

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

<b>CalFresh and Disaster CalFresh Cost-of-Living Adjustments (COLA) for Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2017 Effective 10/01/16</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Page</b>
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**Effective Date:**

10/01/2016

**Background:**

The Food Stamp Act of 1977 provides annual Cost-of-Living Adjustments (COLA) to allotments, certain deductions, and eligibility standards. The adjustments are effective every year on the first day of October. For SAR households where October falls mid-period, the COLA is treated as a county-initiated mid-period change.

**Purpose:**

To provide staff with instructions for COLA implementation.

**Policy:**

The following changes are part of the FFY 2017 COLA:

- Income Eligibility Standards increased and can be found on the CalFresh Assistance Standards Chart and the Disaster CalFresh Desk Aid;
- The Excess Shelter Deduction increased to \$517;
- The Standard Deduction Amount increased according to the Eligible CalFresh Household size as follows:
  - 1 – 3 Eligible household members = \$157
  - 4 Eligible household members = \$168 (No Change)
  - 5 Eligible household members = \$197 (No Change)
  - 6 or more Eligible household members = \$226 (No Change)

**Note:** There was **no** change in the Homeless Household Shelter Allowance, currently \$143.

**Standard Utility Allowance (SUA)**

The SUA amount increased from \$385 to \$389.

**Limited Utility Allowance (LUA)**

The LUA amount increased from \$118 to \$122.

**Telephone Utility Allowance (TUA)**

The TUA amount remains unchanged at \$19.

**Procedure:**

Effective July 2014 the LUA and TUA deductions are no longer used to determine CalFresh allotments, but may be used to determine Expedited Services (63-105.1)

**Program Impacts:**

**Automation:**

The COLA mass update process ran the weekend of September 4th, 2016. Cases containing CalFresh were included in the run. The batch AU Exception indicators were lifted for all programs except Medi-Cal.

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The Standard Deduction, Maximum Excess Shelter Cost Standard Deduction, and Utility Allowance Reference Tables were updated in CalWIN Production September 4th, 2016. The October 2016 budget calculations for the impacted cases will reflect these updates.

The Assistance Standards Chart (63-1102.2) has been updated to reflect the CalFresh COLA.

The Scratch Budget has been updated to reflect the October 2016 COLA.

Forms and Document Capture:

Client Correspondence - Timely notice is not required when processing a mass change. However, we are required to inform households when their CalFresh allotment is changing.

Samples of the COLA informing posters (Attachment A, 2016 COLA Poster English and Attachment B, 2016 Poster Spanish) are attached to this letter. Family Resource Centers (FRCs) will post the notification in their lobbies and other areas frequented by customers. These posters must be posted no later than October 1, 2016 and must remain on display until November 30, 2016.

Attachment C, CF 11 ENG/SP (8/16) "Notice To All CalFresh Recipients" has been uploaded to the Xerox Print Center for staff use if a household has questions regarding the COLA.

Other Programs Affected:

Continue to review Medi-Cal, General Relief (GR), Cash Assistance Program for Immigrants (CAPI), and CalWORKs (CW) cases with CalFresh associated programs alerts and communications for impacts.

Quality Control:

Quality Control will cite the appropriate error when the regulations cited in this program material have not been followed.

Management Reporting:

COLA Supplemental Reports - The reports below require action and can be found on the S drive (S:\ENTERPRISE\Food Stamp State Forms\SPOS Folder\Attachments & Posters):

- Mass Update COLA Exception Report – Is the COLA exception EDBC and Authorization report. This report lists and describes errors encountered on cases during the batch run process. The cases on this list have not been auto-authorized by CalWIN.

Worker Action Required:

1. Review case and authorize.

- Client Correspondence Details Report – Lists the Client Correspondence triggered during the September 4, 2016 CalFresh COLA run that we held in the Print Queue for review.

Worker Action Required:

1. Review all correspondence that is held in the Print Queue.
2. Delete unnecessary correspondence.

Before mailing required correspondence, complete manual variables.

