

Expanding CalFresh: *People with Disabilities who Receive SSI Benefits may Apply in Summer 2019*

Background and Policy Changes

Historically individuals receiving Supplemental Security Income (SSI) could not also receive CalFresh food benefits because the state of California included a State Supplemental Payment (SSP) in addition to the federal allotment. **As of June 1, 2019, this will change.**

CalFresh, known federally as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), **provides monthly food benefits to certain individuals and families with low-income.** The amount of benefits a household receives is based on household size, countable income, and monthly expenses, such as rent and utilities. The program provides the monthly benefits on an **Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) card** which may be used at grocery stores and farmers' markets that accept EBT cards.

Important Points for CalFresh Recipients

To prevent reductions or loss of eligibility for CalFresh, the legislationⁱ **created two** state-funded **nutrition benefit programs intended to protect** or “hold harmless” **existing CalFresh households** that would otherwise be negatively affected by the policy change.

- ❖ If adding the SSI recipient would **reduce** household CalFresh benefits, the family will be provided **Supplemental Nutrition Benefit (SNB) status.**
- ❖ If adding the SSI recipient **increases income** and family would **lose CalFresh benefits**, they will be provided **Transitional Nutrition Benefit (TNB) status.**

Important Points for SSI Recipients

- ❖ **SSI/SSP benefits will not be reduced.**
 - A person is now allowed to receive both SSI and CalFresh benefits.
- ❖ **Some SSI recipients will need to apply for CalFresh.**
 - SSI recipients will need to apply for CalFresh, unless the person is living in a household where other family members are already receiving CalFresh benefits.

Example Scenarios

- ❖ A person with a disability is receiving SSI and lives alone or with others who do not receive CalFresh.
 - This person will need to apply for CalFresh beginning May 1, 2019.



- ❖ A person with a disability is receiving SSI and lives in an existing CalFresh household, meaning others in the home already receive CalFresh benefits.
 - No action is needed.
 - SSI recipients living in a CalFresh household will be added at the next reporting period, or the person may ask the county to add them.

How to Apply for CalFresh

A person may apply by phone, online or in person at their local county DPSS office.

- ✚ Apply online at <https://www.getcalfresh.org>.
- ✚ Call the CalFresh Benefits Helpline at 1-877-847-3663 (FOOD).

More Information

For questions, contact your **HRC Service Coordinator** or call the **CalFresh Benefits Helpline**.

Additional program information and updates may be found on the **state's web site** at <http://www.cdss.ca.gov/inforesources/calfresh>.

CAPI Benefits

The Cash Assistance Program for Immigrants (CAPI) benefit will increase by \$10 per person beginning June 1, 2019 in order to be equivalent with the SSI/SSP benefit amount. No action is needed for persons receiving this benefit.

For more information about CAPI see <https://www.cdss.ca.gov/CAPI>.



ⁱ Assembly Bill 1811, Fiscal Year (FY) 2018-2019, Human Services Omnibus Trailer Bill.