



# CalFresh Program Updates

Alameda County Board of Supervisors' Social Services Committee  
April 27, 2026

**Presented by:**

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# Agenda



**CalFresh Overview**

**CalFresh Awareness Month**

**SUN Bucks**

**CalFresh Fruit and Vegetable (CF&V) EBT Program**

**EBT Electronic Theft**

**Noncitizen Eligibility**

**Able-Bodied Adults Without Dependents (ABAWDs)**

**CalFresh Program Data**



# CalFresh Overview

- The CalFresh Program, federally known as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), is the largest food assistance program in California and serves as a hunger safety net for millions of Californians.
- CalFresh provides eligible individuals and their households with electronic benefits to purchase food at markets and grocery stores.
- Benefits are loaded onto an Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) card that functions similarly to a debit card.
- Applicants can apply by phone, mail, fax, in-person, and online at <https://benefitscal.com>.



# CalFresh Awareness Month

- **May** is CalFresh Awareness Month!
- Three goals during the month are to:
  - Increase public awareness of CalFresh.
  - Dispel myths and misconceptions about CalFresh.
  - Continue assisting individuals and families in completing the enrollment process, including with CalFresh applications and renewals.



# CalFresh Awareness Month Theme

- 2026 theme: CalFresh Works
  - Highlights the program's role in reducing food insecurity and that many recipients are individuals working to support their families.
- ACSSA is partnering with the Alameda County Community Food Bank (ACCFB) and hundreds of local community partners for CalFresh outreach, to educate residents, and to offer application assistance.



# SUN Bucks



- SUN Bucks is a federally funded food assistance program, separate from the CalFresh program, that helps families purchase food for eligible children during the summer when school is not in session.
- In 2025, eligible children received \$40 per month, or \$120 total for June, July, and August, issued on a separately mailed SUN Bucks card.
- The 2026 SUN Bucks budget and participation estimates are pending state release. In the interim, planning efforts are informed by the prior year's data and will be updated as soon as the official allocations and guidance become available.

| <b>Income Requirements for Reduced Pricd Meals<br/>(Effective July 1, 2025 – June 30, 2026)</b> |                                 |                          |
|---|---------------------------------|--------------------------|
| <b>Household Size</b>   | <b>Reduced Price –<br/>185%</b> | <b>Free Meals – 130%</b> |
| 1   | \$ 2,413                        | \$ 1,696                 |
| 2   | \$ 3,261                        | \$ 2, 292                |
| 3   | \$ 4,109                        | \$ 2,888                 |
| 4   | \$ 4,957                        | \$ 3,483                 |
| 5   | \$ 5,805                        | \$ 4,079                 |
| 6   | \$ 6,653                        | \$ 4,675                 |
| 7   | \$ 7,501                        | \$ 5,271                 |
| 8   | \$ 8,349                        | \$ 5,867                 |
| <b>Each Additional<br/>Member</b>   | <b>\$ 848</b>                   | <b>\$ 596</b>            |



# 2025 SUN Bucks *Continued*

- All 2025 SUN Bucks cards have been issued, and benefits expired 122 days after the date of issuance.
- As of February 28, 2026, a total of 3.3M cards have been PIN-ed statewide representing an 80% PIN rate.
- Over \$405.2M in benefits, including replacement benefits, issued statewide.
- Approximately 95.2%, or \$388.2M, has been spent on food. Unlike CalFresh, there is not an option for families to use these benefits to purchase hot foods.
- Approximately \$101.6M, or 20% of the total value loaded on all mailed cards, has been expunged due to non-use within the allowable timeframe.



**SUN**  
**BUCKS**  
CALIFORNIA



# CalFresh Fruit & Vegetable (CF&V) EBT Pilot Program

- Incentive program providing a dollar-for-dollar match (up to \$60/month) when CalFresh participants purchase fresh fruits and vegetables at participating retailers and Farmers' Markets.
- Improve access to healthy foods, promote nutrition, and support food security for CalFresh households.
- \$36 million allocated through CA's Budget Act of 2025 to extend the pilot.
- 3rd iteration launched November 17, 2025.
- Participating retailer in Alameda County:
  - **Santa Fe Foods** 7356 Thornton Ave, Newark, CA 94560
  - Hours of operation: 8:00 AM – 8:00 PM
  - Santa Fe Foods' staff are trained to answer questions and provide support to clients at the point of purchase.



