

PRESS RELEASE

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CalFresh Recipients Losing Monthly Emergency Allotment

Federal government ends extra benefits instituted during COVID-19 Public Health Emergency

Orange County, Calif. (February 6, 2023) – Orange County residents will see lower CalFresh benefits starting in April due to the federal government’s enactment of the Fiscal Year 2023 Consolidated Appropriations Act.

The federal law ends the authority for the state of California to issue CalFresh emergency allotments, effective February 28, 2023. Emergency allotments are an extra benefit in addition to regular CalFresh amounts and accounted for roughly \$30 million a month for Orange County residents during the Public Health Emergency. As recipients are paid in arrears, their last emergency allotment will be issued in March payments to their Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) cards.

The California Department of Social Services (CDSS) notified Orange County CalFresh recipients of the end of the emergency allotments. According to CDSS, “[a]s this is a required change, there are no hearing rights related to the loss of Emergency Allotment benefits. No further action is required.” Anyone with questions about the end of the emergency allotments should call the state’s hotline at (888) 445-1955.

Regular CalFresh benefit amounts will not change and will continue to be put on EBT cards within the first 10 days of each month.

While the County of Orange Social Services Agency (SSA) does not have the authority to continue emergency allotments past the expiration date, it does encourage recipients to call the SSA call center. Eligibility specialists can review changes in the household – such as an increase in expenses or a decrease in income – to ensure recipients receive the highest possible amount in benefits. The SSA call center, (800) 281-9799, is available from 6:30 a.m. to 8 p.m. Monday through Friday and 7 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Saturday.

Residents can also call 2-1-1 or visit <http://www.211oc.org> to be connected with food and other resources.

Orange County households interested in applying for CalFresh, Medi-Cal, General Relief and CalWORKs benefits or those wishing to review existing case information are encouraged to visit www.ssa.ocgov.com or use one of the options below:

- <http://www.mybenefitscalwin.org> to apply for or check on existing Medi-Cal, CalFresh, CalWORKs or General Relief public assistance benefits or alternatively through one of the following options:
 - CalFresh only through www.GetCalFresh.org
 - Medi-Cal only through www.coveredca.com

- SSA's Call Center at **(800) 281-9799**
 - Call Center hours are 6:30 a.m. to 8 p.m. Monday through Friday and 7 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Saturday.
- In person, at SSA's offices: <https://www.ssa.ocgov.com/about-us/office-locations/office-location-list>

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