



PRESS ADVISORY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 29, 2019

Contact:

Sylvia Soublet

Social Services Agency, Public Affairs Director

O: (510) 267-9434 / C: (510) 207-2074

F: (510) 271-9189

ssoublet@acgov.org

Message to Seniors and Disabled Residents on SSI/SSP: You're No Longer Left Out Alameda County Focuses CalFresh Awareness Month 2019 on Connecting Newly Eligible with Benefits

Oakland, CA – Over 48,000 County residents have received a special message from the Alameda County Social Services Agency (ACSSA) in connection with CalFresh Awareness Month. Effective June 1, 2019 a 40-year old rule that prevented recipients of Supplemental Security Income/State Supplementary Payment (SSI/SSP) from receiving CalFresh has been changed by recent legislation that County officials and community members believe is long overdue.

The SSI Program is a federally funded program which provides income support to eligible individuals who are aged 65 or older, blind or disabled. SSI benefits are also available to qualified blind or disabled children. The SSP Program is the state program which augments SSI. [\(More information on SSI/SSP may be found on the California Department of Social Services website.\)](#)

“We plan to get the word out to senior and disabled individuals and families receiving SSI/SSP that they can now apply for more of the assistance they need to make the difference between hunger and nutrition,” said Lori Cox, ACSSA director.

On June 4, 2019, the Alameda County Board of Supervisors will issue its sixth annual CalFresh Awareness proclamation: *CalFresh Expansion*. Through events, social media, and a squad of “Senior Ambassadors,” ACSSA and its partners have begun to reach out to assist newly eligible households with the enrollment process.

“We understand that the enrollment process may be challenging for seniors and persons with disabilities and we want to ensure that we provide all eligible individuals with enrollment assistance. Even before the official enrollment date of June 1, we have had a very robust response from the community wanting information on eligibility requirements and the enrollment process,” stated Andrea Ford, ACSSA Assistant Agency Director. “With the assistance of our community partners, we have begun to receive applications prior to the effective date. That is a direct indication of how eager people are to start accessing these nutritional benefits.”

Known federally as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), CalFresh assists qualified households and individuals in meeting their nutrition needs. In Alameda County 55,784 families and individuals currently rely on the CalFresh program to feed themselves and their families. Under the old rule known as “SSI Cash Out,” states could increase their SSP grant instead of allowing SSI/SSP individuals to participate in what was known then as the Food Stamp Program. However, over time, the value of Food Stamps/CalFresh benefits have increased with the rate of inflation, while the SSI/SSP amount has remained stagnant and lost relative value.

The amount of CalFresh Food benefits a household receives is based on household size, income, and monthly expenses, such as housing, utilities, and medical costs. The average amount nationally for an older adult or person with disability is \$105 – \$110 per month. The range is \$15 – \$192 per month. CalFresh applications can be completed on-line at www.mybenefitscalwin.org or in person at any Alameda County Social Services Agency location:

Eastmont Self-Sufficiency Center
6955 Foothill Blvd.
Suite 100
Oakland, CA 94605

Eden Area Multi-Service Center
24100 Amador St.
Hayward, CA 94544

Enterprise Self Sufficiency Center
8477 Enterprise Way
Oakland, CA 94621

Fremont Office
39155 Liberty St.
Suite C330
Fremont, CA 94538

Livermore Office
3311 Pacific Ave.
Livermore, CA 94550

Thomas L. Berkley
2000 San Pablo Ave.
Oakland, CA 94612

ACSSA continues to partner with the Alameda County Community Food Bank (ACCFB) to increase awareness, outreach, and enrollment in CalFresh. The ACSSA and the ACCFB will host CalFresh outreach and enrollment events to answer questions about enrollment and eligibility, and to educate and inform residents about the benefits of CalFresh and healthy purchase options.

For CalFresh eligibility and enrollment information, the public can call 1.877.847.3663.

