

Students

Characteristics Unique to Students

- The term student is very specifically defined by CalFresh regulations.
- There are additional eligibility requirements for people who meet the student definition.
- If a person attends school but does not meet the student definition as required by CalFresh regulation, they can apply as a regular household, only needing to meet income guidelines.

What is the relevant CalFresh regulation?

Individuals are classified as students by CalFresh if they meet ALL of the following criteria:

- Between 18 and 49 years of age
- Physically *and* mentally fit (In this case, physical and mental fitness extends beyond a disability classification to a written statement from a doctor or psychologist.)
- Enrolled in an institute of higher-education that is either:
 - A business, trade, technical or vocational school at the post high-school level (that normally requires a high-school diploma or GED to enroll); or
 - A junior, community, two-year or four-year college or university, or graduate school, whether or not a high-school diploma or GED is required. [7 C.F.R. § 273.5(a); MPP §§ 63-406.1 and .21]

- Enrolled at least half time *and* enrolled in a “regular curriculum” MPP § 63-406.111(a) (2).
 - Regular curriculum means that the course in which the person is enrolled meets the standard requirements for graduation or certification/qualification in a particular field of study. MPP § 63-406.111. For details see: <http://foodstampguide.org/special-rules-for-students-strikers-roomers-boarders-and-other-people-in-unusual-situations/>
 - Half-time status is determined by the standards set by the college or institution the individual is attending.

Individuals classified as students become eligible for CalFresh only if they meet ONE of the following requirements: [7 C.F.R. §§ 273.5 (b); MPP § 63-406.211.]

- Employed 20 hours a week; or
- Participating in federal or state work study (**Note:** There are no minimum hours of work required. Students who have been awarded work study in their financial aid but who have not yet been able to find a job are still eligible.); or
- Full-time student with a child under age 12; or
- Part-time student with a child under age six; or
- Part-time student with a child between ages six and 12 for whom adequate care is not available; or
- Receiving CalWORKs; or
- Enrolled in a CalFresh employment and training program, or other state or local job training programs that USDA will accept 7 C.F.R. § 273.5(b)(11); or
- Do not intend to register for the next normal school term 7 C.F.R. § 273.5(c). (Note: no state regulation implements this federal requirement.)



How is the regulation applied to CalFresh applicants?

All individuals attending school should be evaluated to see if they are required to meet the CalFresh regulations for students.

Based on the regulation, what unique steps must occur to accommodate this special population?

Prescreening: The individual must first determine whether or not they meet the student classification outlined above. If the individual does not fit under the classifications above, they can apply as a regular household, only needing to meet income guidelines.

Eligibility:

- Once considered a student, they must meet one of the requirements in order to be eligible.
- Grants and financial aid do not count as income and student expense deductions are different.

For details see: <http://foodstampguide.org/how-the-food-stamp-office-counts-student-aid/>

Benefit Retention: Applicants need to update their student status, financial aid, and expenses as they change to retain appropriate levels of benefits.

