

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

<b>CalFresh Cost-of-Living Adjustments (COLA) for Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2021 Effective 10/01/2020</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Page</b>
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**Effective Date:**  
10/01/2020

**Background:**

The Food Stamp Act of 1977 provides annual Cost-of-Living Adjustments (COLA) to allotments, certain deductions, and eligibility standards for the CalFresh Program. 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:**

This notice provides staff with an overview of the COLA changes and instructions for implementation.

**Policy:**

The following changes are part of the FFY 2020 COLA:

<b>ITEM</b>	<b>CHANGE</b>
Allotments	Maximum Allotments increased and can be found on the CalFresh Assistance Standards Chart
Income Eligibility Standards	Income Eligibility Standards increased and can be found on the CalFresh Assistance Standards Chart
Shelter Deduction	The Excess Shelter Deduction increased from \$569 to \$586
Standard Deduction	The Standard Deduction Amounts increased according to the Eligible CalFresh Household size as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 – 3 Eligible household members = \$167</li> <li>• 4 Eligible household members = \$181</li> <li>• 5 Eligible household members = \$212</li> <li>• 6 or more Eligible household members = \$243</li> </ul>
Homeless Household Shelter Allowance	The Homeless Household Shelter Allowance increased from \$152 to \$156
<b>Standard Utility Allowance (SUA)</b>	The SUA amount increased from \$432 to \$438
<b>Limited Utility Allowance (LUA)</b>	The LUA amount increased from \$135 to \$139

The following were **NOT** changed as part of the FFY 2021 COLA:

- The Minimum Allotment remained unchanged at \$16;
- Resource limits remain unchanged:
  - \$3,500 for households that include an elderly or disabled (E/D) member, and
  - \$2,250 for all other households.
- **Telephone Utility Allowance (TUA)** – The TUA amount remained the same at \$18.

**Procedure:**

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

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**Program Impacts:**

The Automation team has confirmed that the COLA mass update process, which ran September 5th, 2020, included all cases containing CalFresh. The following Automation actions have been completed:

- The batch AU Exception indicators were lifted for all programs except Medi-Cal.
- The Standard Deduction, Maximum Excess Shelter Cost Standard Deduction, and Utility Allowance Reference Tables were updated in CalWIN Production September 5th, 2020. The October 2020 budget calculations for the impacted cases will reflect these updates.
- The Assistance Standards Chart (63-1102.2) has been updated to reflect the October 2020 COLA.
- The Scratch Budget has been updated to reflect the October 2020 COLA.

**Notices:**

Timely notice is not required when processing a mass change. If a household has questions regarding the COLA, the following notices have been uploaded to the Electronic Forms Library (EFL) for staff to print:

- CF 11 ENG (08/20) "COLA Notice To All CalFresh Recipients"
- CF 11 SP (8/20) "COLA Notice To All CalFresh Recipients"

COLA informing posters are required to inform households when their CalFresh allotment is changing. The COLA informing posters (Attachment A, 2021 COLA Poster English and Attachment B, 2021 Poster Spanish) are attached to this letter. Family Resource Centers (FRCs) must display the notification in areas frequented by customers. Posters must remain on display from October 1, 2020 until November 30, 2020.

**Management Reporting:**

The following COLA Supplemental Reports require action and can be found on the EO Tracking SharePoint:

<b>REPORT</b>	<b>CONTENT</b>	<b>ACTION REQUIRED</b>
Mass Update COLA Exception 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.	Review case and authorize.
Client Correspondence Details Report	Lists the Client Correspondence triggered during the September 5, 2020 CalFresh COLA run that we held in the Print Queue for review.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Review all correspondence that is held in the Print Queue.</li> <li>2. Delete unnecessary correspondence.</li> <li>3. Before mailing required correspondence, complete manual variables.</li> </ol>

**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.

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**Quality Control:**

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

**References:**

All County Information Notices I-65-20

All County Letter 20-60

MPP 63-1100 Eligibility Determination

Scratch Budget - S:\ENTERPRISE\QR Excel Spreadsheet

Management Reports – EO Tracking SharePoint

**Sunset Date:**

This policy will be reviewed for continuance by 09/30/2021.

**Approval for Release**

*AW, 9-16-20*

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, 2020, your CalFresh benefits may change due to this federal law change.

- The Maximum Allotments increased.
- The Maximum Excess Shelter cost deduction increased from \$569 to \$586.
- The Gross/Net Income Eligibility Standards increased.
- The Standard Utility Allowance (SUA) deduction increased from \$432 to \$438.
- The Standard Deduction increased according to your household size (an increase to \$167 for 1 to 3 people; \$181 for 4 people; \$212 for 5 people; and \$243 for 6 or more people).

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 2020 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	<b>OR</b>	Calling toll free: 1-800-952-5253. If you are hearing impaired and use TDD, please call 1-800-952-8349.
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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 2020, sus beneficios de CalFresh podrían cambiar debido al cambio a ésta ley federal.