# EBT Electronic Theft

- Federal policy allows households to receive up to two-months worth of replacement food benefits for each report of electronically stolen benefits.
- Households are limited to two (2) replacements within a Federal Fiscal Year (Oct. 1 – Sept. 30).
- Households must submit the Form EBT 2259 within 90 calendar days from the date of theft.
- It is highly recommended that all EBT cardholders download the ebtEDGE mobile app (QR codes to the right) and not any other 3rd party apps.

Apple App Store Download



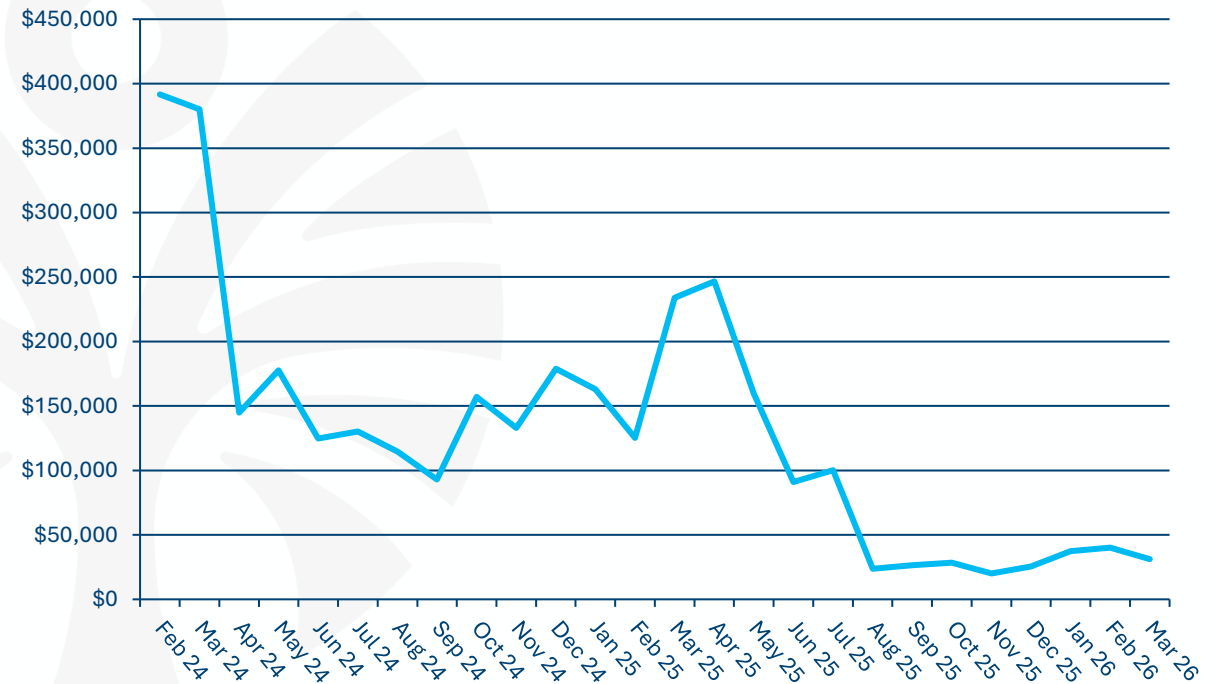
Google Play Store Download



# State and County Collaboration Reduces EBT Theft

- Since February 2024, there has been a **92% reduction in CalFresh EBT theft** in Alameda County.
- Success driven by:
  - Strong collaboration across state and county partners
  - Deployment of Chip/Tap EBT cards
  - Implementation of ebtEDGE app and web portal
  - PIN resets for compromised cards with client notifications

Alameda County EBT Theft Feb. 2024 – Mar. 2026



# Noncitizen Eligibility

Under H.R. 1, federal CalFresh eligibility is restricted to the following groups:

- **U.S. Citizens including:**
  - Individuals born in the U.S.
  - Individuals born in U.S. territories
  - Naturalized citizens
- **Noncitizen U.S. Nationals including:**
  - People born in American Samoa and Swain's Island after Dec. 21, 1952
  - Residents of the Northern Mariana Islands
- **Lawful Permanent Residents (LPRs)**
- **Individuals with a Compact of Free Association (COFA) agreement including:**
  - Lawfully present citizens of the Federated States of Micronesia, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, and the Republic of Palau
- **Cuban and Haitian Entrants (CHEs) including:**
  - Individuals granted parole
  - Not subject to a final removal order
  - Has a pending asylum application



# Noncitizen Eligibility *Continued*

Under H.R. 1, the following noncitizens are no longer eligible for federal CalFresh unless their status is adjusted to Legal Permanent Resident (LPR):

- Refugees
- Asylees
- Parolees (except CHEs) \*
- Individuals with deportation or removal withheld
- Conditional entrants \*
- Victims of trafficking \*
- Battered noncitizens\*
- Certain Afghan Nationals granted parole between July 31, 2021, and September 30, 2023.
- Certain Ukrainian Nationals granted parole between February 24, 2022, to September 30, 2024.

