

**County of San Diego, Health and Human Services Agency (HHS)**  
**CalFresh Program Guide**

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**Issue Date:**

03/24/2016

**Effective Date:**

Upon receipt

**Background:**

Generally, students enrolled in an institution of higher education are ineligible to CalFresh. However, meeting certain eligibility requirements or exemptions can allow them to participate in the program. All higher education students must be properly evaluated at intake and recertification.

For definitions of Institution of Higher Education and Student in Higher Education, please refer to Definitions and Examples.

**Policy:**

**63-162.1: Applicability**

Student eligibility requirements will **not** apply to people who are:

- Aged 17 or younger, or aged 50 or older,
- Physically or mentally unfit for employment. Request verification if unfitness is not evident. Verification may consist of the customer receiving temporary or permanent disability benefits issued by government or private sources. The verification may also be a statement from a physician or licensed or certified psychologist.
- Attending high school,
- Participating in the job training portion of on-the-job-training programs, as opposed to the class attendance portion,
- Enrolled less than half time in an institution of higher education,
- Enrolled less than half time in a regular curriculum in an institution of higher education,
- Enrolled full-time in schools and training programs which are not institutions of higher education.

**63-162.2: Student Exemption Criteria**

In order to be eligible for CalFresh, students must meet at least one of the exemptions listed below on the date of the interview. Review for the following exemptions during the Intake and Recertification Interview.

- Work for an average of 20 hours per week or an average of 80 hours per month and be paid for this work.  
If self-employed, work for an average of 20 hours per week or an average of 80 hours per month and receive gross monthly earnings at least equal to the federal minimum wage multiplied by 20 hours per week or by 80 hours per month.
- Is responsible for the care of a dependent household member under the age of 6. If two people exercise parental control in the assistance unit, allow student status to only one person. See section 63-602 for an example.

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- Exert parental control over a dependent household member who has reached age 6, but is under age 12 and there is no adequate child care available that will allow the parent to attend class and work 20 hours per week or participate in work study. Consider the following when determining if adequate child care is available:
  - Nearness of the child care facility to the child’s home and school
  - Convenience and hours of the child care facility with respect to the student’s school schedule.
  - Appropriateness of the child care services to the age and special needs of the child.
- Is a single parent, enrolled full time in an institution of higher education, responsible for the care of a dependent child under the age of 12. This applies to the child’s natural, adoptive or stepparent, regardless of marital status. If one natural parent and a stepparent are living with the child, neither the natural parent nor the stepparent could qualify for this student exemption.
- Be approved for state or federally financed work-study for the current school term, as defined by the institution, and anticipate working during the school term. This exemption begins the month the school term starts or the month the work-study is approved whichever is later. It will continue until the end of the month the school term ends or it becomes known that the student refused a work assignment. The exemption does not continue between terms when there is a full month class break or longer unless the student is participating in work-study during the break.
- Receives CalWORKs.
- Voluntarily participating in one of the Employment and Training programs below:
  - The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA).
  - Extended Opportunity Programs and Services (EOPS).
  - CalFresh Employment and Training Program. This component is currently not available in San Diego County.
  - Job Opportunities and Basic Skills (JOBS) program under Title IV of the Social Security Act.
  - A program under Section 236 of the Trade Act of 1974.(Trade Adjustment Assistance Program)
  - A state or local government employment and training program for low income individuals, determined by the county welfare department to be providing at least one of the components specified in 63-908.1. This option is currently not available in San Diego County Employment and Training program.

**63-162.3: Ineligible Students**

Any student who does not meet any of the exemption criteria listed above (63-162.2) will be considered an excluded household member. The income and resources of an ineligible student are exempt.

**63-162.4: Enrollment Status of a Student**

The enrollment status of a student begins on the first day of the school term. Once a student enrolls in the institution and begins classes, they shall be considered to be a student through vacation and school recess unless the student graduates, is suspended or drops out.

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Student eligibility criteria will be applied on the date of the interview:

- To all applicants who are students, and
- To all applicants who are non-continuing students in the final month of student status.

**63-162.5: Reporting of Student Status:**

A student's status is to be reported at application and at recertification. Student eligibility is not a mandatory mid-period reporting requirement and is not considered Verified Upon Receipt (VUR). If the household reports a student status mid-period, it is not required to take action, but required to document in case comments voluntarily reported changes that do not impact the CalFresh benefit.

**63-162.6 Dormitory Meals:**

CalFresh cannot be used to pay for college cafeteria meal plans. Students who live in dormitories and receive more than half their meals from a meal plan are not eligible for CalFresh benefits. If a student purchases a meal plan that provides them with less than half of their meals (ten meals per week) they may be eligible for CalFresh benefits.

**Procedures:**

Refer to the following for student eligibility evaluation, student forms and processing:

Processing Guide # 162-01

Definitions and Examples

09-55 HHS CalFresh Student Eligibility Worksheet/Desk Aid

**Impacts:**

No Programs

**References:**

MPP 63-406.1

ACIN No. I-89-15

Federal minimum wage : <http://www.dol.gov/general/topic/wages/minimumwage>

Definitions and Examples: S:\ENTERPRISE\Food Stamp State Forms\SPOS Folder\Guides Charts & Tables

Processing Guide 162-01: S:\ENTERPRISE\Food Stamp State Forms\SPOS Folder\Guides Charts & Tables\CalFresh Processing Guide 162-01.pdf

09-55 HHS CalFresh Student Eligibility Worksheet/Desk Aid : S:\ENTERPRISE\Food Stamp State Forms\Other Food Stamp Forms

**Sunset Date:**

This policy will be reviewed for continuance by 03/24/19.

**Approval for Release:**

03/24/2016