

Quality and Productivity Commission
34th Annual Productivity and Quality Awards Program
“Leading with Excellence”

2021 APPLICATION

Title of Project (Limited to 50 characters, including spaces, using Arial 12-point font):

NAME OF PROJECT: CALFRESH EXPANSION

DATE OF IMPLEMENTATION/ADOPTION: SEPTEMBER 30, 2019

(Must have been fully implemented for a minimum of at least one year - on or before July 1, 2020)

CHECK HERE IF THIS PROJECT IS BEING SUBMITTED FOR THE COVID-19 IMPACT AWARD ONLY. (Projects must be implemented on or before December 31, 2020. **Note:** Projects implemented less than one year ago will not be eligible for any other PQA awards. In addition, once a project is submitted, you cannot submit the same project for awards consideration in subsequent years).

PROJECT STATUS: _____ Ongoing One-time only

HAS YOUR DEPARTMENT PREVIOUSLY SUBMITTED THIS PROJECT? _____ Yes No

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: Describe the project in 15 lines or less using Arial 12 point font. State clearly and concisely what difference the project has made.

1 The County of Los Angeles Workforce Development, Aging and Community Services
 2 (WDACS) Area Agency on Aging (AAA) participated in a statewide outreach program to
 3 reach individuals regarding the reversal of the SSI/SSP Cash-Out policy, and CalFresh
 4 application assistance to SSI/SSP recipients, age 60 and older, and disabled adults in
 5 California. The AAA played a key role in providing outreach and application assistance
 6 for the older adult population in many of our program settings. The AAA streamlined the
 7 process for eligible SSI/SSP recipients that were historically ineligible to receive
 8 CalFresh benefits. The AAA also successfully outreached to 42,474 eligible recipients,
 9 screened 5,922 recipients, and submitted applications for 1,833 recipients. By
 10 informing these individuals of their eligibility for CalFresh benefits, it presented an
 11 opportunity to increase food security for this population. The recipients reached by the
 12 AAA, who potentially now have CalFresh benefits, are now able to purchase nutritious
 13 food.
 14
 15

BENEFITS TO THE COUNTY

(1) ACTUAL/ESTIMATED ANNUAL COST AVOIDANCE	(2) ACTUAL/ESTIMATED ANNUAL COST SAVINGS	(3) ACTUAL/ESTIMATED ANNUAL REVENUE	(1) + (2) + (3) = TOTAL ANNUAL ACTUAL/ESTIMATED BENEFIT	SERVICE ENHANCEMENT PROJECT
\$	\$	\$	\$	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

ANNUAL = 12 MONTHS ONLY

SUBMITTING DEPARTMENT NAME AND COMPLETE ADDRESS Workforce Development Aging and Community Services 510 S. Vermont, Eleventh Floor Los Angeles, CA 90020	TELEPHONE NUMBER
PROGRAM MANAGER'S NAME Anna Avdalyan EMAIL: aavdalyan@wdacs.lacounty.gov	TELEPHONE NUMBER 213-200-2584
PRODUCTIVITY MANAGER'S NAME AND SIGNATURE <small>(PLEASE CALL (213) 893-0322 YOU DO NOT KNOW YOUR PRODUCTIVITY MANAGER'S NAME)</small> Stephanie Maxberry <i>Stephanie Maxberry</i>	TELEPHONE NUMBER 213-738-2015 EMAIL smaxberry@wdacs.lacounty.gov
DEPARTMENT HEAD'S NAME AND SIGNATURE Otto Solorzano <i>Otto Solorzano</i>	TELEPHONE NUMBER DATE 06/25/2021

ELECTRONIC, WET, OR SCANNED SIGNATURES ARE ACCEPTABLE

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1st FACT SHEET – LIMITED UP TO 3 PAGES ONLY: Describe the **challenge(s), solution(s), and benefit(s)** of the project **to the County**. What quality and/or productivity-related outcome(s) has the project achieved? Provide measures of success **and specify assessment time frame**. Use Arial 12 point font.

Challenge

In 1974, the federal government combined Federal-State Supplemental Security Income and/or the State Supplementary Payment (SSI/SSP) program. States could increase their SSP grant instead of administering Food Stamps (known today as CalFresh). California opted for this “Cash-Out” policy and increased its monthly SSP grant by \$10.

