

CONTRA COSTA COUNTY

EMPLOYMENT & HUMAN SERVICES

Contra Costa County Employment and Human Services Department

CalFresh Report

Family and Human Services Committee

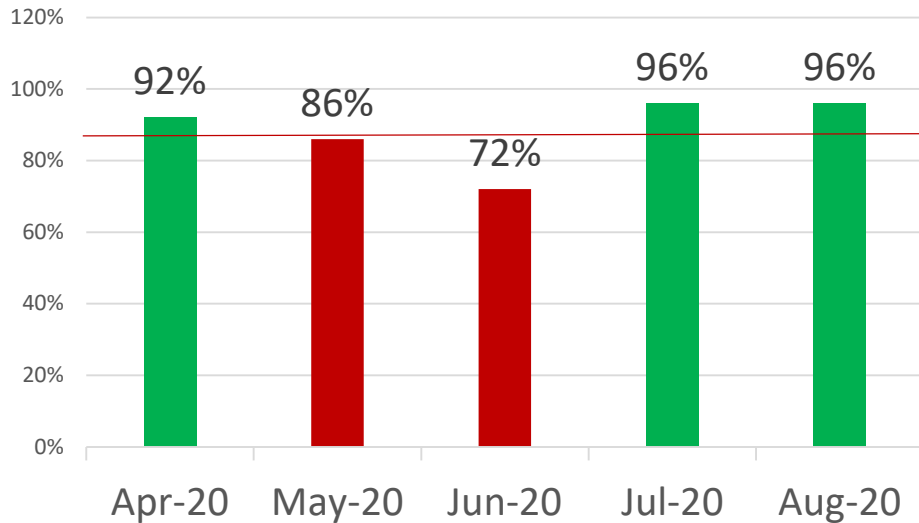
September 28, 2020



Due in part to COVID 19, **18 million children** (1 in every four kids) may not know where they will get their next meal.

Source: Feeding America

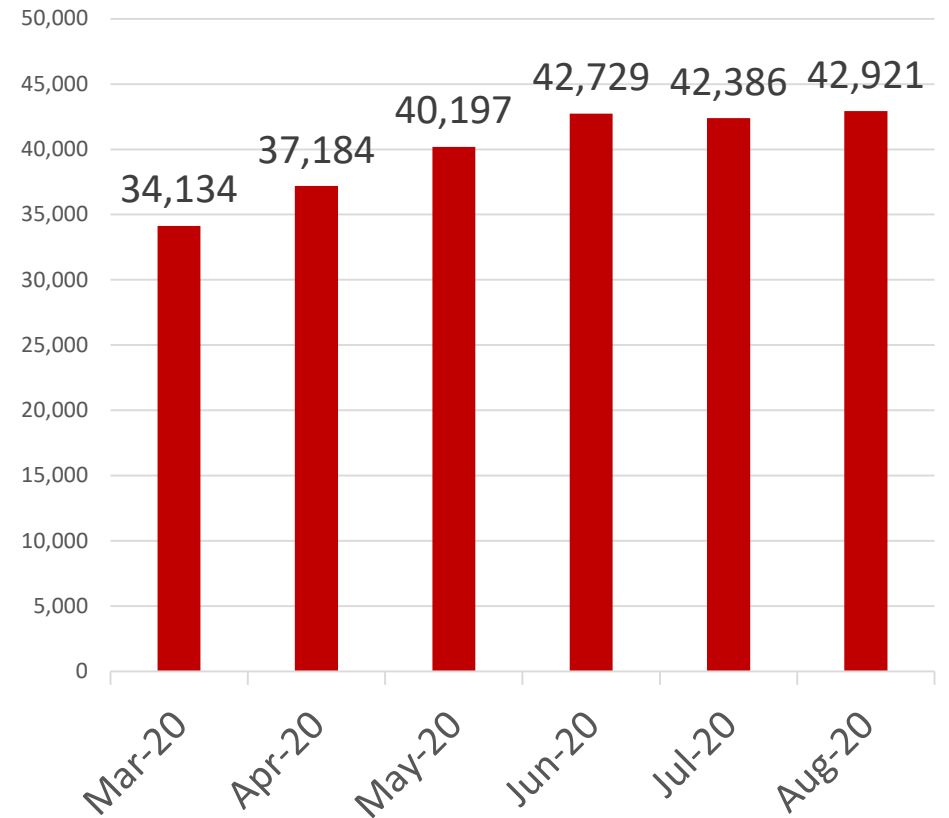
Applications Processed Timely



Returning to compliance with 90% of applications processed in 30 days.

