



Food Stamp Program Overview

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Introduction/Agenda

- Food Insecurity & Food Assistance Programs
- Food Stamp Program (FSP)
- Food for LA
- FSP Communication/Marketing And Perception Change – Task Group
- What can we do?



Food Insecurity

- Definition
 - Limited or uncertain availability of nutritionally adequate and safe foods, or
 - Limited or uncertain ability to acquire acceptable foods in socially acceptable ways.
- California
 - Approx. 2.5 million low-income adults can not afford adequate food.

California Food Policy Advocates
Shared Tables, Shared Struggles: The Impact of Adult Food
Insecurity on Families in California
November 2007



Food Insecurity

- Los Angeles
 - More than 1 in 4 households experience Food Insecurity.
2002-2003 LA County Health Survey.
- **Families with the lowest incomes are at greatest risk for food insecurity and obesity.**



Food Assistance Programs

- The Food Stamp Program
 - Los Angeles County Program Access Index (PAI) is 0.395.
- Women, Infants and Children Program (WIC)
- The School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs
- Food Banks and Food Pantries



Increase Food Security

- Key steps to ensure access to healthy, affordable food:
 - Every child starts the day with a school breakfast.
 - Access to healthy, affordable foods
 - improved purchasing power with food stamps
 - healthier school meals.
 - Remove unnecessary barriers to participating in the Food Stamp Program.

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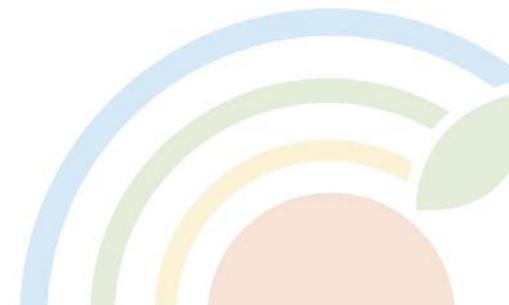
What is the Food Stamp Program?

- The Food Stamp Program (FSP) is the largest food assistance program in the country.
 - 100% Federally funded through USDA.
 - State run program where Federal and State governments share administrative costs.
 - Help for low-income people and their families to purchase food.
- Who can get food stamp benefits?
 - People who do not have enough money to buy the food they need to stay healthy.



What is the Food Stamp Program?

- Who can qualify for food stamp benefits?
 - Low-income people and their family even if someone works full time.
 - Do not have many assets. Exception is for a home or car.
 - Immigrants and children of immigrants may be eligible.
 - Seniors can get food stamp benefits.



What is the Food Stamp Program?

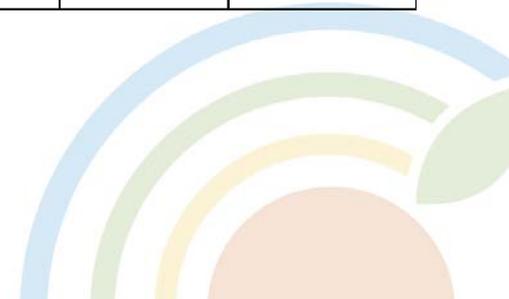
- Who is eligible?
 - Income below the Federal poverty level.
 - Households with an elderly or disabled member.
- How much food stamp benefits can people receive?
 - The amount depends on income, expenses and family size.
 - Most families who receive food stamp benefits get over \$100 per month.



Food for LA

If you have this many people in your family...	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
And make less than this each month...	\$1,107	\$1,484	\$1,861	\$2,238	\$2,615	\$2,992	\$3,369	\$3,746
You could get up to this much in benefits:	\$162	\$298	\$426	\$542	\$643	\$772	\$853	\$975

* Actual amount depends on your case situation.



Food for LA

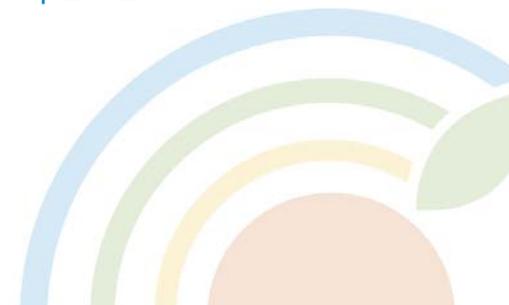
- Example family in Los Angeles:
 - Family of 4 - Income less than \$2,238
 - Rent in LA
 - 2 bedroom apt. approx. \$1,500/mo.
 - Remaining \$738
 - Transportation
 - Health care
 - Education
 - Utilities
 - And food
 - Food Stamp Benefits could be \$542.