For the past several decades, seniors and people with disabilities enrolled in State Supplement Security Income and/or State Supplementary Payment (SSI/SSP) have been unable to receive CalFresh, California’s version of the federal Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). CalFresh benefits are intended to provide food security, but some of our vulnerable older adults were excluded from receiving these CalFresh benefits. Instead, they received a \$10 payment, referred to as “Cash-Out.”

However, over time, the value of Food Stamps/CalFresh benefits has increased with the rate of inflation, while the SSI/SSP amount has remained stagnant and lost relative value. Recognizing this inequity, the California Legislature and Governor approved a reversal of the SSI/SSP Cash-Out program in 2018. Effective June 1, 2019, SSI/SSP recipients became eligible to apply for CalFresh benefits.

Solution

On April 2, 2019, in a motion authored by Supervisors Hilda Solis and Janice Hahn, the Board of Supervisors directed the Department of Public Social Services (DPSS), in collaboration with the Public Social Services Commission, the Department of Workforce Development, Aging and Community Services (WDACS), and non-profit organizations, to develop a comprehensive workplan to successfully implement the SSI/SSP Cash-Out Reversal policy change in Los Angeles County.

WDACS applied and received grant funding from its State partner, the California Department of Aging (CDA), to provide CalFresh outreach and application assistance to our target population of older adults who receive SSI/SSP benefits.

The AAA administered the CalFresh Expansion Program in order to provide outreach to SSI/SSP recipients regarding the reversal of the SSI/SSP Cash-Out policy. The CalFresh Expansion Program provided outreach and screening of eligible individuals to determine whether they qualify to submit an application that will determine their

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eligibility to receive CalFresh benefits. The program had two main activities to assist potential clients, outreach and application assistance.

The AAA collaborated and partnered with multiple agencies to achieve these activities and began doing outreach activities by training direct call center staff about CalFresh and educating our callers about the new policy which made SSI/SSP recipients potentially eligible. The AAA further expanded its outreach activities in the community by:

- Utilizing its social media outlets with CalFresh marketing messaging;
- Outreach Events;
- Email communications to all AAA contractors in our vast aging network;
- Flyer distribution to older adult congregate meal sites; and
- Flyer distribution to Adult Protective Services Social Workers to distribute at home calls.

The AAA wanted to ensure that the program was available to all five supervisorial districts; therefore, they released an Invitation for Bids to procure agencies to participate in the CalFresh Program. The AAA was successful in awarding two non-profit agencies to perform CalFresh activities in two supervisorial districts. Additionally, the AAA enlisted the assistance of our WDACS Community Services Centers to also participate in the program. WDACS has 14 Community Services Centers throughout all five supervisorial districts and Community Center staff was educated and trained on the CalFresh Program which resulted in outreaching to their daily patrons at the centers.

The AAA determined that a web-based application assistance database, GetCalFresh.org, was the best method of submitting applications on behalf of potentially eligible SSI/SSP recipients. Every staff member and contractor participating in the program was granted access to the database to submit applications for CalFresh on behalf of the clients. This database benefitted the older and disabled adult community as this would bypass them having to go into their local welfare office and stand in long lines. Once an application was submitted for the clients via the GetCalFresh.org web portal it was routed to the Department of Public Social Services (DPSS) to determine eligibility. If needed, DPSS would reach out to the applicant to schedule a phone interview to gather additional information. If additional documents were needed, a client would mail them to the DPSS office or upload them via the web portal with assistance from one of our program staff or DPSS Intake staff. The application submission process would take on average 10 minutes to submit.

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Benefit

Although participating in CalFresh is not one of the normal programs for the AAA, we felt that it was extremely important to assist with successful implementation of this program in order to reach an underserved population. As a result, the AAA was able to successfully reach thousands of older adults that may not have been informed about the program. At the conclusion of the program, the AAA successfully informed, screened, and processed the following:

- Outreached to 42,474 eligible recipients
- Screened 5,922 recipients
- Submitted 1,833 Applications

It is a well-known fact there is a rising issue of food insecurity among older adults in the County of Los Angeles. Older adults have also had historically low participation rates in the state’s CalFresh program. One of the main reasons for this is that older adults have believed that the application process was too cumbersome and not worth the hassle. The AAA took key steps to streamline the process of submitting the CalFresh application which was once burdened with stigmas of long wait times for application processing and denials. The AAA participating in this statewide initiative resulted in a direct avenue to reach older adults that may not have been aware of the state’s reversal of the cash-out policy for SSI/SSP recipients. The AAA’s application assistance activities essentially brought the program to the clients by creating a path to applying in an environment that an older adult would have been already visiting. The recipients reached by the AAA, who potentially now have CalFresh benefits, are now able to purchase nutritious food.

