



Proclamation: Recognition of May 2019 as CalFresh Awareness and Action Month in the City and County of San Francisco

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 a state in which all persons obtain a nutritionally adequate, culturally acceptable diet at all times through local, non-emergency sources; and

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

WHEREAS, one in four San Franciscans, especially low-income residents, seniors, families with children, immigrants, young adults, and people who are homeless, suffer disproportionately from hunger and food insecurity; and

WHEREAS, food insecurity results in poor nutritional intake, unhealthy eating behaviors that persist sometimes for decades after the food insecurity experience, and is associated with poor health outcomes in all populations and higher health care costs; and

WHEREAS, a robust CalFresh program (known nationally as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (or SNAP) and formerly known as Food Stamps) is critical to providing financial resources for food to thousands of San Franciscans; and

WHEREAS, the average household on CalFresh in San Francisco receives about \$200 per month for groceries; and CalFresh is provided on an electronic benefits card that can be used in supermarkets, corner stores, and at all San Francisco farmers markets; and hot meals can be purchased through that benefit card at dozens of restaurants in San Francisco by those who are homeless, elderly, or disabled; and

WHEREAS, CalFresh spurs the local economy because each CalFresh benefits dollar generates \$1.79 as economic multiplier; and the City of San Francisco pays for only 15% of the total cost of administering the program, and zero of the benefit dollars; which means that for \$3.6 million of local investment, CalFresh brings in \$173 million in benefits and associated economic activity; and

WHEREAS, roughly 46,000 individuals in San Francisco receive CalFresh, yet an estimated 27,000 other individuals may be eligible but are not enrolled in CalFresh; and

WHEREAS, a key opportunity for increasing participation is conducting targeted outreach to people who are likely eligible, such as students, older adults, people with disabilities, and parents with young children; and

WHEREAS, a new opportunity begins with the reversal of the decades-long policy prohibiting SSI recipients from participating in CalFresh, with over 20,000 individuals forecast in San Francisco to be eligible to receive CalFresh benefits starting in June 2019; and

WHEREAS, another key opportunity for increasing participation includes reducing “churn”- people discontinued from CalFresh who then reapply within three months; it is estimated that approximately 19% of CalFresh participants in San Francisco experience “churn”; and

WHEREAS, another key opportunity for increasing participation is to debunk myths and fears about participating, especially those related to immigration status; and

WHEREAS, community partners, city agencies, and local leaders all have a role to play in furthering awareness about CalFresh and promoting this critical program; and

WHEREAS, San Francisco stands united to promote CalFresh to the local community, improve the CalFresh participation rate, and offer robust County options for meeting the newly re-established federal work requirements; and therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the San Francisco Human Services Commission shall proclaim May 2019 to be CalFresh Awareness and Action Month, and shall urge all community members to support efforts to increase awareness of and participation in the CalFresh program.

SCOTT KAHN
President, Human Services Commission

April 25, 2019
Date