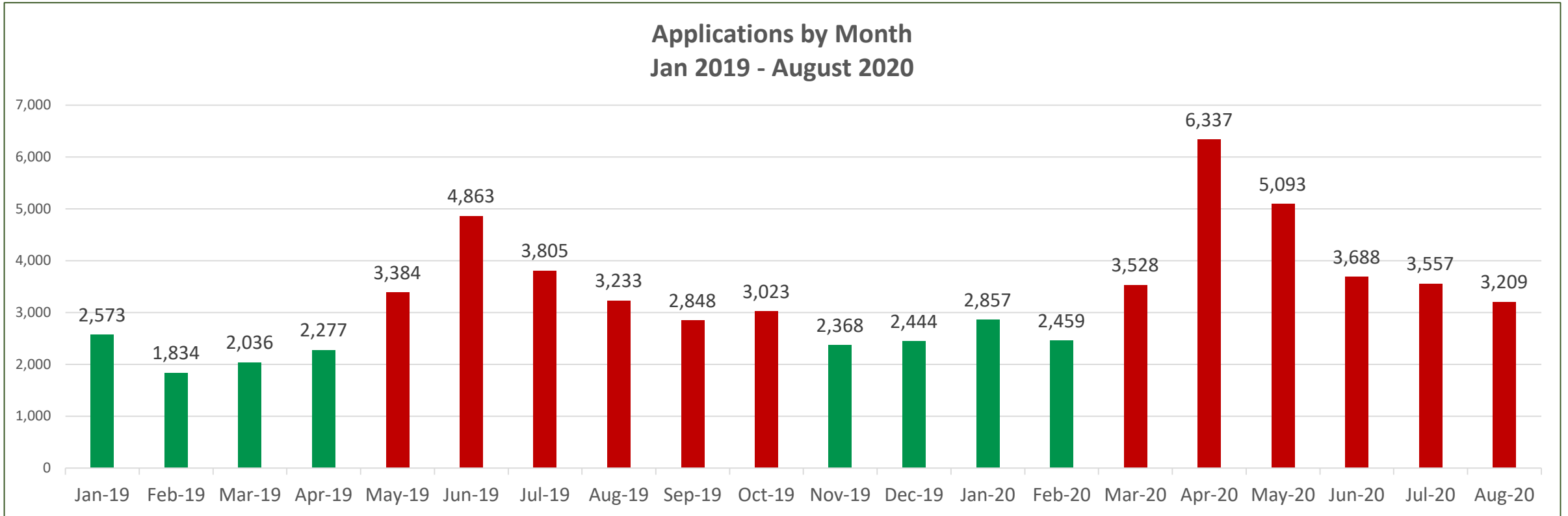
EHSD's CalFresh caseloads are higher than the numbers experienced at the height of the Great Recession.