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Linkage to the County Strategic Plan – 1 page only. Which County Strategic Plan goal(s) does this project address? Explain how. Use Arial 12-point font.

The goals of the CalFresh Expansion Program were to provide outreach and assistance to the SSI/SSP recipients, age 60 and older, and disabled adults. By informing them of their new potential eligibility for CalFresh benefits it presented a tremendous opportunity to increase food security for this population. It also allowed for them to make ends meet and not have to pick between paying bills and buying food. Additionally, CalFresh participation among older individuals is very low; therefore, by promoting an easy way to apply, it potentially led to an increase of services for older adults. With these goals in mind, we feel that the project supported the following Countywide Strategic Plan Strategies:

Strategy I.1 (Increase Our Focus on Prevention Initiatives) by promoting self-sufficiency and independence among older adults.

Strategy I.2 (Enhance Our Delivery of Comprehensive Interventions) by ensuring the delivery of a broad-range of community-based services for older adults; and

Strategy II.2 (Support the Wellness of Our Communities) by increasing services that promote the well-being of older adults.

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COST AVOIDANCE, COST SAVINGS, AND REVENUE GENERATED (ESTIMATED BENEFITS TO THE COUNTY): If you are claiming cost benefits, include a calculation on this page. Please indicate whether these benefits apply in total or on a per unit basis, e.g., per capita, per transaction, per case, etc. You must include an explanation of the County cost savings, cost avoidance or new revenue that matches the numbers in the box. Remember to keep your supporting documentation. Use Arial 12-point font

Cost Avoidance: Costs that are eliminated or not incurred as a result of program outcomes. Please indicate whether these are costs to the County or to other entities.

Cost Savings: A reduction or lessening of expenditures as a result of program outcomes. Please indicate whether these were expenditures by the County or by other entities.

Revenue: Increases in existing revenue streams or new revenue sources to the County as a result of program outcomes.

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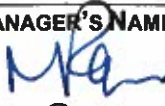
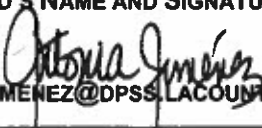
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FOR COLLABORATING DEPARTMENTS ONLY

(For single department submissions, do not include this page)

DEPARTMENT NO. 2 NAME AND COMPLETE ADDRESS	
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SOCIAL SERVICES 12860 CROSSROADS PARKWAY SOUTH, CITY OF INDUSTRY, CA 91746	
PRODUCTIVITY MANAGER'S NAME AND SIGNATURE	DEPARTMENT HEAD'S NAME AND SIGNATURE
MARIA RIVERA  EMAIL: MARIA.RIVERA@DPSS.LACOUNTY.GOV	ANTONIA JIMÉNEZ  EMAIL: ANTONIAJIMENEZ@DPSS.LACOUNTY.GOV
DEPARTMENT NO. 3 NAME AND COMPLETE ADDRESS	
PRODUCTIVITY MANAGER'S NAME AND SIGNATURE	DEPARTMENT HEAD'S NAME AND SIGNATURE
EMAIL: _____	EMAIL: _____
DEPARTMENT NO. 4 NAME AND COMPLETE ADDRESS	
PRODUCTIVITY MANAGER'S NAME AND SIGNATURE	DEPARTMENT HEAD'S NAME AND SIGNATURE
EMAIL: _____	EMAIL: _____
DEPARTMENT NO. 5 NAME AND COMPLETE ADDRESS	
PRODUCTIVITY MANAGER'S NAME AND SIGNATURE	DEPARTMENT HEAD'S NAME AND SIGNATURE
EMAIL: _____	EMAIL: _____
DEPARTMENT NO. 6 NAME AND COMPLETE ADDRESS	
PRODUCTIVITY MANAGER'S NAME AND SIGNATURE	DEPARTMENT HEAD'S NAME AND SIGNATURE
EMAIL: _____	EMAIL: _____
DEPARTMENT NO. 7 NAME AND COMPLETE ADDRESS	
PRODUCTIVITY MANAGER'S NAME AND SIGNATURE	DEPARTMENT HEAD'S NAME AND SIGNATURE
EMAIL: _____	EMAIL: _____