

2014 State Policy Agenda

SB 1147 (DeSaulnier) CalFresh Performance Goals and Customer Service Standards

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Opportunity

State and local leaders have taken important steps to improve CalFresh access and participation. Recent changes have focused on enhancing the client experience and more efficiently meeting the growing need for nutrition assistance. Some CalFresh improvements have resulted in statewide change, while others have been adopted by select counties. Such inconsistencies contribute to a fragmented system in which access to CalFresh and the quality of customer service vary greatly by geographic location.

Enrolling and participating in CalFresh should be straightforward, consistent experiences for individuals and families throughout the state. Establishing statewide performance goals and customer service standards would help make CalFresh more effective, efficient, and consistent by setting minimum expectations and holding decision makers accountable for meeting those expectations. Measuring progress towards the performance goals and customer service standards would also provide data to inform future changes to CalFresh. Such data is needed to better evaluate the effects of policy change and outreach efforts for CalFresh.

Action

California should:

- Establish, through a collaborative process that integrates stakeholder input, statewide performance goals and customer service standards for CalFresh.
- Periodically monitor progress towards meeting those goals and standards.
- Make timely, state and county-level measures of performance and service regularly available to the public through a dynamic data management tool.

Why This Matters

CFPA and SF-Marin Food Bank envision a healthy and food secure California for all residents. Too many Californians struggle to meet their most basic needs. For instance, at least 4 million low-income adults faced food insecurity in 2011-12¹. At the same time, California continues to grapple with low CalFresh participation. The latest data indicate that over 40 percent of all eligible Californians are not enrolled in this crucial safety-net program.

CalFresh benefits help protect vulnerable individuals and families from food insecurity and hunger. What's more, CalFresh benefits help ensure overall health and well-being. We must do all we can to boost CalFresh participation. California can set the expectation for statewide performance and customer service in order to help ensure consistent CalFresh access and customer service quality regardless of geographic location.

To learn more about SB 1147 visit www.cfpa.net/SB1147

¹ UCLA Center for Health Policy Research's California Health Interview Survey

For more than 20 years, CFPA has been the state's trusted food policy advocacy organization dedicated to increasing low-income Californian's access to healthy food at home, at school and throughout entire communities. CFPA's advocacy agenda draws on the anti-hunger, nutrition, and health movements. Working as both a policy leader and supportive policy ally, CFPA continues to build on its long history of success.