

Upcoming Changes to CalFresh Benefits: October and November 2013

This document provides CalFresh advocates and outreach partners with basic information about the upcoming changes to CalFresh monthly benefit levels as a result of cost of living adjustments and the termination of the ARRA stimulus.

What is a Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA)?

Every year, SNAP (known as CalFresh in California) benefit levels are adjusted to reflect changes in the cost of living. The maximum benefit is adjusted, along with changes to the standard deduction, shelter deduction, income test thresholds (gross and net), and the D-SNAP allotment. By law, States will make these adjustments October 1, 2013.

What is the ARRA benefit increase?

In 2009, the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA, also known as the federal stimulus package) was passed in order to foster economic activity during the recession. Under ARRA, the maximum SNAP allotment was increased to provide larger benefit amounts to clients. This increase in benefits is expected to end on November 1, 2013.

What will change and when?

CalFresh recipients will see two changes in their benefit amounts during the fall of 2013.

- On October 1 most households will see their benefits *increase* slightly to reflect the new COLA and other annual benefit changes.
- On November 1 most households will see their benefits *decrease* due to the end of the temporary ARRA benefit increase.

How much will CalFresh benefits change?

Several factors determine CalFresh monthly benefit allotments such as income, household size, and expenses. The following table explains how benefits may change in November (with the end of the ARRA stimulus) for households that have no income. *These numbers do not reflect changes in the COLA, which will impact each household's benefits differently, depending on their income, expenses, etc.*

SNAP Maximum Monthly Benefit Levels

Household Size	October 1, 2013 (ARRA stimulus levels)	November 1, 2013 (June 2013 TFP levels)	Difference
1	\$200	\$189	-\$11
2	\$367	\$347	-\$20
3	\$526	\$497	-\$29
4	\$668	\$632	-\$36
5	\$793	\$750	-\$43
6	\$952	\$900	-\$52
Add on	\$150	\$142	-\$8

How will clients be notified of these changes?

Clients will be notified by the State of California. They may also hear about these changes via the news, posters in local offices, from CalFresh retailers, or through a notice sent via mail. Please use the information in this document to explain the upcoming changes to your clients and clarify any questions they may have.

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