CalFresh Caseload by Month
March - August 2020





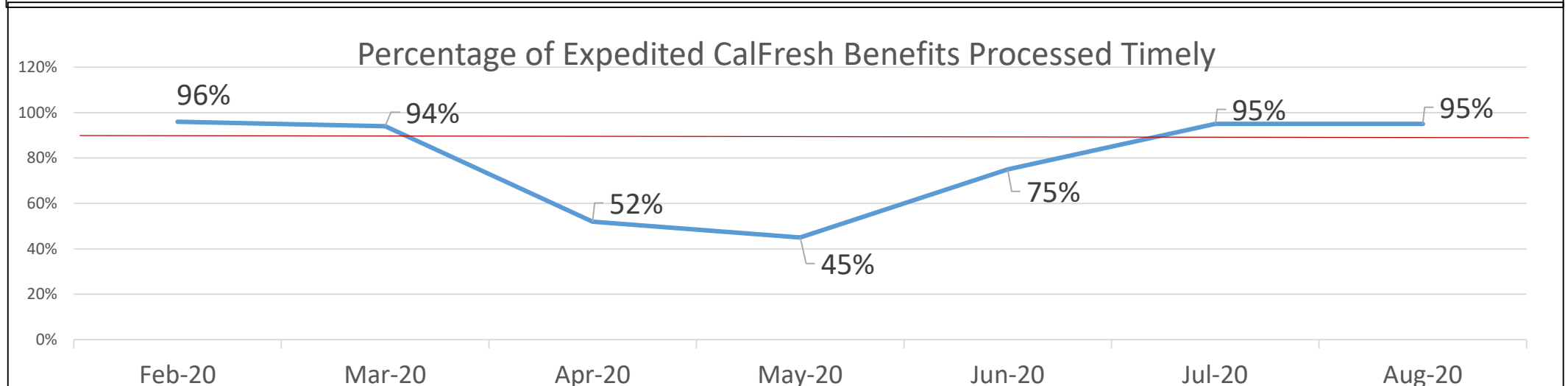
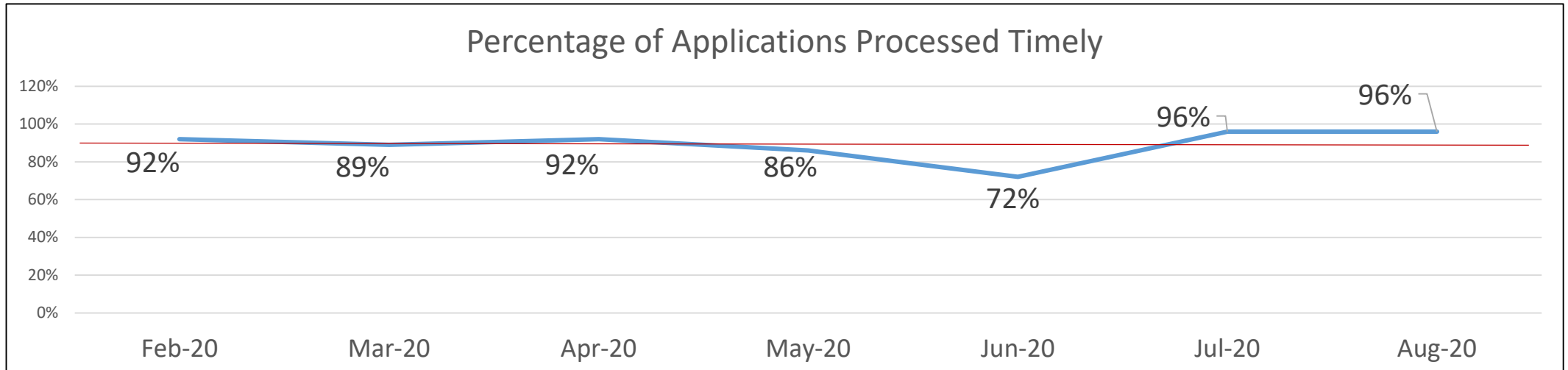
Applications



Over the past 20 months, two significant changes have resulted in unprecedented CalFresh caseloads in Contra Costa County. In May 2019, CalFresh eligibility was expanded to SSI (Supplemental Security Income) recipients, resulting in an application surge through October 2019. The second and even more significant application surge was driven by the economic impacts of COVID-19. Applications for benefits have remained above average since March.



