



Report to the
Family and Human Services Committee
April 22, 2019

CalFresh Expansion to Include SSI Recipients
An Update as of April 15, 2019

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CalFresh Expansion Implementation Update

As Of April 15, 2019

A. What is CalFresh Expansion?

Effective June 1, 2019, individuals receiving or authorized to receive Supplemental Security Income/ Supplementary Payments (SSI/SSP) through the Social Security Administration are now eligible for CalFresh or the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). CalFresh and SNAP are commonly referred to as "Food Stamps".

Individuals who are blind, disabled or over the age of 65 with limited income and resources are eligible for SSI/SSP. Many of these SSI/SSP individuals will now be authorized to receive CalFresh providing all other eligibility criteria are met.

Similar to Health Care Reform, CalFresh Expansion adds a large newly eligible group of people to an existing program under the administration of EHSD. Most of this SSI group are already known to EHSD as MediCal, IHSS and General Assistance recipients.

B. How Many New CalFresh Applicants do we expect and how do they apply?

The following are projections received from the State of California Department of Social Services (CDSS) of those Contra Costa residents who are eligible and will likely seek CalFresh benefits under the SSI Cash-Out program.

- Total number of Contra Costa County residents on SSI in June 2018: **24,841**
- Of the total number of County SSI recipients, the estimated number to be CalFresh Eligible: **10,045**
- Total SSI recipients CalFresh Eligible and expected to participate (75% participation rate): **7,533**
 - *Current IHSS recipients* **(6,527)**
- SSI recipients expected to apply, and those who will be added to an existing CalFresh household **2,512**

The above numbers provided by CDSS only address eligible applicants. We anticipate a significant number of ineligible individuals will submit applications as well due to the wide outreach being conducted.

Applications for CalFresh can be submitted in a variety of ways: phone; mail; on-line portals via the Internet; in person at EHSD offices and at staffed sites such as the Food Bank, Family Justice Centers, et.al. Home visits can be scheduled for application processing.

C. What is the internal service delivery plan that will be used to provide services to this new population in the initial 4-6 months?

Both the Department's Aging and Adult Services (AAS) Bureau as well as the Workforce Services (WFS) Bureau will provide initial CalFresh application processing as well as eligibility determination for the new SSI CalFresh population.

We expect to begin receiving applications in May, with heaviest influx in June, July and August. Workload will be handled by existing staff in the WFS and IHSS bureaus through the use of overtime, and with the assistance of up to 19 additional staff (14 temporary and 5 permanent).

Automation of the CalWIN system will not be available until May 13 which is delaying the training of staff. Staff Development is ready to train, and has begun training existing CalFresh workers, who are already familiar with the CalWIN system, in the new SSI processes.

As new applications level out we will review the data in order to revise and reset our estimates and staffing plans. The State expects that many of the CalFresh applications from IHSS recipients would be processed at their annual IHSS reassessment, however if an application is submitted prior to that date, it must be processed regardless.

D. What will be the service delivery model for the SSI and pending SSI population?

EHSD will be combining the caseloads of SSI recipients into a separate eligibility division, under one manager. These program caseloads include General Assistance, IHSS MediCal and CalFresh eligibility cases (not IHSS program cases handled by social workers), non-IHSS CalFresh cases, and the SSI Advocacy program. Workers in this division will have assigned cases and will be the primary case management point of contact for their recipients. We plan to have this division fully established no later than October 2019.

E. What are current risks and concerns?

Under Federal law, the eligibility determination for CalFresh must be completed within 30 day of the application date. If there is an influx of applications beyond our capacity to meet this requirement, the county will be at risk of sanctions due to non-compliance.

Because of the vulnerable nature of this population, we expect to see an increased incidence of lost EBT cards which will have an impact on the recipient, and, an impact on EHSD workload which to date has not been anticipated by the State in their funding premises.

Likewise, an increased incidence of fraud perpetrated on some of our vulnerable elderly and mentally challenged recipients will have similar impacts.

Funding: FY 18/19 State/Federal funding was provided in December 2018 in the amount of \$973,280 to cover planning and implementation costs. Because the implementation of the CalFresh Expansion begins in May, this may not be sufficient funding to address the anticipated high numbers of applications in the early months of the program. The CAO is making available up to \$300,000 (\$600,000 with Federal match) to fill the gap until September when the FY 19/20 CalFresh/SSI allocations are known.