

CalFresh & Immigrant Populations

CFPA & CDSS CalFresh Forum

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Issues Affecting Access to CalFresh

- **Immigrant eligibility rules**
- **Privacy**, Confidentiality and Verification
- Concerns about "**Public charge**"
- Concerns about **Sponsors**
- Linguistic and Cultural Competence
- Logistical Barriers
- The "Climate"

Questions re Status & SSN

- Agencies directed not to ask unnecessary questions about immigration status or SSNs
- Immigration status and SSNs required only of individuals seeking benefits themselves
- Information provided to USCIS may be used only to determine eligibility for benefits
- Parents seeking services for children must provide proof of income, but can use alternative methods

Public Charge

- Use of CalFresh is not relevant in public charge determinations
- Does not affect applications for citizenship (unless used fraudulently)
- Questions asked on immigration forms may deter families
- Can come up in discretionary decisions

Sponsor Deeming

- Generally applies only to lawful permanent residents (LPRs) who immigrated via a family-based petition
- Income/resources of sponsor may be added to immigrant's in determining eligibility
- Can render immigrant over-income for the benefit, even if receive nothing from sponsor
- There are exceptions to deeming!

Deeming in CalFresh

- **CFAP:** 3 years, unless DV survivor, indigent, or sponsor is member of CFAP household
- **CalFresh:** until citizen or credit for 40 quarters of work in US, unless:
 - **Child** under 18
 - Sponsor is **member of CalFresh household**
 - **Domestic violence survivor**
 - **Indigent** (hunger or homelessness)

Indigence Exemption

- Would go hungry or homeless without assistance: household income + contributions, including in-kind assistance is < 130% of federal poverty level
- Renewable for 12 month periods
- Agency reports name of immigrant & sponsor to USCIS Policy Division
- No known consequence, but deters families, who may choose whether to seek this exemption

FNS Resources

- **SNAP Non-Citizen Guidance**
- **Public Charge Letter**
- **Tri-agency Guidance regarding questions on application forms**
- **Letter on Verification of Sponsor's Income**
- **Letter on Proving Income**

NILC/CIPC Resources

- Immigrant Eligibility table
- Materials on Public Charge
- Benefits for Sponsored Immigrants
- Questions & Answers re Food Stamps
- Survivors of Trafficking, Domestic Violence and other Serious Crimes