



EXPANDING CALFRESH FOR SENIORS AND ADULTS WITH DISABILITIES

Communications and Outreach
Plan for SSI Recipients

San Francisco Human Services Agency

April 2019



San Francisco Human Services Agency Communications and Outreach Plan

I. Background

Assembly Bill 1811 reverses the CalFresh eligibility policy known as “cash-out” under which Supplemental Security Income (SSI)/ State Supplemental Payment (SSP) recipients are ineligible for CalFresh. Beginning June 1, 2019, individuals receiving SSI/SSP are eligible for CalFresh, provided all other eligibility criteria are met. This ends a long-standing policy to increase monthly SSP grants by \$10 in lieu of CalFresh nutrition benefits.

In addition, the state has created two programs for existing CalFresh households whose benefits would be reduced or will no longer qualify for CalFresh as a result of adding an SSI/SSP beneficiary to the case. To hold individuals harmless, the new state programs include the Supplemental Nutrition Benefit (SNB) Program and the Transitional Nutrition Benefit (TNB) Program. The new law also augments the grant amount for the Cash Assistance Program for Immigrants (CAPI).

II. Impacts to San Francisco

Data from the Social Security Administration (SSA) indicates there are about [41,000 SSI recipients in San Francisco](#) as of June 2018. When comparing this data to income, housing costs, and household size self-reported in the 2011-16 American Community Survey, an estimated 24,500 SSI recipients may be eligible for CalFresh. This amounts to nearly 60% of all SSI recipients in San Francisco.

The California Department of Social Services (CDSS) and SSA have stated intentions to provide all counties with a list of SSI recipients to assist with outreach and CalFresh enrollment strategies. While we await those records, the following three populations can serve as a preliminary analysis of SSI recipients likely to qualify for CalFresh eligibility in San Francisco. This plan will evolve with CalFresh enrollment strategies and outreach efforts as we learn more about SSI recipients in San Francisco that are currently unknown to the Human Services Agency (HSA).

Of the estimated 24,500 eligible individuals:

1. **2,400 are part of active CalFresh households:** HSA caseload data indicates 2,400 SSI recipients are already part of an existing CalFresh household. These households will be evaluated under new rules at the time of their next scheduled contact with HSA, or may apply beginning May 13, 2019.
2. **5,300 belong to households currently eligible for CalFresh:** 5,300 SSI recipients are part of a household that is eligible for CalFresh, but has not yet taken up the program.
3. **16,800 are potentially eligible SSI/SSP recipients:** The remaining 16,800 SSI recipients live alone or with people who are also SSI recipients. They will be able to apply for CalFresh benefits beginning May 2019. This category includes significant opportunities for engagement through HSA's [In-Home Support Services \(IHSS\)](#) caseload. Our data analysis indicates 70% of IHSS recipients in San Francisco receive SSI.

III. Communications Strategy and Channels

HSA's targeted CalFresh enrollment strategies focus on engaging SSI recipients known to HSA, in addition to those that may be on SSI but not currently receiving HSA services. Communications strategies to expand CalFresh for seniors and adults with disabilities will align with target enrollment audiences through "inreach" to HSA clients, community engagement, and formative research to develop targeted messages for SSI recipients in San Francisco. Target audiences include:

- Current SSI recipients (provided by CDSS)
- Active CalFresh and CalWORKs households with an SSI recipient
- IHSS recipients and providers
- CalFresh applicants recently denied due to SSI
- Community providers that serve older adults and adults with disabilities
- HSA clients who are receiving SSI benefits and are part of a Medi-Cal household, or are in the Medicare Savings Program (MSP)
- New SSI applicants

This plan outlines the methods, communications channels, and proposed timelines for activities HSA will deploy to reach SSI recipients and caregivers. Communications objectives include:

- Engaging local food security organizations and nutrition advocates to "speak with one voice" regarding the SSI policy change;
- Understanding the motivations and barriers for SSI recipients to apply for CalFresh in San Francisco through formative research with target populations;
- Leveraging SSI/CalFresh marketing materials and paid advertisements provided by CDSS;
- Engagement with SSI recipients, caregivers, and organizations serving target audiences to promote the policy change and provide application resources; and
- Cultural competency.