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**References:**

All County Information Notices I-64-16, I-68-16 and I-65-16

All County Letter 16-47

MPP 63-1100 Eligibility Determination

Scratch Budget - S:\ENTERPRISE\QR Excel Spreadsheet

Management Reports - S:\ENTERPRISE\Food Stamp State Forms\SPOS Folder\Attachments & Posters

**Sunset Date:**

This policy will be reviewed for continuance on or before 09/30/2017

**Approval for Release:**

 , 10-3-14

RICK WANNE, Director  
Eligibility Operations

# NOTICE TO ALL CALFRESH RECIPIENTS IMPORTANT PLEASE READ

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) has approved a Cost of Living Allowance to the CalFresh program.

Effective October 1, 2016, your CalFresh benefits may change due to this federal law change.

- The Maximum Excess Shelter cost deduction increased from \$504 to \$517.
- The Gross/Net Income Eligibility Standards increased.
- The Standard Utility Allowance (SUA) deduction increased from \$385 to \$389.
- The Standard Deduction increased according to your household size (an increase to \$157 for 1 to 3 people; \$168 for 4 people; \$197 for 5 people; and \$226 for 6 or more people).
- The Homeless Shelter Allowance will remain at \$143.

With the changes, the amount of CalFresh benefits you will get depends on your household status. You will get a notice if your CalFresh benefits change.

If you think we made a mistake in figuring your October 2016 allotment because of the federal law change, you may ask for a state hearing **within 90 days of the date you received this information by:**

Writing to:  
San Diego County  
Health and Human Services Agency  
Appeals Section –W402  
1255 Imperial Avenue Suite 300  
San Diego, CA 92101

**OR**

Calling toll free: 1-800-952-5253.  
If you are hearing impaired and use  
TDD, please call 1-800-952-8349.

When you ask for a hearing you must tell us why you believe we made a mistake. You may speak for yourself at the state hearing. You can have a friend, attorney or other person speak for you. You may ask for free legal aid at the Legal Aid Society of San Diego office in your area.

# AVISO A TODAS LAS PERSONAS QUE RECIBEN BENEFICIOS DE CALFRESH

## IMPORTANTE – FAVOR DE LEER

El Departamento de Agricultura de los Estados Unidos (USDA por sus siglas en inglés) aprobó un aumento por costo de vida para el programa de CalFresh.

A partir del primero de Octubre de 2016, sus beneficios de CalFresh podrían cambiar debido al cambio a ésta ley federal.

- El máximo para la deducción por gastos excesivos de vivienda aumentó de \$504 a \$517.
- Las cantidades permitidas de ingreso bruto y neto aumentaron.
- La cantidad normal permitida para servicios públicos y municipales (SUA por sus siglas en inglés) aumentó de \$385 a \$389.
- La deducción estándar incrementó de acuerdo al número de personas que reciben beneficios en su caso (\$157 para familias de 1 a 3 personas, \$168 para familias de 4 personas, \$197 para familias de 5 personas, y \$226 para familias de 6 ó más personas).
- La cantidad permitida como deducción por gastos de vivienda para personas sin hogar se mantendrá en \$143.

Con los cambios, la cantidad que reciba de beneficios de CalFresh dependerá de la situación y del número de personas en su caso. Si sus beneficios cambian el condado le informará en futuras notificaciones o cartas.

Si cree que hay errores en el cálculo de sus beneficios de Octubre de 2016 por éste cambio a la ley federal, puede pedir una audiencia **antes de 90 días de haber recibido por escrito la información del cambio.**

### Por favor escriba a:

San Diego County  
Health and Human Services Agency  
Appeals Section – W402  
1255 Imperial Avenue, Suite 300  
San Diego, CA 92101

o

Llame al 1-800-952-5253 sin costo para usted.  
Si tiene problemas auditivos y usa TDD, por favor llame al 1-800-952-8349.

Cuando pida la audiencia, deberá decirnos la razón por la cual cree que hicimos el error. Puede representarse a sí mismo en la audiencia, o puede asignar a un amigo(a), un abogado, u otra persona para que le represente en la audiencia. Puede también pedir asistencia legal gratuita a la Sociedad de Asuntos Legales de San Diego en su área.

