California and CalFresh: State of Change
Panelists

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CALFRESH: STATE AND COUNTY MODERNIZATION

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What is CalFresh?

Federally, the Food Stamp Program is known as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program or SNAP

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CalFresh is the new name in California for the Food Stamp Program
Program Overview

- National eligibility standards and benefit levels are established by Congress and administered nationally by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), Food and Nutrition Service (FNS).
- CalFresh benefits are 100% federally funded.
- CDSS is the designated single state agency responsible for program supervision at the state level with county administration of the program.
- California currently serves approximately 4.1 million persons and issues approximately $8 billion in CalFresh benefits annually.
Other CalFresh Programs

The California Food Assistance Program (CFAP)

- A state funded program for legal noncitizen adults who meet all federal SNAP eligibility criteria except that they have resided in the U.S. less than 5 years.
Participation in CalFresh

- According to USDA data from 2010, only about one-half (55%) of those eligible participate in the program.

- This not only hurts families, it hurts the state economy as well as each $5 of CalFresh benefits returns $9 to the state and local economy.

- Recent data from the California Food Policy Advocates for 2011 indicates substantial improvement in county program access.

- CDSS’ weighted average for county program access for 2011 using CFPA data is almost 68 percent.
CalFresh ReFresh

- Last year, CDSS introduced the CalFresh Modernization Initiative, otherwise known as CalFresh ReFresh. CDSS solicited advocates, counties, and the County Welfare Directors Association (CWDA) for suggested ideas and improvements to the application and retention process with a goal to greater participation rates.

- The goal was to modernize the CalFresh program by planning for additional program simplifications and removal of access barriers, reducing administrative complexity, providing additional linkages with and coordination among other state assistance programs, providing stronger support for nutritious food choices and nutrition education, and greater encouragement of other program innovations.
CalFresh ReFresh

- **Eliminating the Requirement for a Face-to-Face Interview at Application and Recertification** – This ensures that all counties eliminate requirements for face-to-face interviews and standardize the application and recertification process on a statewide basis. This removes some barriers and streamline the process for applicants and recipients. This was implemented in May 2012.

- **Expanding outreach focused on immigrants and senior citizens** - This proposal would expand current efforts with the California Department of Aging (CDA) for targeted outreach to senior citizens including senior brochures.

- **Golden Advantage Nutrition Program (GANP)** - New initiative we are piloting is to allow usage of EBT cards for voluntary donations for Meals on Wheels and senior congregate sites to encourage seniors to participate in CalFresh.
CalFresh ReFresh

- **Electronic verification of client income and assets** – This proposal would utilize a business intelligence system to electronically search other federal and state agencies (Social Security, IEVS, Vital Statistics, etc.) to verify client receipt of income and assets when a CalFresh application is received.

- **Telephonic signatures on applications** – This would allow telephonic signatures (for client approval of an application or other forms) during a phone interview. This is in use in some counties now and is permissible due to a change in the State Plan.

- **E-Notices** – CDSS obtained a waiver from FNS to allow, at client option, the ability to send alerts to clients to let them know to check online for a new notice as opposed to mailing notices of action. Expect to implement in the Summer.
CalFresh ReFresh – County Technology Changes

- **Online Applications** – now available in all counties.
- **Application Assistor Portals** – provides access for assistors to the online benefits systems. Will be available for all counties by the end of the year.
- **Online Functionality to Apply for and Manage Benefits** – recipients can:
  - Apply for benefits (CalFresh and Medi-Cal, CalWORKs, CMSP (indigent health), Disaster CalFresh)
  - Check benefits
  - Report changes in income, household members, address
  - Submit verifications
  - Schedule appointments (not all counties)
  - Complete annual redetermination (available for all counties in 2013)
  - See office hours, get telephone numbers and find the nearest office
  - *Future Enhancement: view correspondence, schedule appointments (both currently available in one county); view notices of action*

- **Call Centers** - 22 counties participating.
- **Task-Based Case Management** – ~20 counties participating.
County Modernization Projects - SnapFresh

- A national database of certified SNAP retailers, accessible via the internet, smartphone app, and SMS text.
- Developed by San Francisco county, in partnership with Code for America and Applications for Good.
- A simple way for individuals to find the closest certified SNAP retailers anywhere in the nation.
County Modernization Projects - SnapFresh

- Links to Google Maps for directions (walking, public transportation, driving)*
- Information on the type of establishment so that users can determine the best option for their needs**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Website</th>
<th>Mobile App**</th>
<th>SMS Text</th>
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<td><a href="http://www.snapfresh.org">www.snapfresh.org</a></td>
<td>SnapFresh</td>
<td>415-889-8650</td>
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*website and mobile app only
**iPad and iPhone only
County Modernization Projects - SnapFresh

- Existing options include:
  - USDA SNAP retailer locator: http://www.snapretailerlocator.com/
  - CA EBT Project Client website: https://www.ebt.ca.gov/caebtclient/cashlocationSearch.recip
  - Signage at retailers

- SnapFresh combines the best of each option:
  - Multiple platforms available
  - Location-targeted searches
  - Results displayed in map and list format (website and mobile app only)
  - Filtering for Restaurant Meals Program and Farmer’s Markets
  - Directions for walking, driving, and public transportation
County Modernization – SnapFresh
Los Angeles County’s “Health & Nutrition Mobile Office”
  - Provides ADA-compliant mobile office space for screening and interviews
  - Monthly:
    - Average of 12 events
    - ~150 CalFresh applications and ~25 Medi-Cal applications
  - Venues include
    - Farmer’s Markets/Grocery Stores
    - Community Events
    - Other public and private non-profit events
CalFresh Modernization - Outreach

- Technology improvements help streamline the process for applicants, recipients, and staff.
- Outreach helps bring people “in the door” and keep them connected.
- Innovation is a challenge – programs are complex, policies change, and fiscal constraints can limit the pace.
CalFresh: Looking to the Future

- Although we need to continue to work to improve participation, we are encouraged by the continued efforts of counties and dedicated stakeholders who work to provide CalFresh benefits to the most vulnerable children, seniors and adults in our state.

- By leveraging modernization to handle the increased caseload, and remove barriers, we will be better able to continue to focus on our mission to ensure that families are able to have greater access to food during these difficult economic times.

- Questions?