

## SPRING/SUMMER 2025



### Best Practices: Supporting Clients Through the CalFresh Application Process

Supporting clients through the CalFresh application process doesn't have to be overwhelming. Here are a few ways to make a difference:

- **Set expectations:** Clearly explain timelines, required deadlines, and next steps.
- **Promote self-sufficiency:** Show clients how to check their application status or complete reporting forms such as the SAR 7 and Recertification on their own.
- **Use plain language:** Keep instructions clear and simple. Visual aids can be useful as well.
- **Follow-up:** Check in after submission to answer questions and provide support.



### SUN Bucks Is Back!

SUN Bucks, California's summer food program, is returning to help families bridge the gap when school is out. This benefit provides \$120 per eligible child to help families purchase groceries during the summer months.

### Who qualifies?

- Children ages 0-22 who submit a School Meal or Universal Benefit Application and attend a school that participates in the National School Lunch or Breakfast Program (NSLP/SBP)
- Children ages 6-18 who participate in CalFresh, CalWORKs or Medi-Cal – these children are automatically enrolled
- Children ages 0-22 approved for free or reduced-price meals through direct certification or categorical eligibility at a participating school

Once eligibility is determined, families will receive a SUN Bucks card in the mail.

For more information, visit <https://www.cdss.ca.gov/sun-bucks>.

Note: Some families may still need to apply.

Questions? Contact us at  
[CalFreshAccess@dss.ca.gov](mailto:CalFreshAccess@dss.ca.gov)

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### Disaster Prep: CalFresh Outreach in Emergencies

When disasters strike – wildfires, floods, power outages - CalFresh outreach plays an important role in connecting communities to food assistance quickly.

#### Here's how to prepare:

**Stay informed:** Visit [CalAlerts.org](https://CalAlerts.org) and sign up for alerts.

**Know the programs:** Be familiar with Disaster CalFresh and replacement benefits for food lost in power outages or evacuations.

**Create a response plan:** Contractors should connect with nearby partners to support outreach and share materials during disasters.



### Partner Success Story Imperial Valley Food Bank

"A client who relies on Social Security benefits due to illness, visited Farmacias del Pueblo to refill his medications. During his visit, he picked up a flyer from the Imperial Valley Food Bank and became interested in learning if he could qualify for food stamps. His financial situation had become challenging, as his wife works for IHSS providing his care, but her limited hours of work meant their income was not enough to cover all their food and monthly expenses.

[Staff] assisted the client with completing the CalFresh application, and [staff] also informed him about the food pantries offered by the food bank, which could provide free monthly groceries. Additionally, [Staff] shared information about local agencies that offer assistance with rent, electricity, and home-delivered vegetables, ensuring he had access to a variety of support services.

After a few weeks, [staff] followed up with the client to see how things were going. He excitedly shared that their application was approved, and they had been granted \$200 in food assistance. He expressed deep gratitude for the support [staff] provided during the application process and for the follow up call. The client and his wife were thrilled, as they hadn't expected to receive approval."

### CalFresh Awareness Month (CFAM) Highlights

In May, CalFresh outreach partners across California celebrated CalFresh Awareness Month (CFAM) with over **115 outreach events** statewide. From application assistance clinics to food distributions, these efforts helped raise awareness and connect families to vital nutrition benefits. Thank you to all who helped make CFAM 2025 a success!



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