\*may be eligible for CFAP



# California Food Assistance Program (CFAP)

- CFAP is a state-funded CalFresh benefit for certain legal noncitizens who do not qualify for Federal CalFresh benefits due to their immigration status.
- CFAP eligibility is limited to noncitizens who are ineligible for federal CalFresh solely due to Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (PRWORA) restrictions. Because H.R. 1 restrictions fall outside PRWORA, most noncitizens who lose CalFresh eligibility under H.R. 1 will not qualify for CFAP.
- The following groups remain eligible for CFAP:
  - **Some Lawful Permanent Residents** - who do not meet the five-year waiting period or an exemption
  - **Battered noncitizens** - regardless of meeting the five-year waiting period or an exemption.
  - **Parolees** - who do not meet the five-year waiting period or an exemption. *Effective June 1, 2026*
  - **T Visa** - survivors of Trafficking preparing to apply for a T visa, with a pending T visa, and granted a T visa without an Office of Refugee Resettlement certificate.
  - **U Visa** - Individuals with a pending or granted U visa.
  - **Conditional Entrants** - who do not meet the five-year waiting period or an exemption



# Addressing Food Access Gaps for Impacted Communities

Coordinated response to support immigrant communities facing CalFresh benefit loss.

- An estimated 5,400 individuals in Alameda County are expected to lose CalFresh benefits due to H.R. 1 noncitizen eligibility changes.
- To address the food access gap, ACSSA has partnered with East Bay Refugee and Immigrant Forum (EBRIF).
- EBRIF is a coalition of 32 organizations serving immigrant communities across the region
  - EBRIF and ACSSA engaged in early-stage discussions and planning to support food distribution to impacted communities.
- ACSSA is developing a plan to use available Refugee Support Services Funds to provide short-term food assistance for individuals who qualify for the Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) program.



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ALAMEDA COUNTY  
**COMMUNITY**  
FOOD BANK

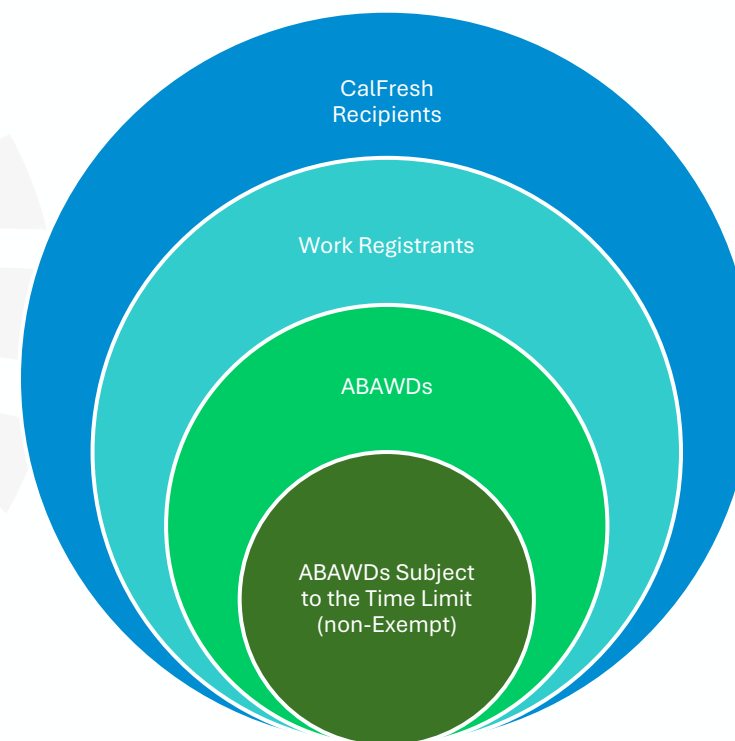


**EAST BAY REFUGEE &  
IMMIGRANT FORUM**



# Able-Bodied Adults Without Dependents (ABAWDs)

- An ABAWD is defined as an individual between the ages of 18 and 64, able-bodied, and who does not qualify for an exemption.
- An ABAWD who does not meet the work requirement or an exemption will be limited to 3 full months of CalFresh benefits within a fixed 36-month period.
- ABAWD time limits will take effect for new CalFresh applications received on or after June 1, 2026.
- For households currently active on CalFresh, ABAWD time limits will take effect at their next recertification due in June 2026 and forward.
- The current 36-month period began on Jan. 1, 2026, and ends Dec. 31, 2028.