Timeliness and Compliance





Reasons Applications are Denied

Top 3 denial reasons

1. Over income
2. Missed mandatory interview appointment
3. Failed to provide mandatory verification

Strategies implemented since March to reduce procedural denials

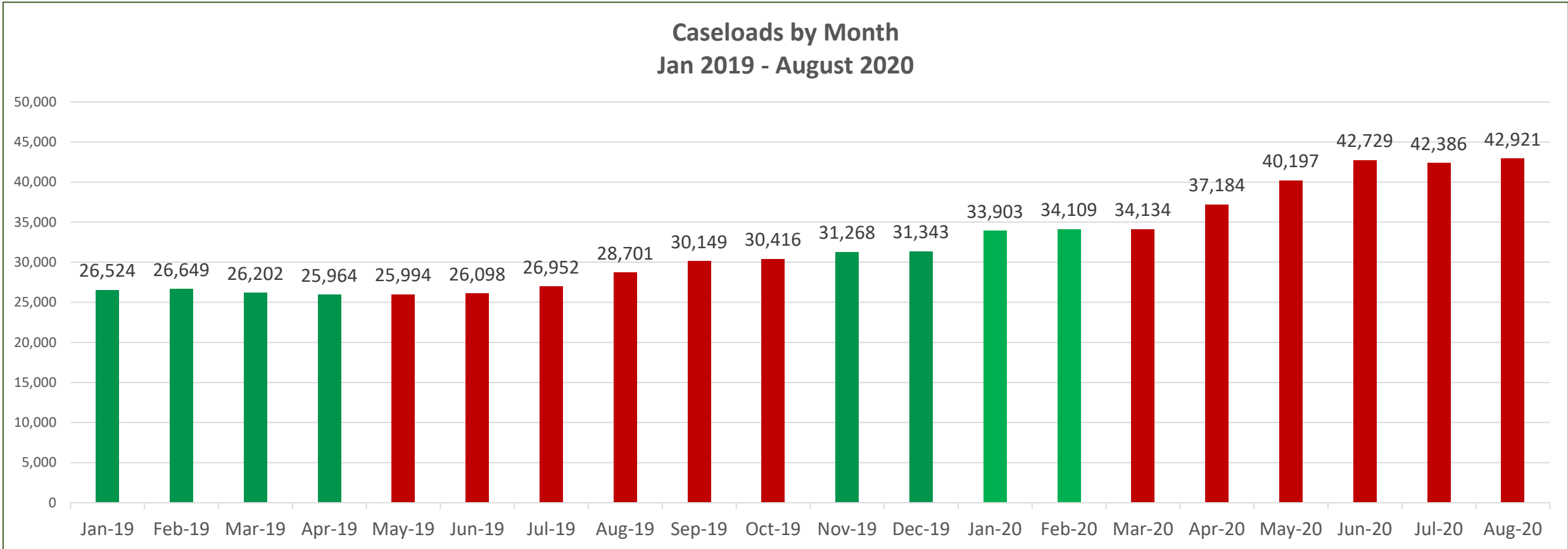
- Adobe Sign for receiving email documents
- Telephonic signature for applications

Additional strategies being explored

- Automated text and/or voice reminders for appointments
- Secure text to submit verifications during phone interviews
- Updating EHSD.org to receive applicant verifications



