

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MEDIA ADVISORY

EVENT DATE: Wednesday, January 23, 10:30 AM

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SUPERVISOR WILMA CHAN TO HOLD PRESS CONFERENCE ON IMPACTS OF THE GOVERNMENT SHUTDOWN ON ALAMEDA COUNTY RESIDENTS

Oakland, CA – Alameda County Supervisor Wilma Chan will hold a press conference Wednesday to discuss the impact of the partial federal government shutdown on County programs and the citizens they serve. With the shutdown entering its fourth week and no progress in negotiations, several essential services relied upon by tens of thousands of County residents may go unfunded in the coming weeks.

State and County officials have grown increasingly concerned that the state's CalFresh program may exhaust all federal funding by early to mid-February. CalFresh is a Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) that helps low-income households purchase nutritious food. Without funding, no additional benefits will be issued come February, leaving vulnerable County residents at risk. There is also concern about the impacts on the 800,000 federal workers, some of who are furloughed and others who are working without pay.

"With so many Alameda County residents already struggling to make ends meet, the possibility of losing CalFresh benefits would be devastating," Supervisor Chan said. "These gaps in coverage could result in severe consequences for individuals and working families both locally and nationwide in the weeks to come."

Supervisor Chan will ask the Board of Supervisors to allocate up to \$1 million from a county-created federal emergency impact fund to provide additional food for affected CalFresh recipients and federal workers.

CalFresh brought approximately \$192.4 million in 100% federally-funded benefits to Alameda County in 2017. As of June 2018, over 106,100 County residents were receiving CalFresh benefits, including 7,130 seniors and 46,390 children.

WHO: Alameda County Supervisor Wilma Chan
Lori Cox, Director of Alameda County Social Services Agency
Allison Pratt, Alameda County Community Food Bank

Brandon Patterson, Office of Congresswoman Barbara Lee
CalFresh Recipient from Alameda County Invited

WHAT: Press Conference on Local Impacts of the Government Shutdown
WHEN: Wednesday, January 23, 2019 at 10:30 AM
WHERE: North Oakland Self-Sufficiency Center
2000 San Pablo Avenue, 2nd Floor, Oakland Room

Although SNAP is a mandatory entitlement program, it is dependent on an allocation from the U.S. Treasury. Given that Congress has not enacted a bill to extend the Agriculture Department's programs, SNAP is currently relying on approximately \$3 billion in reserve funds appropriated early last year.

The California Department of Social Services (CDSS) is issuing February benefits earlier than usual. Existing recipients will now have their February funds loaded on their Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) cards between January 15th and 20th. CDSS will rely on a small reserve fund to cover new applications or renewals received in February. The program's ability to continue providing benefits beyond February is currently in doubt, and recipients are being cautioned to budget their spending to ensure their benefits last through February 28, 2019.

Other critical programs also face potential shortfalls that could detrimentally impact the health and safety of County residents should a federal shutdown continue. These include Women, Infants, and Children (WIC)—a national nutrition education program that promotes healthy eating for parents and guardians raising infants or children under the age of 5 years.

Alameda County CalFresh recipients may direct questions about their benefits to our Customer Service Call Center at 510-263-2420, or visit the County's website at:
<http://www.alamedasocialservices.org/public/index.cfm>

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About Supervisor Wilma Chan

Alameda County Supervisor Chan represents District 3, which includes the cities of Alameda, San Leandro, parts of Oakland including Chinatown, Jack London, Fruitvale and San Antonio neighborhoods, and the unincorporated community of San Lorenzo. She is Chair of the Health Committee and ALL IN, an anti-poverty initiative of the Board, and a member of the County's Legislative Committee, Budget Committee, Unincorporated Services Committee, and the Ad Hoc Committee on Immigrant Rights. For more on Supervisor Chan's accomplishments and current initiatives, please visit www.acgov.gov/board/district3 or connect on Facebook with "Supervisor Wilma Chan."