# ABAWDs *Continued*

- ABAWDs must work an average of 20 hours per week/80 hours per month **or** participate in qualifying work activities such as:
  - CalFresh Employment & Training activities
  - A program under Section 236 of the Trade Act of 1974
  - Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) programs
  - Community service or volunteer work
- Or meet one of the following exemptions:
  - Under the age of 18 or over the age of 64
  - Pregnant
  - Medically certified as physically or mentally unfit to work
  - An Indian, Urban Indian, or California Indian as defined under the Indian Health Care Improvement Act (IHCIA)
  - Residing in a CalFresh household with a CalFresh household member under 14\*
  - Exempt from CalFresh work registration requirements (except due to age)
  - Participating in an Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) training program at least half time

\*exemption has been revised since the Feb. 2026 update



# ABAWD Data Updates

- **As of March 31, 2026:**
  - 26,000 Non-Exempt ABAWDs (27,000 in Jan. 2026)
  - 11,600 Exempt ABAWDs (12,500 in Jan. 2026)
  - 6,300 Non-Exempt ABAWDs aged 60-64 (6,400 in Jan. 2026)
  - 5,000 Unhoused Non-Exempt ABAWDs (5,200 in Jan. 2026)
- **Change is likely due to the decreasing number of CalFresh recipients**
  - 167,900 CalFresh recipients (169,900 in Jan. 2026)



# CalFresh Program Data

- **March 2026:**

- **107,600** CalFresh households
- **167,900** CalFresh recipients
- **4,200** CalFresh applications
- Average household benefit amount: **\$308**
- Total benefits issued in the month: **\$32.8M**

- **March 2025:**

- **112,900** CalFresh households
- **178,800** CalFresh recipients
- **6,000** CalFresh applications
- Average household benefit amount: **\$310**
- Total benefits issued in the month: **\$34.4M**

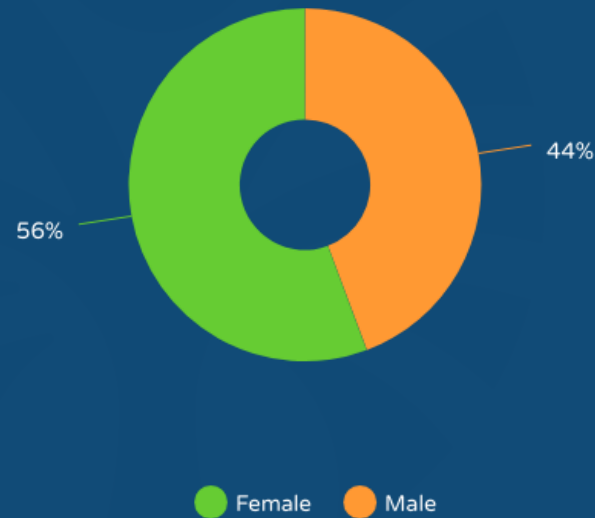


# CalFresh Program Data *Continued*

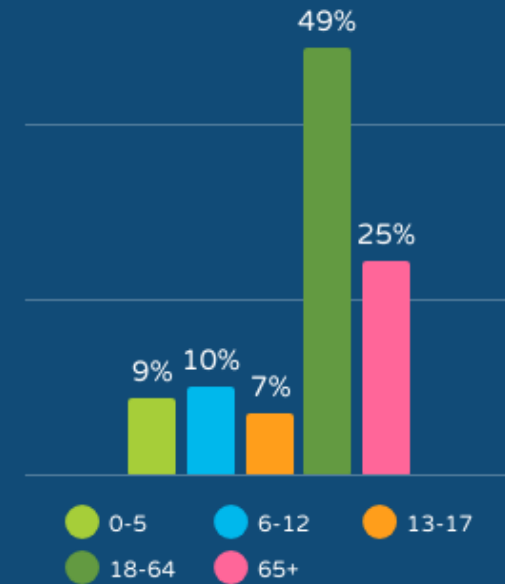
CalFresh Households by District

| Supervisor District | Households |
|---------------------|------------|
| 1                   | 10%        |
| 2                   | 17%        |
| 3                   | 25%        |
| 4                   | 23%        |
| 5                   | 20%        |