Caseload



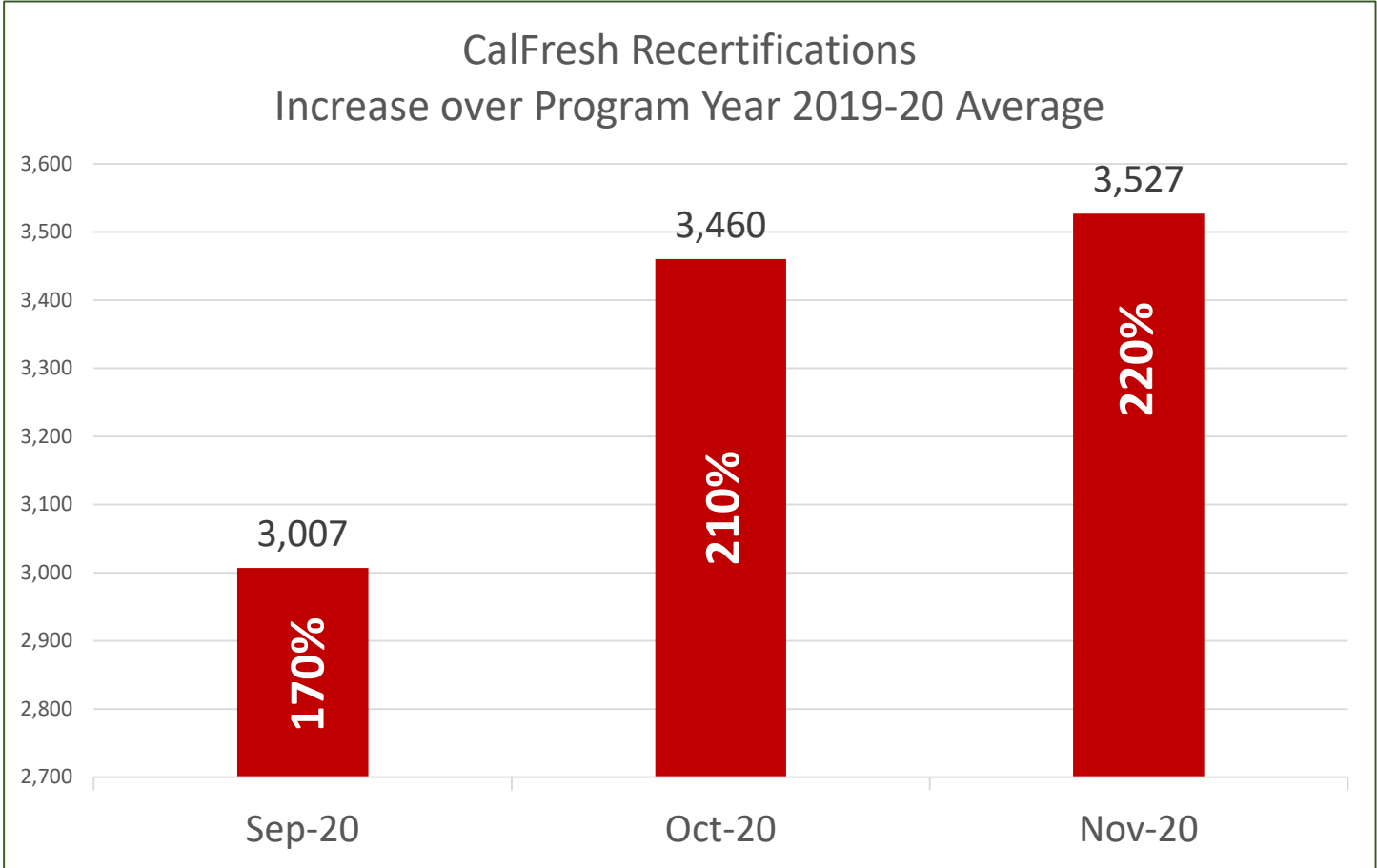
CalFresh caseloads have grown 62% in the past 20 months primarily due to CalFresh expansion to Supplemental Security Income (SSI) recipients and COVID-19 financial impacts.



Current Workload Impacts

CalFresh Recertifications were deferred in March, April and May to September, October and November

During Program Year 2019-20, the average number of recertifications due each month was 1108 (excluding deferred months).