## NOTICE TO ALL CALFRESH RECIPIENTS IMPORTANT — PLEASE READ

Effective October 1, 2016, State and Federal laws provide for the following:

**Maximum CalFresh Allotments:** These are benefit amounts your household would receive if your household had no income.

Household Size:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Each Additional Person
	\$194	\$357	\$511	\$649	\$771	\$925	\$1022	\$1169	+146

- Additionally, the maximum excess shelter deduction has increased from \$504.00 to \$517.00.
- The homeless shelter allowance of \$143.00 remains unchanged.
- The standard deductions have changed as follows:

### Standard Deductions for FFY 2017:

Household Size	Standard Deductions
1 to 3 persons	\$157.00
4 persons	\$168.00
5 persons	\$197.00
6 or more persons	\$226.00

The Standard Utility Allowance (SUA) of \$385.00 increased to \$389.00.

The Limited Utility Allowance (LUA) of \$118.00 slightly increased to \$122.00.

If the SUA/LUA is used as part of your shelter deduction and if you have had no changes in your CalFresh case, your CalFresh benefits may be changed. With the changes in your CalFresh benefits, the amount you will get depends on other household changes. These changes will be included in any notice you get that tells you about other changes in your CalFresh benefits.

If you think we made a mistake in figuring your October CalFresh benefits due to the new amounts for allotments and SUA/LUA you may ask for a state hearing, **within 90 days of when you got this letter** by writing to:

State Hearings  
1255 Imperial Avenue, Suite 330  
San Diego, CA 92101

or you may call toll free: 1-800-952-5253. If you are deaf and use TDD, call 1-800-952-8349. When you ask for a state hearing, you must tell us why you think we made a mistake. You can speak for yourself at the hearing or you can have a friend, attorney, or other person speak for you, but you must get these people to help you. You may ask for free legal aid at a legal aid office in your area.

## AVISO A TODAS LAS PERSONAS QUE RECIBEN BENEFICIOS DE CALFRESH IMPORTANTE — FAVOR DE LEER

A partir del 1° de octubre, 2016, las leyes estatales y federales estipulan lo siguiente:

**Asignaciones máximas de beneficios del Programa de CalFresh:** Estas son las cantidades de beneficios que su hogar recibirá si su hogar no tuviera ingresos.

Número de personas en el hogar:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Cada persona adicional
	\$194	\$357	\$511	\$649	\$771	\$925	\$1022	\$1169	+146

- Además, la cantidad máxima para la deducción por gastos excesivos de vivienda aumentó de \$504.00 a \$517.00.
- La asignación de \$143.00 para alojamiento/albergue para personas sin hogar permanecerá igual.
- Las deducciones normales cambiaron de la siguiente manera:

### Deducciones normales para el año fiscal federal (FFY) 2017:

No. de personas en el hogar	Deducciones normales
1 a 3 personas	\$157.00
4 personas	\$168.00
5 personas	\$197.00
6 ó más personas	\$226.00

La cantidad normal permitida de \$385.00 para servicios públicos (*Standard Utility Allowance* - SUA) aumentó a \$389.00.

La cantidad limitada permitida de \$118.00 para servicios públicos (*Limited Utility Allowance* - LUA) aumentó un poco a \$122.00

Si la SUA/LUA se usa como parte de su deducción por vivienda y no ha tenido cambios en su caso de CalFresh, es posible que haya un cambio en sus beneficios de CalFresh. Con los cambios en sus beneficios de CalFresh, la cantidad que recibirá dependerá de otros cambios en su hogar. Estos cambios se incluirán en cualquier notificación que reciba indicándole otros cambios en sus beneficios de CalFresh.

Si cree que cometimos un error al calcular la cantidad de sus beneficios de CalFresh correspondientes al mes de octubre, debido a las nuevas cantidades de las asignaciones y la SUA/LUA, puede pedir una audiencia con el Estado **dentro de 90 días a partir de la fecha en que recibió esta carta**, escribiendo a:

State Hearings  
1255 Imperial Avenue, Suite 330  
San Diego, CA 92101

o llamando gratuitamente al 1-800-952-5253. Si usted es una persona sorda y usa un aparato de telecomunicaciones (TDD), llame al 1-800-952-8349. Cuando pida una audiencia con el Estado, tendrá que decirnos por qué cree que cometimos un error. Puede representarse a sí mismo en la audiencia o lo puede representar un amigo, abogado u otra persona, pero usted tiene que pedirles a esas personas que le ayuden. Puede pedir asistencia legal gratuita en una oficina de asesoramiento legal en el área donde usted vive.