Food for LA

Food Stamp Household Profile

Average Age of Head of Household	36.1 years
Average age of child:	8.1 years
Average number of persons per household:	2.6
Recipients who are U.S. citizens:	92%
Recipients who are female heads of households:	74.2%
Household completing at least 12 years of education:	56.6%
Single-person Food Stamp only households:	47%
Food Stamp households that have received food stamps for five years or more:	17%
Food Stamp households with earnings:	21.7%
Average Food Stamp allotment per household:	\$242

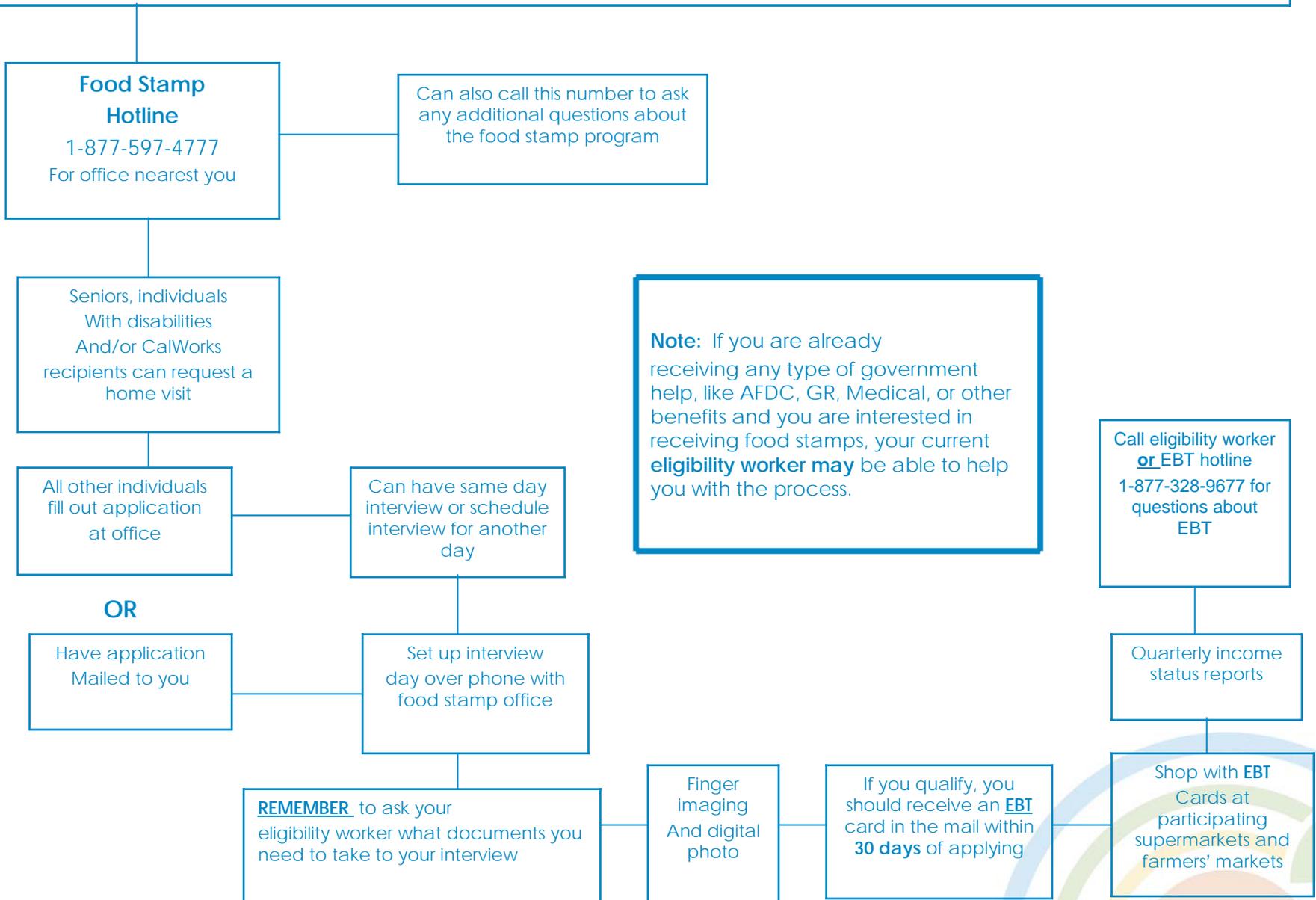


Food for LA

- Advantage Card Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) system.
- Buy food with EBT card from any approved grocery store, farmers' markets, and restaurants.
- EBT card works like an ATM card.

