



# PRESS ADVISORY

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **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 SSI/SSP recipients from receiving CalFresh has been changed by recent legislation that County officials and community members believe is long overdue.

“We plan to get the word out to senior and disabled individuals and families who were previously ineligible 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 acknowledge the month of May as CalFresh Awareness Month by issuing its sixth annual CalFresh Awareness Month 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](http://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.

