

County of San Diego, Health and Human Services Agency (HHS)
CalWORKs / CalFresh Program Guide Special Notice

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|---|---------------------|-------------|
| Eligibility for Disaster Victims and Evacuees Affected by Major Fires in Siskiyou, Placer, El Dorado, Riverside, Madera and Modoc Counties | Number | Page |
| | CW 22-06 / CF 22-04 | 1 |

Effective Date:

September 1, 2022

Background:

Emergency proclamations were issued by Governor Newsom on September 2, 2022, September 8, 2022, and September 19, 2022, for the following counties effected by major wildfires: Siskiyou County due to Mill Fire and Mountain Fire; Placer and El Dorado Counties due to the Mosquito Fire; Riverside County due to the Fairview Fire, Madera County due to Fork Fire, and Modoc County due to Barnes Fire. The danger and damage caused by the fires has made it necessary for some families to evacuate their home counties.

Purpose:

The purpose of this joint special notice is to provide Human Services Specialists (HSS) with policy reminders and instructions for CalWORKs and/or CalFresh application processing and continuing case services for wildfire evacuees from federally designated disaster or state declared emergency areas.

Policy:

It is anticipated that some evacuees will apply for CalWORKs and/or CalFresh in counties other than those in which they reside, due to disaster-related relocation.

CalWORKs

Many evacuees will lack documentation of various items such as identity, age, social security number, value of property/resources, income, and may be unable to obtain such verification within standard application processing time periods.

When processing applications received from victims and evacuees in State or Federal declared emergency areas, HSSs must follow the guidance regarding waivers of CalWORKs rules as mentioned in the CalWORKs Processing Guide 40-100.A6.

CalWORKs rules regarding residency, income, property resources, temporary absence, work participation and SAR 7 reporting requirements also apply to Refugee Cash Assistance (RCA) and Trafficking and Crime Victims Assistance Program (TCVAP) customers.

CalFresh

When processing CalFresh applications submitted by evacuees of the Siskiyou County Mill Fire or Mountain Fire, Placer County and El Dorado County Mosquito Fire, Riverside County Fairview Fire, Madera County Fork Fire and Modoc County Barnes Fire, evaluate under regular CalFresh eligibility rules, regardless of whether the household (HH) is a permanent resident of San Diego County.

Evacuees with active CalFresh cases from the counties affected by these wildfires may request replacement benefits or replacement Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) cards in counties other than those they reside in. Replacement benefits will only be issued if the food was purchased with CalFresh benefits and was destroyed due to a HH misfortune or the wildfires. Replacement benefits and replacement EBT cards will be processed under regular CalFresh rules.

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CalWORKs / CalFresh Program Guide Special Notice**

| Eligibility for Disaster Victims and Evacuees Affected by Major Fires in Siskiyou, Placer, El Dorado, Riverside, Madera and Modoc Counties | Number | Page |
|--|---------------------|------|
| | CW 22-06 / CF 22-04 | 2 |

Procedure:

CalWORKs

HSSs are encouraged to explore Immediate Needs, Diversion and Homeless Assistance eligibility for the wildfire evacuees. Diversion payments are designed to deal with a specific crisis situation or item of need and may be appropriate for displaced families.

When a CalWORKs application is received from an individual or family displaced by the wildfires, the HSS will do the following:

- Create the application in CalWIN.
- Enter “Disaster CalWORKs” case special indicator.
- Determine that the evacuee was living in a Federal or State declared disaster area during the period that the wildfires occurred.
- Ask the evacuee if anyone in their family is currently receiving CalWORKs.
- Process the application and complete the eligibility determination process.

CalFresh

When a CalFresh application is received from an individual or family displaced by the wildfires, the HSS will:

- Determine that the evacuee was living in Siskiyou County, Placer County, El Dorado County, Riverside County, Madera County, or Modoc County, and had to temporarily evacuate their home county as a result of the wildfires.
- Screen all applications to determine if the HH meets the Expedited Service (ES) requirements and process eligible applications within three days.
- Accept self-certification for residency (no length of residency may be imposed).
- Allow for COVID-19 flexibilities (i.e., verbal signature and verbal attestations).
- Ensure that customers without a permanent mailing address receive notices:
 - Using the address of a friend or family member.
 - Using the address of a local shelter.
 - Using the FRCs homeless PO Box.
- Once approved Inter-County Transfer (ICT) the case to the HH’s county of residence.

When replacement benefits are requested by an evacuee the HSS must determine that the evacuee was living in Siskiyou County, Placer County, El Dorado County, Riverside County, Madera County or Modoc County and had to temporarily evacuate their home county as a result of the wildfires. Once this has been determined follow regular CalFresh replacement benefit policy, refer to CFPG 63-509.

When an evacuee requests a replacement EBT card at a local Family Resource Center (FRC) staff are to contact the evacuee’s home county to request a new card be printed at the local FRC. An evacuee may also request a replacement EBT card by calling EBT Customer Service at (877) 328-9677.

Automation:

CalFresh

None

CalWORKs

Enter “Disaster CalWORKs” case special indicator for those applications that meet the above criteria.

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| | | |
|---|---------------------|-------------|
| Eligibility for Disaster Victims and Evacuees Affected by Major Fires in Siskiyou, Placer, El Dorado, Riverside, Madera and Modoc Counties | Number | Page |
| | CW 22-06 / CF 22-04 | 3 |

References:

ACWDLs (September 6, 2022) (September 9, 2022) (September 20, 2022).

Sunset Date:

This policy will be reviewed for continuance by September 30, 2023.

Approval for Release:



Rick Wanne, Director
Self-Sufficiency Services