Source: CalWIN

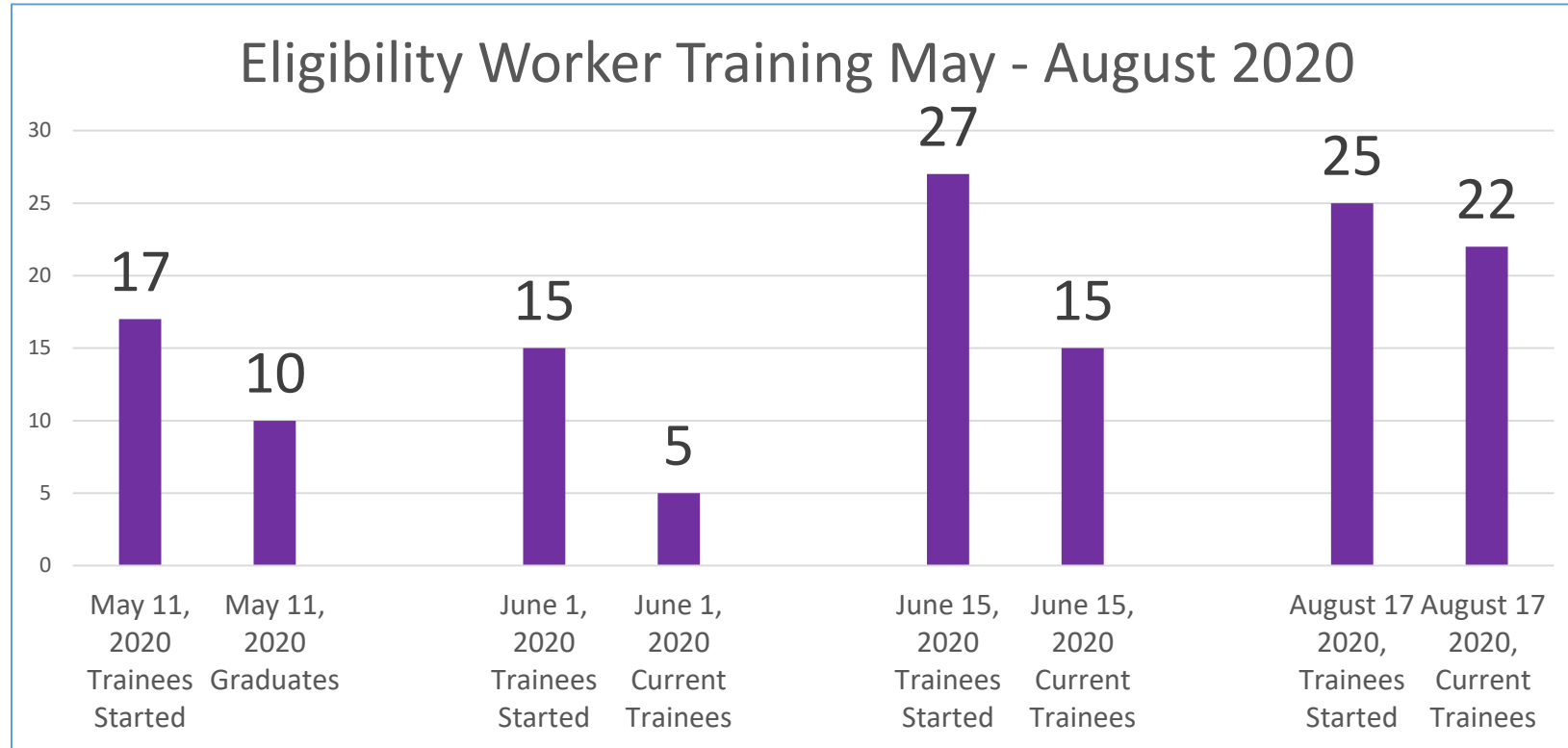


Staffing Efforts & Challenges

84 new eligibility workers have been hired since May 2020.

38% attrition rate to date compared to 25 – 30% pre-COVID

74% of those who separated resigned or were no shows to training



COVID 19 is also impacting eligibility worker training success.

The CalFresh logo features the word "Cal" in a green script font, followed by a stylized graphic of a green leaf with red and purple berries. To the right of the graphic, the word "Fresh" is written in a bold, green, sans-serif font.

CalFresh Program Updates

- Temporary Waivers, Postponements and Benefit Expansion Due to COVID 19
 - Emergency CalFresh benefits bring families up to maximum household benefit through September
 - Interview waivers allowed on some applications expired August 2020
 - Waiver of the requirement to conduct a face-to-face interview if requested has been extended through October 2020
 - Able-Bodied Adults Without Dependents work requirements waived through public health emergency
 - Online EBT purchases through Amazon and Walmart
 - Over 54,000 Contra Costa families received Pandemic-EBT cards supporting households who lost access to free or reduced price school meals between March and June 2020.