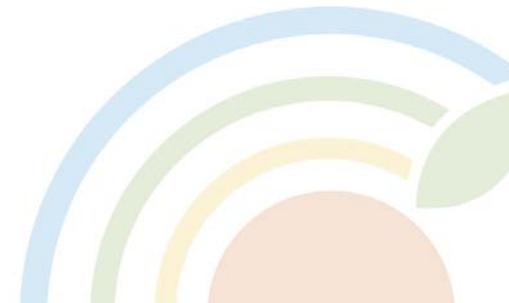


Process of Applying for Food Stamps



Food for LA

- Underutilization of FSP in Los Angeles
 - Approx. 650,000 of the 1.3 million people eligible in Los Angeles do not participate.
 - This equates to about \$948,066,231 in lost food stamp dollars for Los Angeles.
- **Families with the lowest incomes are at greatest risk for food insecurity and obesity.**



Myths and Misconceptions

- **Food Stamps will affect your eligibility for permanent residency.**

- **IMPORTANT NOTICE FOR IMMIGRANTS**

New INS guidelines permit immigrants and their children to use certain non-cash benefits and special purpose cash benefits without affecting their immigration status including:

Food Stamps



Myths and Misconceptions

- You must pay back the benefits that you receive.
- Your child must pay back the benefits.
- You could be deported if DPSS knows you are undocumented.
- If both parents work, your family will not qualify.
- Food Stamps are welfare.



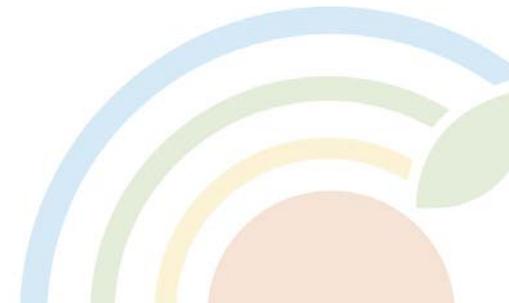
Myths and Misconceptions

- There are not enough Food Stamp benefits for everyone who qualifies.
- Having a bank account disqualifies you.
- You cannot own a home (or a car).
- Finger printing is used to determine your legal immigration status.
- If you are homeless or a senior citizen, you do not qualify.



Food Stamp Outreach throughout California

- *The Network for a Healthy California* partners with
 - California Department of Social Services
 - California Association of Food Banks
 - Numerous community based organizations
- To promote participation in the FSP
 - Educating clients about the FSP
 - Prescreening clients for potential eligibility
 - Assisting clients with application



Food Stamp Outreach throughout California (continued)

- Los Angeles County Organizations
 - Los Angeles Regional Food Bank
 - Hope Net
 - St. Francis Medical Center
 - Harbor Interfaith Services
 - Daughters of Charity
- **Food Stamp Information Line**
1-877-847-3663



July 11, 2007 LA Roundtable

- In Los Angeles, the Food, Nutrition and Consumer Services Under Secretary, Nancy Johner, joined the
 - ▶ Food and Nutrition Service, Food Stamp Program
 - ▶ California Department of Social Services
 - ▶ Los Angeles County Department of Social Services
 - ▶ and various regional public and community partners



Preliminary Action Plan/Recommendations

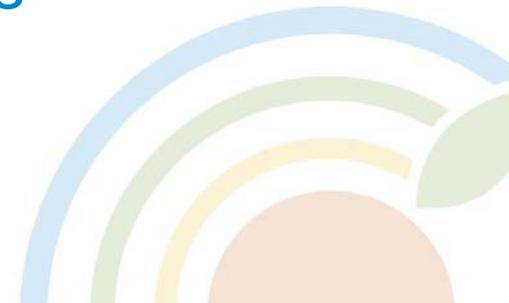
- Address barriers to participation in Los Angeles County and develop action-oriented recommendations:
 - A. Process
 - Hours, Location and Points of Contact
 - Office Operations and Policies
 - Forms and Fingerprinting
 - Retention
 - B. Out-stationed Workers
 - C. Communication/Marketing and Perception Change
 - Messaging
 - Immigration status
 - Partnerships



Communication/Marketing Team: Plans and Recommendations

- Promote FSP with updated resources
- Market FSP in novel ways
- Develop social marketing campaign
- Address barriers of specific populations
- Engage community connections

Goal: Increase participation rates in Los Angeles County



Promote FSP with updated resources

- Developed new brand for Program: Name and logo
- Developed new brochures, tear sheets, and posters
- Available in English and Spanish
- Ordering information



Promote FSP with updated resources

- *Network for Healthy California* brochure: **Need Help Buying Food?**
 - Explains the benefits/Dispels myths
 - Encourages consumption of at least 5 servings of fruits and vegetables everyday
 - Will be updated in late February. See Michael Greene to order.



