TNB) on their existing EBT card.
Policy Change Overview:
Impact on Ongoing Households

Implementing the Policy Change Results in an Increase in Benefits or No Change

• These ongoing households will continue to receive CalFresh.

But what if there is a decrease or loss of eligibility....
New State Nutrition Benefit Programs: SNB & TNB
Overview of SNB & TNB:
Introducing Two New State Nutrition Programs

SNB and TNB Program Benefits….

• Are not considered income for other means tested programs.
• Can be used like CalFresh (only for food).
• Will be issued monthly on EBT cards.
• Amount is determined using a program benefit table.
• Cannot be prorated.
  – Only full month’s benefit can be issued
Overview of SNB & TNB: Program Eligibility

SNB Program Eligibility:

- Household must have received CalFresh benefits on June 1, 2019;
- Household must have included at least one excluded SSI recipient member on June 1, 2019; and
- Household must have experienced a CalFresh benefit **reduction** when any of the previously excluded household members are added on the *household’s effective date*.
  - Applies even if adding the SSI recipient is not sole cause of reduction.
Overview of SNB & TNB: Program Eligibility

Households that do **not** qualify for the SNB Program

• The SSI/SSP recipient excluded from the household at the *household’s effective date* is **not** the same SSI recipient excluded on June 1, 2019

• Ongoing CalFresh households that experience a benefit reduction at some point after the household’s effective date
Overview of SNB & TNB:
SNB and CalFresh

Important Reminder!

• SNB Program households are also CalFresh households.
  – An ongoing household had to experience a CalFresh benefit reduction, not a loss of eligibility, to be determined SNB Program eligible.

• SNB Programs rules are separate and apart from CalFresh Program rules, even though household’s will receive both benefits at the same time.
Overview of SNB & TNB: Benefit Maintenance

SNB Program

• A household will maintain SNB eligibility as long as:
  – Household continues to receive CalFresh; and
  – Household continues to include at least one of the same SSI/SSP recipient(s) excluded from the household on the implementation date and added to the household on the household’s effective date.

• If a SNB household loses CalFresh eligibility, the household loses SNB Program eligibility
  – Unless CalFresh is restored within 30 days, in which case, SNB Program benefits are restored without proration.

• No SNB Program reporting requirements
Overview of SNB & TNB:
Program Eligibility

TNB Program Eligibility

• Household must have received CalFresh benefits on June 1, 2019;

• Household must have included at least one excluded SSI recipient member on June 1, 2019; and

• Household must experience a loss of CalFresh eligibility when any of the previously excluded household members are added on the household’s effective date.
  – Applies even if adding SSI recipient member is not sole cause of the loss of eligibility.
Overview of SNB & TNB: Program Eligibility

Households that do **not** qualify for the TNB Program

- The SSI recipient excluded from the household at the *household’s effective date* is **not** same SSI recipient excluded on June 1, 2019

- Ongoing CalFresh households that experience a loss of eligibility at some point after the household’s effective date
Overview of SNB & TNB: Benefit Maintenance

TNB Program

• Household will maintain TNB eligibility as long as:
  – Household continues to include at least one of the same SSI recipient(s) excluded from the household on the implementation date and added to the household on the household’s effective date;
  – That same individual(s) continues to receive SSI; and
  – Household is ineligible for CalFresh.

• If a TNB household receives CalFresh benefits during the TNB certification period, the household will lose TNB Program eligibility.

• No TNB Program reporting requirements, other than the TNB Program recertification process.
Overview of SNB & TNB: Benefit Maintenance

TNB Program Recertification

• Initially household’s are certified for a 12-month period

• Then, household’s must complete the TNB Program recertification process every six months thereafter

• TNB Recertification Process
  – Households must complete the Notice of Recertification for the Transitional Nutrition Benefit Program (TNB 4) form
  – Answer four yes/no questions
  – If household answers “Yes” to any question, they must also submit a CalFresh application
NOTICE OF RECERTIFICATION FOR TRANSITIONAL NUTRITION BENEFIT (TNB) PROGRAM

State of California – Health and Human Services Agency
California Department of Social Services

TO KEEP YOUR BENEFITS, YOU MUST COMPLETE THIS FORM AND RETURN IT TO THE COUNTY BY

Your TNB Program certification period ends on ______________. To keep your TNB Program benefits you must complete and return this form. If you do not submit the completed form by the return date, you may lose your TNB Program benefits. You may also have to complete a CalFresh application. If you need help filling out this form, contact your county.

If you no longer live in California STOP. You do not need to complete the TNB Program recertification. Your household must live in California to receive TNB Program benefits.

Here’s What You Need to Do:
1. Complete Section 1 by answering the “YES” or “NO” questions.
2. Complete Section 2 to determine whether or not you need to also submit a CalFresh application by the return date listed above. If required, you can complete a CalFresh application online at www.beneficia1.com or use the included paper application.
3. Complete Section 3 by signing, dating, and providing your contact information.
4. Return this completed form to the county by the return date listed above.

Section 1: Household Changes

Check “YES” or “NO” to report changes since your last TNB Program certification on

1. Did any person listed below move out of your household? (Do not count anyone who is only temporarily gone from the household and plans to return. Do include people who have passed away.)

   YES \ NO

Section 2: CalFresh Application

If you checked “NO” to all of the questions in Section 1.

1. Complete Section 3 and return this form to the county by the return date.
2. Complete Section 3 and return this form. If you use the included paper application, please return it with this form.
3. Select the box that describes how you will submit the required CalFresh application:
   - Completed an online application at www.beneficia1.com
   - Completed a paper application and returned with form

Section 3: Signature and Contact Information

I understand that I must accurately answer the questions above regarding changes to my household. I declare under penalty of perjury that all information provided is true and correct.

Signature: ____________________________ Date: ____________________________
Printed Name: ____________________________
Address: ____________________________
Phone Number: ____________________________

TBN 4 (5/15) Required Form – No Substitutes Permitted

Page 1 of 4
Overview of SNB & TNB: New Forms and Notices

• Six new notices for the TNB Program
  – Found in **ACL 18-107: Implementation of the Transitional Nutrition Benefit Program Notices**

• Five new notices for the SNB Program

• An updated **Inter-County Transfer (ICT) form**, and ICT forms specific for SNB and TNB, **can be found on CDSS website**. An All County Letter is coming soon!
Resources
Next Webinar: Policy Refresher: CalFresh Eligibility Rules for Elderly and/or Disabled Individuals

February 5, 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: Partner Outreach Flyer

- Partner Outreach Flyer
  - English and Spanish
  - Accessible
  - More languages in progress

- Email calfreshssi@dss.ca.gov to be added to Partner List

- Download Flyer and See Calendar of Partner Events on www.cdss.ca.gov/calfreshssi
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 18-91: Implementation of the Supplemental Nutrition Benefit Program
- ACL 18-92: Implementation of the Transitional Nutrition Benefit Program
- ACL 18-107: Implementation of the Transitional Nutrition Benefit Program Notices
- ACL 18-131: CalFresh Reversing Cash-Out Policy, Supplemental Nutrition Benefit Program, And Transitional Nutrition Benefit Program Quarterly Question And Answer
Question and Answer