- SSI and Senior Outreach
 - IHSS/SSI recipient participation in CalFresh increased by 12% following the mailing of approximately 2,000 flyers in June, July and August. Mailing will continue at a rate of 500 a month through December 2020
 - Community outreach remains on hold due to COVID 19



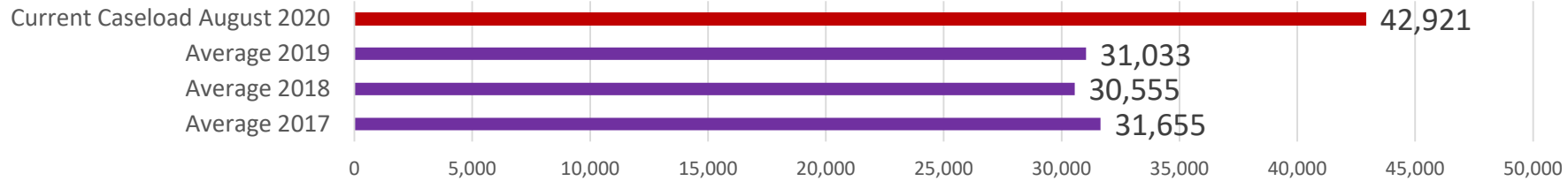
Next Steps

- ❖ Medi-Cal recipient mailer in partnership with the Food Bank of Contra Costa and Solano
- ❖ Program reach research to identify outreach targets post-COVID
- ❖ IHSS recipient mailers continue through December 2020



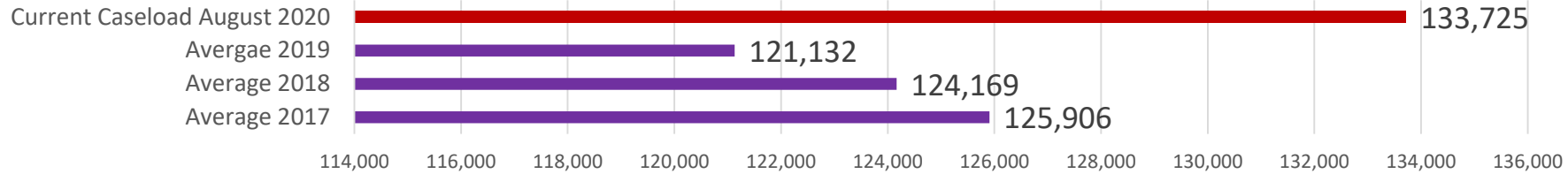
Program Comparison

CalFresh Caseload Averages 2017 – 2019 and Current Caseload August 2020



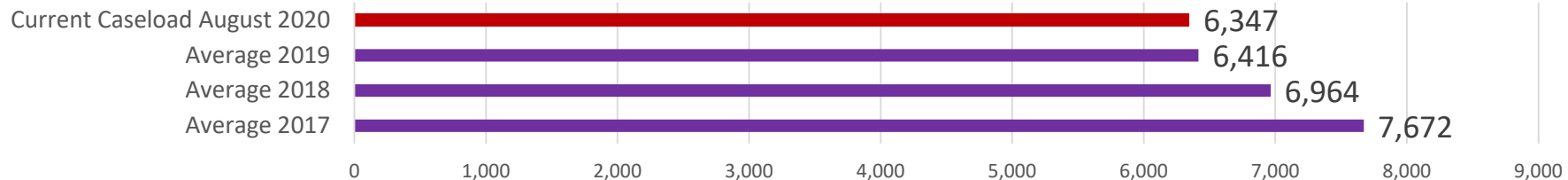
Number of CalFresh
Individuals served in
August 2020:
77,362

Medi-Cal Caseload Averages 2017-2019 Current Caseload August 2020



Number of Medi-Cal
Individuals served in
August 2020:
257,369

CalWORKs Caseload Averages 2017-2019 and Current Caseload August 2020



Number of CalWORKs
Individuals served in
August 2020:
13,980



Questions?