Formative Research

Given the high cost of living in San Francisco and upcoming changes to long-standing CalFresh SSI eligibility requirements, it is more important than ever that our most vulnerable community members are aware of available help and have a clear understanding of how to secure nutrition assistance. HSA has hired a public health research firm, John Snow, Inc. (JSI), to assist in the development of a community-based social marketing approach to create research-backed outreach content that will promote enrollment in the CalFresh program among San Francisco residents, including the newly eligible SSI population.

This approach includes the implementation of social media messages and formative research based on community member feedback, which can be used by community-based organizations (CBOs) and HSA to promote CalFresh among SSI recipients. To inform messaging and content creation, JSI will conduct a series of key informant interviews and focus groups with SSI recipients, caregivers, and service providers. While HSA plans to leverage marketing materials developed by CDSS as the primary marketing collateral for CalFresh expansion, JSI

will gain insights from formative research with the SSI population to develop local strategies for such content as HSA's website and direct mail to SSI recipients in San Francisco.

Partner Resources

JSI will also develop a toolkit for local non-profit organizations, agencies, and healthcare providers working with SSI recipients in San Francisco. This toolkit will 1) orient HSA partner agencies to the policy change and its implications; 2) describe how to assist SSI recipients in applying for CalFresh; 3) deliver partner resources such as translated CDSS marketing materials (i.e. post cards, fact sheets); and 4) provide research-based messaging for partners to use in their own outreach efforts as well as recommendations for how to implement them. Toolkits will be available on HSA's website and provided to partner agencies through a series of planned informational forums and presentations to community based organizations and City Departments serving SSI recipients.

Direct Mail

HSA will mail a series of consumer-friendly and concise informational notices to our target audiences. Existing CalFresh households with an SSI recipient, IHSS clients and their providers will receive mailed notification of the policy change and how to apply. We will also explore opportunities for direct mail to clients receiving services through HSA's Department of Aging and Adult Services. CalFresh households will be informed of the evaluation upon receipt of the SAR 7 and recertification, or when they report a household change.

CalFresh Telephone Benefit Linkages

HSA is committed to reducing hunger and improving health in San Francisco through external partner agencies with the shared goal to increase the number of approved CalFresh applications. On behalf of HSA, 211 San Diego performs up 1,000 outbound phone calls each month to San Francisco residents who may be eligible for CalFresh, but who are not currently enrolled, and clients at risk of losing benefits. Beginning summer 2019, target populations for this partnership will expand to SSI recipients. This service comprises outbound phone contact, assistance in submitting applications to HSA for processing, and reminders to encourage individuals to complete the application process with HSA.

Community Outstations and Application Assistance

Outstations serve as critical sites wherein residents can apply for and access benefits at convenient community locations, health and supportive service providers beyond HSA service center locations. Our existing network of outstations consists of five (5) standard outstations and (5) navigation centers spread across various neighborhoods within San Francisco. The standard outstations are co-located at CBOs, whereas navigation centers are City and County of San Francisco sites overseen by the Department of Homelessness and Supportive Housing (HSH) designed to temporarily house San Francisco's homeless residents. Both standard outstations and navigation centers (hereinafter referred to as outstations) provide individuals

with an array of social services, including access to an HSA Eligibility Worker (EW) who can assist them in applying for CalFresh and MediCal benefits on-site.

Consistent with the expansion of CalFresh benefits to SSI recipients, HSA is undergoing an analysis of its current outstations and staffing levels to identify new outstation sites that serve older adults and adults with disabilities, such as [Aging and Disability Resource Centers \(ADRCs\)](#) and other community centers.