CalFresh Recipients by Gender

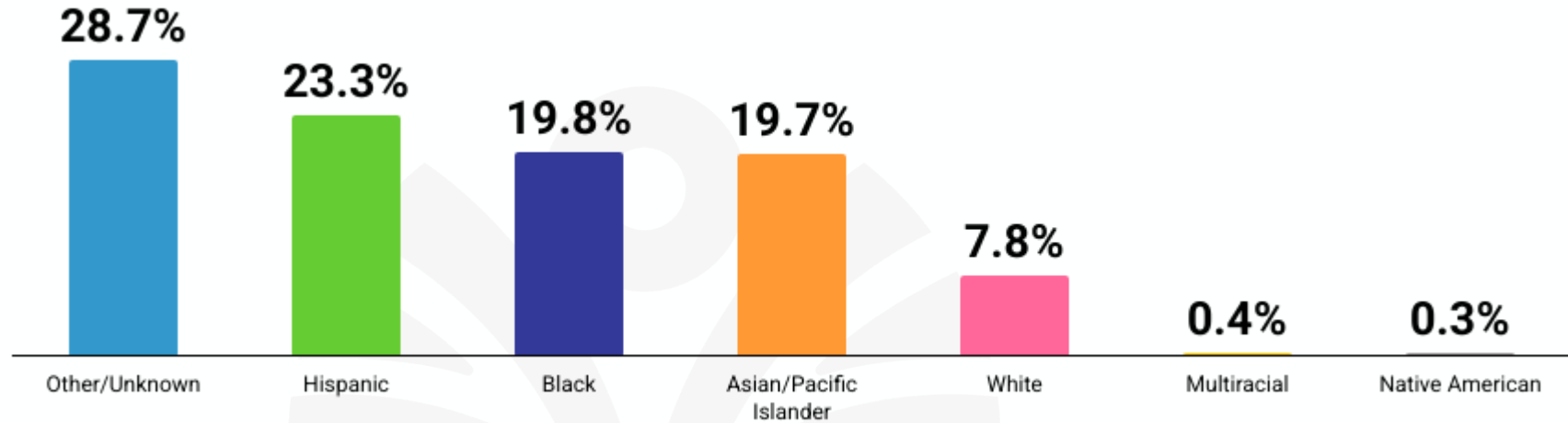


CalFresh Recipient Age Range

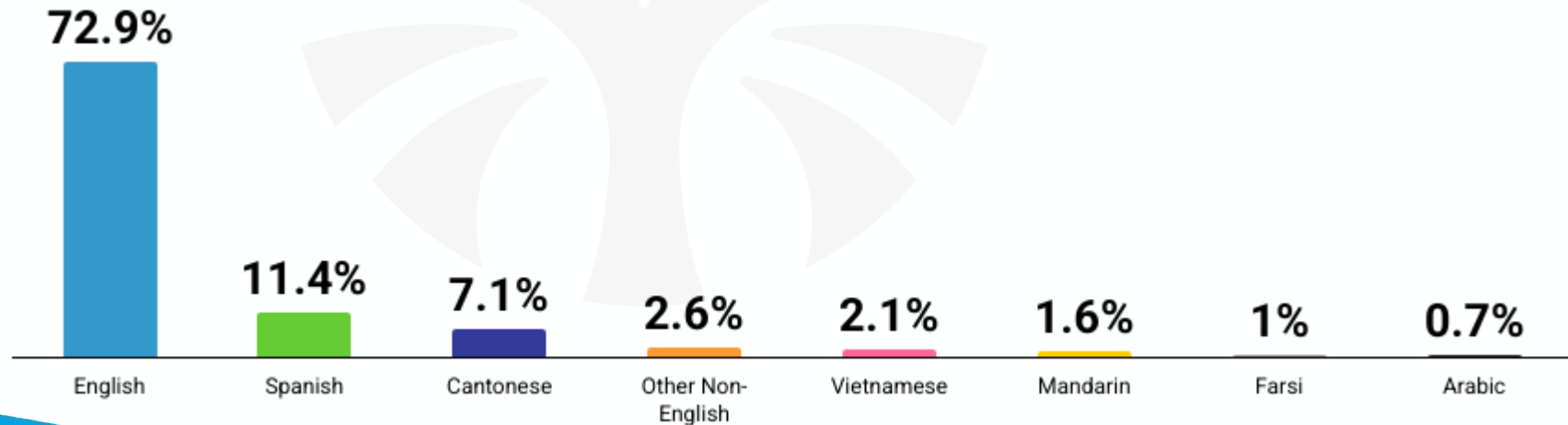


# CalFresh Program Data *Continued*

CalFresh Recipients by Ethnicity



CalFresh Recipient by Language Preferences



# CalFresh Program Data *Continued*

## Unhoused CalFresh Recipients



20% Unhoused

80% Housed



# Questions?

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