Promote FSP with updated resources

- A California Medical Association (CMA) Foundation brochure:

Promoting Health
Through the Food
Stamp Program

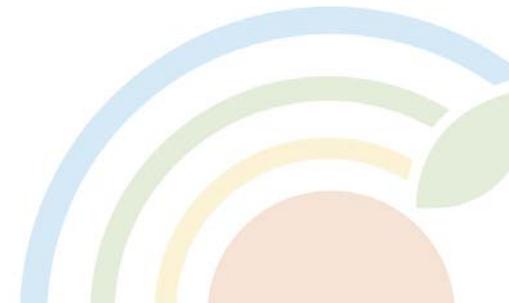


- See Michael Greene to order



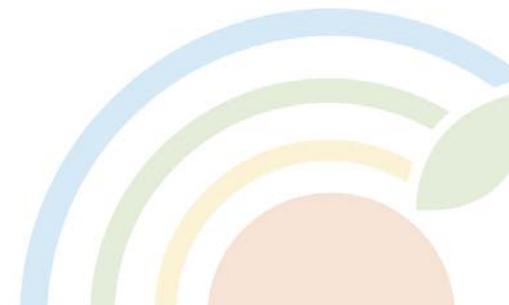
Market FSP in novel ways

- Placing pamphlets in utility bills of specific customers and in customer service lobbies
- Marketing at WIC offices and through MediCal applications
- Building Retail Partnerships
- Exploring Employment Development Department offices
- Marketing to intermediaries



Social Marketing Campaign

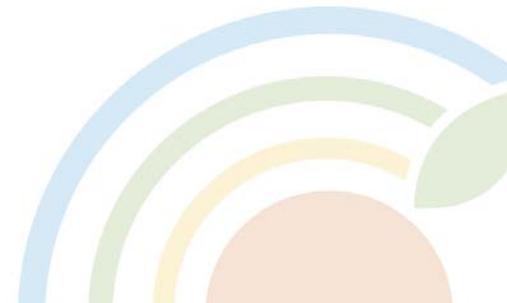
- 2007 Advertising Campaign:
 - 60 second radio spots
 - Bus placards (outside and inside)
- USDA radio campaign currently on air
- 2008 Advertising Campaign:
 - Develop telethon with Univision
 - Find FS Champions
- Effectiveness and tracking concerns



Address Barriers

- Dispel Myths
- Target sources of misinformation
- Disassociate FSP with Welfare

- Reviewing data from past focus groups and assessments

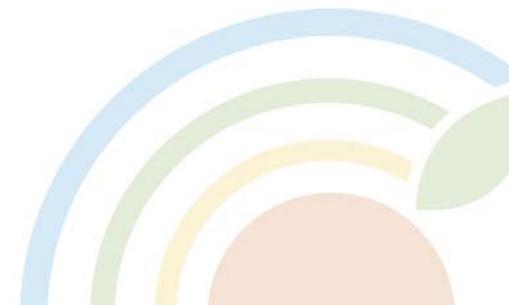


Engage Community Connections

CBOs/FBOs Application Assistance Program

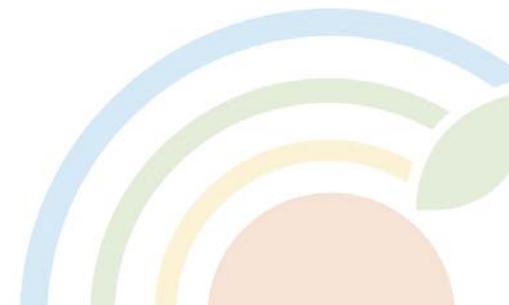
- CBOs/FBOs can process FS applications
- Applications from CBOs will have finger printing waived until a later time
- Support intra-agency connections and communications

Outreach Specialist at your event – contact Rosalind Taylor at rosalindtaylor@dpss.lacounty.gov



Engage Community Connections

- **Promote FSP through MediCal workers.**
 - MediCal workers outreach at 90 non-traditional sites
 - MediCal workers will promote food stamp program



Engage community connections

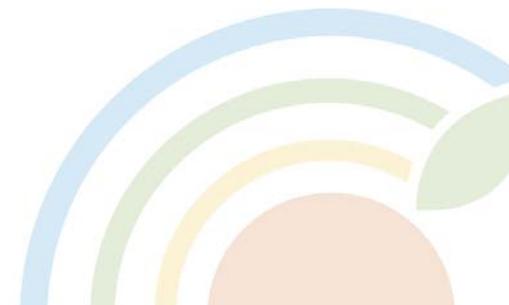
Enhance partnership with consulates

- Public Health program named Ventanilla de Salud
 - Mini presentation on an outside walkway
 - Address barriers and promote community organizations
 - Offer print materials
- Community connection as the marketing tool.



What can we do?

- Talk about FSP with intermediaries and consumers.
- Support access to tools and champions.
- Promote Food Stamp Program with Los Angeles partners.
- Share success stories.



Thank you!

Contact Information

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