In addition to expanding the outstations, HSA plans to widen its “CalFresh-in-a-Day” enrollment events to sites that serve seniors and people with disabilities. These enrollment events are arranged in advance with the San Francisco Marin Food Bank (SFMFB) and the temporary host site, such as universities, CBOs, etc. and occur in one business day. SFMFB and the host site staff schedule potential clients for appointments with HSA Eligibility Workers (EWs) in advance of the enrollment event and inform the potential clients of the documentation to bring. The EWs then arrive to the enrollment event location with laptops and other equipment to assess and process individuals for CalFresh benefits on the spot. In line with Expanding CalFresh to Seniors and People with Disabilities, HSA is examining senior/disabled housing facilities, local farmer’s markets, and other sites for future enrollment events.

HSA has a contract with SFMFB to oversee its network of application assistor sites. These application assistor sites are provided limited access to our benefit administration systems to assist clients in submitting applications for CalFresh benefits, which HSA staff then process for eligibility. SFMFB is developing their outreach strategy to spread awareness about expanding CalFresh to SSI recipients through their network of application assistors that serve seniors and adults with disabilities.

Department of Homelessness and Supportive Housing (HSH)

Through the provision of coordinated, compassionate, and high-quality services, the Department of Homelessness and Supportive Housing (HSH) strives to make homelessness in San Francisco rare, brief, and one time. HSH oversees approximately 7,500 permanent and supportive housing units for vulnerable residents living in San Francisco and estimates that roughly 4,000 of its residents are currently receiving SSI or are eligible for SSI benefits. Training and education will be provided to housing case managers and other staff to build awareness, and to inform SSI recipients residing in HSH supportive housing about the change in policy.

IV. Department of Aging and Adult Services (DAAS) Support

HSA is comprised of three City Departments that provide specialized services to distinct San Francisco populations. HSA's Department of Aging and Adult Services (DAAS) is positioned to play an integral role in the enrollment of newly eligible SSI recipients into CalFresh. Through its internal direct service programs, community funded services, and expertise in working with older adults and people with disabilities, DAAS plans to implement a multi-pronged strategy in coordination with HSA's CalFresh administration. Opportunities to educate SSI recipients on the CalFresh policy change include home visits and assessments, inbound phone calls, case management, provider and caregiver training.

DAAS will employ three primary strategies to support CalFresh enrollment with both our internal direct service programs and with community-funded non-profits, including:

1. Education and awareness for direct service providers
2. Outreach and awareness to clients and their caregivers
3. Enrollment and enrollment assistance to clients

DAAS internal programs:

- In-Home Support Services (IHSS)
- [Intake and referral](#) telephone hotline and 2 Gough Street drop-in center - a centralized resource for most DAAS funded programs. CalFresh and Medi-Cal enrollment also provided.
- Adult Protective Services
- Public Guardian and Public Conservator

DAAS partners and external providers:

- [Aging and Disability Resource Centers](#)
- Community Living Fund/Institute on Aging
- Office on Aging
- [Congregate meal providers](#) and [home-delivered meals](#)
- Homebridge
- IHSS Public Authority

In-Home Support Service (IHSS)

Through IHSS, DAAS serves 17,000 clients receiving SSI benefits. Each IHSS client has at least one independent provider that can support applying for CalFresh benefits. Through the provider network and food security screenings performed during home visits by DAAS social workers, there are a number of touchpoints to connect IHSS recipients with CalFresh. IHSS clients and providers will also receive letters informing them of the CalFresh policy change and how to apply.

