



CDSS

WILL LIGHTBOURNE  
DIRECTOR

STATE OF CALIFORNIA—HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES AGENCY  
**DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES**

744 P Street • Sacramento, CA 95814 • [www.cdss.ca.gov](http://www.cdss.ca.gov)



EDMUND G. BROWN JR.  
GOVERNOR

May 31, 2012

**ALL COUNTY LETTER NO. 12-26**

TO: ALL COUNTY WELFARE DIRECTORS  
ALL CalFresh COORDINATORS  
ALL CalWORKs PROGRAM SPECIALISTS  
ALL CONSORTIUM MANAGERS

SUBJECT: CALFRESH WAIVER OF FACE-TO-FACE INTERVIEWS

REFERENCE: ALL COUNTY LETTER (ACL) 09-62; ALL COUNTY INFORMATION NOTICE (ACIN) I-15-10; Manual of Policies and Procedures (MPP) Section 63-300.44-45 and 63-504.6; CalFresh Waiver #2090051

The purpose of this letter is to inform counties of a change in policy regarding the current face-to-face interview waiver (CalFresh Waiver #2090051).

As stated in ACL 09-62, since June 1, 2009 counties have had the option of waiving the face-to-face interview for all Non-Assistance CalFresh applicants and recipients at initial application, recertification, or both. In lieu of the face-to-face interview, a telephone interview could be conducted without the need to document whether a hardship exists at either initial application or recertification for CalFresh. ACL 09-62 gave counties the option to take advantage of the waiver. If a county opted to utilize the waiver, it was required to be done on a county-wide basis.

According to the United States Department of Agriculture Food and Nutrition Services, waiving the requirement for a face-to-face interview has not negatively affected payment error rates, is beneficial for CalFresh applicants and recipients, and provides administrative relief for county staff. The majority of counties are utilizing this waiver at both intake and recertification.

As an element of program simplification and as part of California Department of Social Services (CDSS) commitment to improving access, offering the option of a telephone interview in lieu of a face-to-face interview will now be required at intake and recertification. Counties not currently taking full advantage of the waiver are encouraged to do so beginning as soon as possible, but no later than July 1, 2012.

REASON FOR THIS TRANSMITTAL

- State Law Change
- Federal Law or Regulation Change
- Court Order
- Clarification Requested by One or More Counties
- Initiated by CDSS

ALL COUNTY LETTER NO. 12-26  
Page Two

However, current county practices (including conducting a face-to-face interview on the first day if the applicant is in the office) may be maintained at the option of the applicant if such practice expedites the determination of eligibility and issuance of benefits.

When a face-to-face interview is required by another program, such as CalWORKs, the CalFresh certification interview may still be conducted in conjunction with the other program interview. A face-to-face interview is still required if requested by the applicant/recipient or if deemed necessary by the county to clarify a condition of eligibility.

If you have any questions regarding this letter, please contact Tracy Ahlenstorf at (916) 657-3283 or via email at [tracy.ahlenstorf@dss.ca.gov](mailto:tracy.ahlenstorf@dss.ca.gov).

Sincerely,

***Original Document Signed By:***

TODD R. BLAND  
Deputy Director  
Welfare to Work Division