



Legislation Text

File #: 2021-0383, **Version:** 1

To: Sonoma County Board of Supervisors

Department or Agency Name(s): Human Services and Health Services

Staff Name and Phone Number: Felisa Pinson, 565-2198; Emilia Gabriele, 565-4774

Vote Requirement: Majority

Supervisorial District(s): Countywide

Recommended Action:

Adopt a Gold Resolution declaring May 2021 as CalFresh Awareness Month in Sonoma County.

Executive Summary:

The designation of May 2021 as CalFresh Awareness Month is a collaborative effort across Sonoma County to highlight the benefits of the federal Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) to increase access and participation in food assistance, to reduce hunger, and to promote good nutrition and physical activity. The California Department of Social Services, as well as counties throughout the State, traditionally celebrate CalFresh Awareness month in May each year. This year, recognition of the CalFresh program and the support it offers is even more important given the increased need and scope of food insecurity due to the pandemic and its economic impacts on Sonoma County residents.

Discussion:

CalFresh benefits are critical to healthy nutrition for many vulnerable county residents. The benefits supplement household food budgets, allowing families to put healthy and nutritious food on the table. Over the past year, CalFresh has become even more critical to residents during the unprecedented pandemic and sweeping economic impacts. With the inclusion of expanded eligibility criteria for students, administrative flexibilities for increased service delivery, and federal legislation increasing the household benefits every month, CalFresh has become even more available to the community. Currently, Sonoma County has 30,183 people actively receiving CalFresh benefits. Of these beneficiaries:

- 39% are children under 18
- 20% are seniors age 60 and over
- 13% are homeless
- 5% are documented immigrants

In addition to the immediate ability to provide food and decrease hunger insecurity, CalFresh generates \$1.79 of economic activity for every \$1.00 of benefits spent in the community. Over \$6 million dollars of CalFresh benefits annually enter into Sonoma County's local economy, while increasing access to nutritious food for our most vulnerable residents. The CalFresh program and its economic benefit also supports local farmers markets and helps community supported agriculture and local grocers sustain jobs in our community.

Through the SNAP education (SNAP-Ed) program, the Human Services Department and the Department of Health Services partner with community organizations and agencies to provide CalFresh outreach, education

and enrollment services throughout Sonoma County. Collaboration is central to reaching our residents and engaging the community where the need is the greatest.

Due to the pandemic and social distancing guidelines, CalFresh Awareness activities will be done primarily in virtual and online platforms this year, highlighting the program, benefits and partnerships across the county. A series of coordinated social media posts will be launched in partnership with community agencies to share information about the CalFresh program, how to apply, how to maintain benefits, pandemic related changes, and additional benefits including the Farmers Market Local Incentive for Food and Economy match program for CalFresh recipients.

While CalFresh vendor enrollment and oversight is coordinated by the State of California, various County and non-profit organizations coordinate CalFresh benefits and/or SNAP-Ed efforts in Sonoma County, including the Human Services Department, the Department of Health Services, Catholic Charities, Petaluma Bounty, Redwood Community Healthcare Coalition, Redwood Empire Food Bank, Area Agency on Aging, the Northern Center for Well-Being, and the United Way of Wine Country. Among other efforts, these partnerships seek to raise awareness and improve utilization of CalFresh benefits and healthy nutrition practices throughout Sonoma County.

Prior Board Actions:

Adopted a resolution recognizing CalFresh Awareness Month on these prior dates:

April 28, 2020

May 14, 2019

May 8, 2018

May 2, 2017

FISCAL SUMMARY

Expenditures	FY 20-21 Adopted	FY 21-22 Projected	FY 22-23 Projected
Budgeted Expenses			
Additional Appropriation Requested			
Total Expenditures	0	0	0
Funding Sources			
General Fund/WA GF			
State/Federal			
Fees/Other			
Use of Fund Balance			
Contingencies			
Total Sources	0	0	0

Narrative Explanation of Fiscal Impacts:

N/A

Staffing Impacts:

Position Title (Payroll Classification)	Monthly Salary Range (A-I Step)	Additions (Number)	Deletions (Number)

Narrative Explanation of Staffing Impacts (If Required):

N/A

Attachments:

Resolution

Related Items "On File" with the Clerk of the Board:

None