

September 28, 2012



Program Guide Letter #576

Subject

CALFRESH WAIVER TO AVERAGE STUDENT WORK HOURS AND STUDENT ELIGIBILITY

Reference

All County Letter (ACL) 12-37
All County Information Notice (ACIN) I-36-12
MPP 63-406.1, 63-406.211, 63-406.22, and 63-503.1.

Effective Date

This letter informs staff of:

- The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) waiver to average student work hours;
 - Revisions and updates to the Student Eligibility section 63-162, student worksheet desk aid; and
 - Clarification of eligibility status of an applicant (aged 18-49) who does not intend to continue their enrollment at least half-time at an institution of higher education.
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Background

Under current regulations students must be:

- Enrolled at least half time in an institution of higher education;
- Employed for a minimum of 20 hours per week; and
- Paid for this employment in order to be eligible for CalFesh benefits.

State Manual Program Policies (MPP) section 63-406.1 indicates that once a student is enrolled in an institution of higher education, such enrollment shall be deemed to continue through normal periods of class attendance, including vacation and recess, unless the student graduates, is suspended or expelled, or drops out.

Changes and Clarifications

Under this waiver, staff shall average student work hours taking into account work schedules that fluctuate to accommodate classes and employer needs. This waiver allows for students whose employment hours fluctuate from week to week to be considered otherwise eligible, provided they maintain an average of at least 20 hours per week or an

average of 80 hours or more per month.

The above regulation regarding student enrollment as indicated in State Manual Program Policies (MPP) 63-406.22 and CalFresh Program guide (CFPG) section 63-162.6 should not be interpreted to classify individuals as ineligible for CalFesh if they do not intend to enroll in school for a future term.

As indicated in State MPP 63-503.1 and CFPG 63-115.1 “a household’s eligibility for the month of application shall be determined by considering the household’s circumstances as of the date of the interview”.

Therefore, regardless of the household having been continually attending school prior to the application and interview:

If ...	Then ...
An applicant specifically states that they do not intend to register for an upcoming term at least half-time in an institution of higher education,	Staff cannot assume that the student will in fact be attending school and determine them to be ineligible.
At a later date the recipient reports that they have in fact enrolled in an institution of higher education at least half-time	The student eligibility requirement criteria listed in CFPG section 63-163.4 will be applied at that time.

Note for CalWIN Entries: CalFresh student eligibility must be determined before running exemptions for CalFresh Employment and Training (CFET) in CalWIN.

Summary of Updates

Updates to the CalFresh Program Guide are noted with highlighted text in section 63-162.

Chapter/ Section	Section Title	Update
63-162.1	Definition of a Higher Education Student	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Removed the reference regarding the student enrollment as it is already in 63-162.6
63-162.4	Student Eligibility Requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Added information regarding: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The waiver to average work hours;

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Dependent care for children under the age of six. ○ The Workforce Investment Act (WIA) that replaced the Job Training Partnership Act. WIA is administered by San Diego Workforce Partnership <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Renamed section to Student Eligibility Requirements/Criteria ● Removed the reference regarding components of the CalFresh Employment and Training program mentioned in 63-908.1 ● Add link and reference to section 63-222.6 for treatment of work study and 63-225.7 for treatment of Financial Educational Assistance
63-162.6	Enrollment Status of a Student	<p>Added:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A chart for Student Eligibility Evaluation and examples ● The requirement to verify and scan into DoReS College enrollment records
63-162.7	Student Forms	Updated Student Eligibility Worksheet/Desk Aid form 09-55 HHSA
63-222.2	Wages, Salaries and Self-employment Income	<p>Removed information regarding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Work Study which is now in new section 63-222.6 ● Strikers' information which is already mentioned in 63-222.5
63-222.6	Work Study Income	Added a new section for Work Study.
63-650.5	Desk Aids,	Updated Student Verification section

	Guides and Reminders	in CalFresh Verification Requirement Chart
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Operational Impact

Staff must review student work hours at intake, recertification or when the student reports any change in work hours. Students certified under this waiver will still need to meet all other applicable CalFresh eligibility requirements such as residency and nonfinancial eligibility.

Individuals in the CalFresh case shall be evaluated for school enrollment at:

- Intake as indicated in question L of form DFA 285 A2, and
- Recertification as indicated in question 5 of form FS 27, and
- Quarterly as indicated in QR7 form question 9 School Attendance; and
- When a client calls or reports changes in their school enrollment.

Any changes to the determination of student eligibility status shall be documented in case comments.

Automation Impact

Workers are reminded to complete the following actions whenever determining student eligibility requirements:

- Enter the weekly average work hours in the “Estimated Average HRS/WEEK” field of the Collect Employment History Detail parent window.

Tip: *Student work hours shall be averaged outside of CalWIN then manually entered into this field.*

For new applications, the Effective Begin Date of the Collect Employment History Detail parent window shall be the 1st of the month.

- Enter student’s expected graduation date in the “Expected Graduation Date” field within the Collect Student Detail Window>School Information Tab

Tip: *Students (CalFresh Eligible or Ineligible) shall not be registered for CalFresh Employment and Training (CFET).*

If individual is currently registered for CFET the record in CalWIN must be end dated before the student status begin date.

Forms (Client Correspondence Impact)

Form 09-55 HHSa CalFresh Student Eligibility Worksheet/Desk Aid shall be scanned into DoReS.

Other Programs Impact

CalWORKs

Per CPG 44-100 F. the following types of income of a child are excluded or exempt from consideration:

- Workforce Investment Act (WIA)
Earnings of a child which are derived from participation in WIA programs are disregarded from consideration as income for both eligibility and grant determination for up to six months per calendar year.
- Student Exemption
Earned income (including WIA) of a child under 19 is exempt if he/she is a full time student or he/she has a school schedule that is equal to at least one-half of a full time curriculum and is not employed full time.
- College Work Study
Earned income from any college work study program including both Work Study under Title IV of the Higher Education Act and CalWORKs Work Study. This income shall be verified utilizing the CSF 50 Student Income Verification/Request form in CalWIN, instead of the 07-21 HHSa Employment Verification form.

Medi-Cal
No impact

ACCESS Impact

No impact

Quality Control (QC)/Quality Assurance (QA) Impacts

Quality Assurance (QA) will cite the appropriate error when instructions in Section 63-162 are not followed or are followed incorrectly.

Manager Approval



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