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Proclamation Recognizing May 2023 as CalFresh Awareness and Action Month in the City and County of San Francisco

WHEREAS, this is a Resolution declaring May 2023 as CalFresh Awareness and Action Month in the City and County of San Francisco, and urging all community members to support efforts to increase awareness of, and participation in, the CalFresh program; and

WHEREAS, access to safe, nutritious and culturally acceptable food is a basic human right and is essential to human health; and

WHEREAS, food security is the foundation of a strong and healthy community; and

WHEREAS, food insecurity in San Francisco has risen to historic proportions during the Pandemic, CalFresh has played a critical role in filling the gap; and

WHEREAS, during the Health Emergency, the federal government has allowed states to waive the requirement that clients participate in an interview as part of the CalFresh application process. In the past, we could deny a complete application for missing a required interview. That is not currently the case; and

WHEREAS, in recognition of many students who are struggling with food insecurity, the federal government instituted a waiver during the Pandemic easing the access of students to SNAP. As such, the nation has expanded student eligibility to include more who qualify via work study or using expected family contribution as an income indicator; and

WHEREAS, SFHSA reopened 3 of out of 4 SF BenefitsNet outstations following COVID-related closures. Eligibility workers continue to be co-located at these outstations sites, providing CalFresh and other benefit enrollment support to San Francisco residents.



London Breed
Mayor

Trent Rhorer
Executive Director

WHEREAS, SFHSA continued its contract with 211 San Diego to expand CalFresh access and increase food security. On a weekly basis, staff from 211 San Diego conduct telephone outreach to approximately 100 individuals who are receiving Medi-Cal benefits and likely eligible, but not yet receiving CalFresh to see if they are interested in obtaining assistance in submitting applications online, which SFHSA eligibility workers then process; and

WHEREAS, with funding from the federal Process and Technology Improvement Grant, our key partner the San Francisco Marin Food Bank (SFMFB) has launched a new program to help increase the number of MyBenefitsCalWIN.org (MyBCW) client accounts with the end goals of: 1.) Decreasing in-person lobby transactions, particularly relevant during the ongoing pandemic, and 2.) Learning how low-income persons, namely those with limited English, experience technology so that the agency can engage them in future technology developments. MyBCW is an online application portal that allows individuals to create personal accounts that make it possible to use one's personal computer, tablet, or smartphone to submit benefit applications, among other functions. To date, the SFMFB has assisted approximately 1,000 CalFresh recipients in signing up for MyBCW accounts; and

WHEREAS, SNAP agencies throughout the nation are currently waiving all work requirements; and

WHEREAS, Market Match allows a CalFresh household to extend the value of its benefits; farmers markets will double the value of purchases made using CalFresh EBT. This promotes healthy food options, supports farmers and extends the clients' CalFresh budget; and

WHEREAS, Online EBT services has been established for such food distributors as Safeway, Amazon, and Whole Foods to expand access and permit households to use CalFresh food benefits for online purchase and delivery; and

WHEREAS, EBT Food benefit usage at farmers markets in San Francisco soared in 2022 to over \$6.5 million, compared to about \$2.5 million in 2021; and

WHEREAS, San Francisco continues to offer a Restaurant Meals Program, allowing homeless, seniors, and the federally disabled to use their CalFresh allotment to pay for meals in designated restaurants. This increases the access to hot meals for those without easy access to kitchens; and

RESOLVED, that the San Francisco Human Services Commission proclaims May 2023 to be CalFresh Awareness and Action Month, and urge all community members to support efforts to increase awareness of and participation in the CalFresh program.

Scott Kahn
President, Human Services Commission

Date