- La asignación máxima aumentó.
- El máximo para la deducción por gastos excesivos de vivienda aumentó de \$569 a \$586.
- 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 \$432 a \$438.
- La deducción estándar incrementó de acuerdo al número de personas que reciben beneficios en su caso (\$167 para familias de 1 a 3 personas, \$181 para familias de 4 personas, \$212 para familias de 5 personas, y \$243 para familias de 6 ó más personas).

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 2020 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

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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, 2020, State and Federal laws provide for the following:

**Maximum CalFresh Allotments:** These are the benefit amounts your household will receive based on your household size if your household has no income.

HH SIZE 1	HH SIZE 2	HH SIZE 3	HH SIZE 4	HH SIZE 5	HH SIZE 6	HH SIZE 7	HH SIZE 8	Household Size Each Additional Person
\$204	\$374	\$535	\$680	\$807	\$969	\$1071	\$1224	+\$153

- Additionally, the maximum excess shelter deduction will increase from \$569.00 to \$586.00.
- The homeless shelter allowance will increase from \$152.06 to \$156.74.

**Standard Deductions for FFY 2021:** These are the standard deduction amounts your household will receive based on your household-size.

HOUSEHOLD SIZE	STANDARD DEDUCTION
1 to 3 persons	\$167.00
4 persons	\$181.00
5 persons	\$212.00
6 or more persons	\$243.00

The Standard Utility Allowance (SUA) of \$432.00 increased to \$438.00.

The Limited Utility Allowance (LUA) of \$135.00 increased to \$139.00.

The Telephone Utility Allowance (TUA) of \$18 remains at this level.

If the SUA or the LUA was used as part of your shelter deduction before October 1, and if you have had no changes in your CalFresh case, your CalFresh benefits may change after October 1. The amount of the change depends on your household. You will be told about any change in your benefits in a separate notice.

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

County of San Diego/ Appeals Section - W402  
 1255 Imperial Avenue, Suite 300  
 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. If you need someone to speak for you, you must get someone to help you. You may ask for free legal aid at a legal aid office in your area.

## AVISO A TODOS LOS BENEFICIARIOS DE CALFRESH

### IMPORTANTE — FAVOR DE LEER

A partir del 1 de octubre de 2020, las leyes estatales y federales estipulan lo siguiente:

**Asignaciones máximas de CalFresh:** Si su hogar no tiene ingresos, estas son las cantidades de beneficios que su hogar recibiría según la cantidad de personas en su hogar.

TAMAÑO DEL HOGAR 1	TAMAÑO DEL HOGAR 2	TAMAÑO DEL HOGAR 3	TAMAÑO DEL HOGAR 4	TAMAÑO DEL HOGAR 5	TAMAÑO DEL HOGAR 6	TAMAÑO DEL HOGAR 7	TAMAÑO DEL HOGAR 8	Número de personas en el hogar, cada persona adicional
\$204	\$374	\$535	\$680	\$807	\$969	\$1071	\$1224	+\$153

- Además, la deducción máxima por gastos excesivos de vivienda aumentará de \$569.00 a \$586.00.
- La asignación para alojamiento para indigentes aumentará de \$152.06 a \$156.74.

**Deducciones normales para el año fiscal federal (FFY) 2021:** Estas son las cantidades de deducciones normales que su hogar recibirá según la cantidad de personas en su hogar.

NÚMERO DE PERSONAS EN EL HOGAR	DEDUCCIÓN NORMAL
1 a 3 personas	\$167.00
4 personas	\$181.00
5 personas	\$212.00
6 o más personas	\$243.00

La cantidad normal permitida para servicios públicos (SUA) aumentará de \$432.00 a \$438.00.

La cantidad limitada permitida para servicios públicos (LUA) aumentará de \$135.00 a \$139.00.

La cantidad permitida para servicios telefónicos (TUA) de \$18 no ha cambiado.

Si se usó la SUA o la LUA como parte de su deducción por vivienda antes del 1 de octubre y no ha habido cambios en su caso de CalFresh, es posible que sus beneficios de CalFresh cambien después del 1 de octubre. La cantidad del cambio depende de su hogar. Se le notificará sobre cualquier cambio en sus beneficios por medio de un aviso por separado.

Si usted cree que cometimos un error al calcular sus beneficios de CalFresh para octubre debido a las nuevas cantidades de asignaciones o la SUA/LUA, puede pedir una audiencia estatal **dentro de 90 días a partir de la fecha en que recibió este aviso** escribiendo a:

County of San Diego/ Appeals Section - W402  
 1255 Imperial Avenue, Suite 300  
 San Diego, CA 92101

o puede llamar gratis al 1-800-952-5253. Si usted tiene discapacidad auditiva y usa un aparato de telecomunicaciones (TDD), llame al 1-800-952-8349. Cuando pida una audiencia estatal, debe decirnos por qué cree que cometimos un error. En la audiencia, puede representarse a sí mismo o lo puede representar un amigo, abogado u otra persona. Si necesita que alguien lo represente, es su responsabilidad obtener la ayuda de esa persona. Puede pedir asistencia legal gratuita en una oficina de asesoramiento legal en su área.