



CDSS

WILL LIGHTBOURNE  
DIRECTOR

STATE OF CALIFORNIA—HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES AGENCY  
**DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES**



EDMUND G. BROWN JR.  
GOVERNOR

October 14, 2011

ALL COUNTY INFORMATION NOTICE NO. I-71-11

ALL COUNTY WELFARE DIRECTORS  
ALL CALFRESH COORDINATORS

SUBJECT: CALFRESH RESTAURANT MEALS PROGRAM (RMP) FOR THE  
HOMELESS, ELDERLY AND DISABLED

REFERENCE: 7 USC § 2012(k); 7 CFR § 274.7; 7 CFR § 278.1; Manual of Policies and  
Procedures (MPP) Section 63-102(e)(2)(H)(3); All County Information Notices I-  
31-04 and I-13-07.

The purpose of this letter is to provide clarification regarding those individuals eligible to participate in the RMP, general information regarding the RMP and, to remind counties of the option to implement the program. The RMP is an optional county program that enables homeless, disabled, and/or elderly CalFresh individuals to use their CalFresh benefits to purchase prepared meals at participating restaurants. This option has been available to counties since 2003.

The United States Department of Agriculture Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) has provided specific clarification as to which CalFresh recipients are eligible to participate in the RMP. The RMP is intended only for those CalFresh recipients who are elderly and/or disabled, and their spouses, or homeless individuals, and cannot be extended to other household members. CalFresh recipients who are not in either of these categories are not eligible for the RMP.

As stated in MPP section 63-102(e)(2)(H)(3), before instituting an RMP, counties must submit a written proposal to the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) for review and approval. The main component of the proposal is the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to be used with participating restaurants detailing obligations of both the county and the restaurant.

General county responsibilities include:

- Certifying homeless, elderly and disabled recipients of CalFresh as eligible to purchase low cost meals with CalFresh benefits in restaurants which have entered into MOU's with the county for this purpose.
- Identifying households eligible to participate in the program for the use of CalFresh benefits at authorized restaurants.

REASON FOR THIS TRANSMITTAL

- State Law Change
- Federal Law or Regulation Change
- Court Order
- Clarification Requested by One or More Counties
- Initiated by CDSS

- Informing RMP recipients of the names and addresses of participating restaurants.
- Ensuring that the RMP Indicator Code programmed into the county consortium system will only be applied to RMP-eligible Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) cardholders.

The MOU must contain a requirement that the restaurant provide low-cost or discount meals during regular hours to eligible homeless, elderly or disabled persons. Low-cost meals are defined as meals that cost less than what would be charged to customers not using CalFresh benefits. Discounted meals are defined as meals already offered to certain consumers or advertised special or sale prices meals offered to all consumers. The MOU must also contain language indicating that participating restaurants will be notified that involvement in any illegal activity or FNS disqualification resulting from Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program violations may result in permanent termination from the RMP. Once the county's draft MOU is approved by CDSS, the county must secure an MOU with each individual participating restaurant. A chain of two or more participating restaurants under the same ownership and structure are only required to secure one MOU with the county.

Additionally, the Department expects interested counties to submit with their MOU a demographic analysis (by zip code) of the location of the potential RMP population in relation to potential participating restaurants.

Although FNS has restaurant approval authority, the Department strongly encourages current participating counties and any interested counties to evaluate the menu options offered by interested restaurants during the restaurant selection process. In support of FNS' and CDSS' efforts to promote healthy eating for CalFresh recipients, it is also recommended that counties assist participating restaurants in developing signage outlining the nutritional content of menu choices to assist in the selection of healthier menu options. To support this approach, the Department, in conjunction with the California Department of Public Health, will develop informational materials for RMP recipients emphasizing the benefits in selecting healthier and more nutritional food.

All participating restaurants must agree to abide by all rules and regulations of the FNS for CalFresh acceptance and redemption. Any restaurant that wishes to enter into a contract with the county must submit to the FNS an Application for Authorization to Participate in the CalFresh Program for Communal Dining Facilities (FNS-252-22) and the restaurant must notify the county when it receives authorization of its application. Further information is available at [www.fns.usda.gov/snap](http://www.fns.usda.gov/snap).

Counties must submit draft outreach information to advertise the restaurant meals program to the restaurant community and to the eligible recipient community. The Department's approval of a county's RMP MOU will be contingent upon receiving all required information and upon the availability of State funds.

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If you have any questions or require any further information, please contact Eden-Marie Eulingborough at (916) 654-2236 or via e-mail at [Eden-Marie.Eulingborough@dss.ca.gov](mailto:Eden-Marie.Eulingborough@dss.ca.gov). If you have any questions regarding EBT, please contact Dianne Padilla-Bates at (916) 654-1396 or via e-mail at [Dianne.Padilla-Bates@dss.ca.gov](mailto:Dianne.Padilla-Bates@dss.ca.gov).

Sincerely,

***Original Document Signed By:***

LINDA PATTERSON, Chief  
CalFresh Branch