V. 2019-20 Timeline: Expanding CalFresh for Seniors and Adults with Disabilities

2019-20 Timeline of Outreach and Communications Activities: CalFresh SSI Expansion								
Activity	Apr-19	May-19	Jun-19	Jul-19	Aug-19	Sep-19	Nov-Dec-19	2020
CalFresh Expansion Milestones								
1 CDSS outreach and messaging toolkit released (4/25/19)	█							
2 First day to accept applications from SSI recipients (5/13/19)		█						
3 SSI client data available to counties	█							
4 Effective date of benefits expansion (6/1/19)			█					
5 CalFresh benefits issuances begin for SSI-only households			█					
SFHSA.org								
6 CalFresh SSI landing page	█							
7 Digital partner toolkit		█						
8 Interactive map: application assistance sites		█	█					
John Snow, Inc: Formative Research and Partner Toolkit								
9 Partner Toolkit: CalFresh SSI Expansion (available in May)	█							
10 Focus groups and stakeholder interviews				█	█			
11 Message development and testing for direct mail and social media					█	█		
Community Forums								
12 Informational forum and training for CalFresh partners and stakeholders		█						
13 Informational forum and training for CalFresh stakeholders, co-sponsored with DAAS		█						
14 Disseminate CDSS marketing materials		█						
Earned Media								
15 CDSS CalFresh expansion press release		█						
16 HSA local press release and earned media		█	█					
Direct Mail								
17 CDSS letter to SSI recipients in San Francisco		█						
18 HSA letter to existing CF clients w/SSI recipient(s) in the household				█				
19 HSA letter to SSI recipients in SF				█	█			█
20 HSA letter to IHSS SSI recipients							█	
HSA Service Centers and Outstations								
21 Marketing materials available to the public		█						
22 New outstations for CalFresh enrollment				█	█			
Social Media								
23 Paid social media campaign pilot targeting SSI recipients and caregivers					█	█		
Outbound Calls and Texts								
24 211 San Diego Phone Campaign to SSI Recipients			█	█				
25 Text notifications to SSI recipients/CalFresh/Medi-Cal clients				█	█			█
Presentations to DAAS Service Providers								
26 Senior Center and Case Manager quarterly meeting							█	
27 Meal/Nutrition Service Provider meeting							█	
28 Coalition of Agencies Serving the Elderly meeting							█	

VI. Key Messages

Primary (draft):

- SSI recipients can receive CalFresh food benefits beginning in summer 2019.
- Many SSI recipients will be newly eligible for CalFresh. A change to state policy makes this possible for the first time in four decades.
- SSI benefits will NOT be reduced or eliminated because of this change.
- CalFresh boosts food budgets for those on fixed incomes - like SSI recipients - to purchase more healthy food at grocery stores and farmers markets.
- Average food benefit is estimated to be \$65 per month for SSI recipients in San Francisco.
- If approved, you will receive an EBT card with CalFresh food benefits loaded monthly.
- Seniors and persons with disabilities receiving CalFresh can use their EBT card to purchase cooked food at restaurants participating in HSA's [Restaurant Meals Program](#).
- Most SSI recipients will need to apply for CalFresh. Click, call, come in:
 - Apply online in just 10 minutes: GetCalFresh.org
 - In person at an [HSA service center](#)
 - By phone (415) 558-4700
- Visit www.sfhsa.org/calfresh to learn more.

Secondary (draft):

- SSI recipients who are part of current CalFresh households DO NOT need to apply.
- SSI members will be added to existing CalFresh households at the next semi-annual or annual report, or the household can make a voluntary request to add the SSI member any time.
- If adding the SSI recipient increases a household's CalFresh food benefits, they will simply receive more CalFresh food benefits on their existing EBT card.

VII. Partners to Engage*

California Department of Rehab/Independent Living Resource Centers
 EBT Retailers
 Episcopal Community Services
 Golden Gate Rehab
 Homebridge
 Homeless Youth Alliance
 Huckleberry Youth Programs
 IHSS Public Authority
 Independent Living Resource Center
 Larkin Street Youth Services
 Legal Assistance to the Elderly, Inc.
 Lighthouse for the Blind
 Market Match
 Meals on Wheels
 Mercy Housing
 Richmond Area Multi Services (RAMS)
 San Francisco AIDS Foundation
 San Francisco CalFresh Coalition
 San Francisco Community Clinic Consortium
 San Francisco Department of Aging and Adult Services
 San Francisco Department of Homelessness and Supportive Housing
 San Francisco Department of Public Health/General Hospital
 San Francisco Dignity Fund Coalition
 San Francisco Food Security Task Force
 San Francisco Interfaith Council
 San Francisco Marin Food Bank
 San Francisco Mayor's Office on Disability
 Senior Disability Action
 Social Security Administration
 Stupski Foundation
 Tenderloin Neighborhood Development Corporation (TNDC)
 The ARC San Francisco
 The Janet Pomeroy Center
 TODCO
 Toolworks

** Sample. Not intended to be an exhaustive list.*