

CalFresh Forum 2019

All In, All Together



Implementing the ABAWD Time Limit

Jared Call

CFPA

Alexis Fernandez

Chief, CalFresh Policy Branch, CDSS

Francesca Costa

San Francisco-Marin Food Bank

Peri Weisberg

San Francisco County Human Services Agency

Implementing the ABAWD Time Limit

Tracy Wetherby

Second Harvest Food Bank of Santa Clara and San Mateo Counties

Roseann Berthron-Arechiga,

Santa Clara County Social Services Agency

Caitlin Sly

Food Bank of Contra Costa & Solano

Carolyn Foudy

Contra Costa County Department of Employment and Human Services

Becky Gershon (Moderator)

California Association of Food Banks

USDA Proposed Rule Limiting Waivers & Individual Exemptions

- Would greatly limit state flexibility to obtain area waivers
- Would end 15 percent exemption carryover and accrued exemptions
- **Comments Due April 2!**

Stop the Trump Administration from taking food from 755,000 people

The USDA has proposed a rule that would eliminate the flexibility states have always had to waive time limits on SNAP/CalFresh in areas with insufficient jobs for low-income workers. Under the rule, approximately 755,000 SNAP participants would be newly subject to a time limit, meaning if a childless adult (aged 18 to 49) can't find and maintain employment (at least 20 hrs/week), they will only be eligible for 3 months of SNAP benefits over three years.



CFPA.net

#HandsOffSNAP

No one should be punished for lack of opportunity.

Act Now to Protect CalFresh!

Comments due by April 2nd, 2019

Tell the USDA why taking CalFresh away from unemployed and underemployed Californians would harm your community.

CFPA Template Comments: bit.ly/noSNAPlimits

Submit Comments Here: frac.org/timelimitcomments



ABAWD Time Limit: Implementation Update

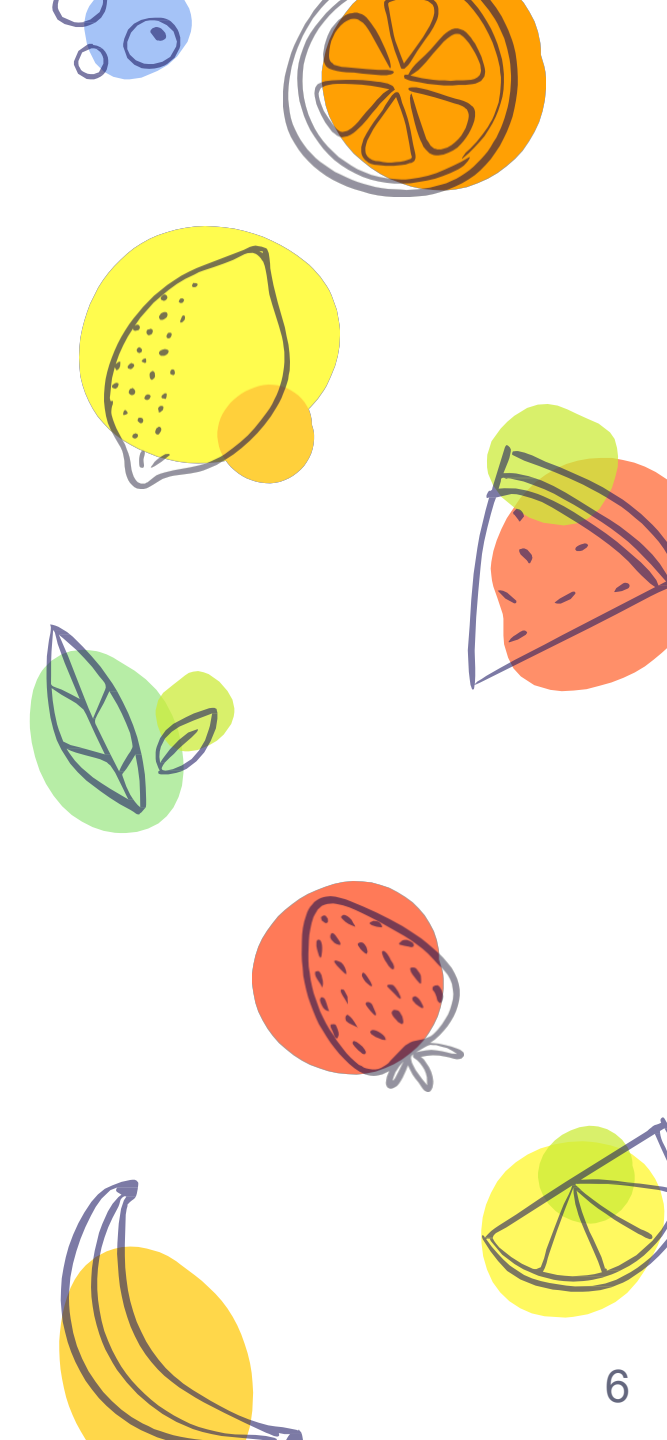
Alexis Fernández, Chief, CalFresh Policy Bureau

California Department of Social Services

CalFresh Forum 2019

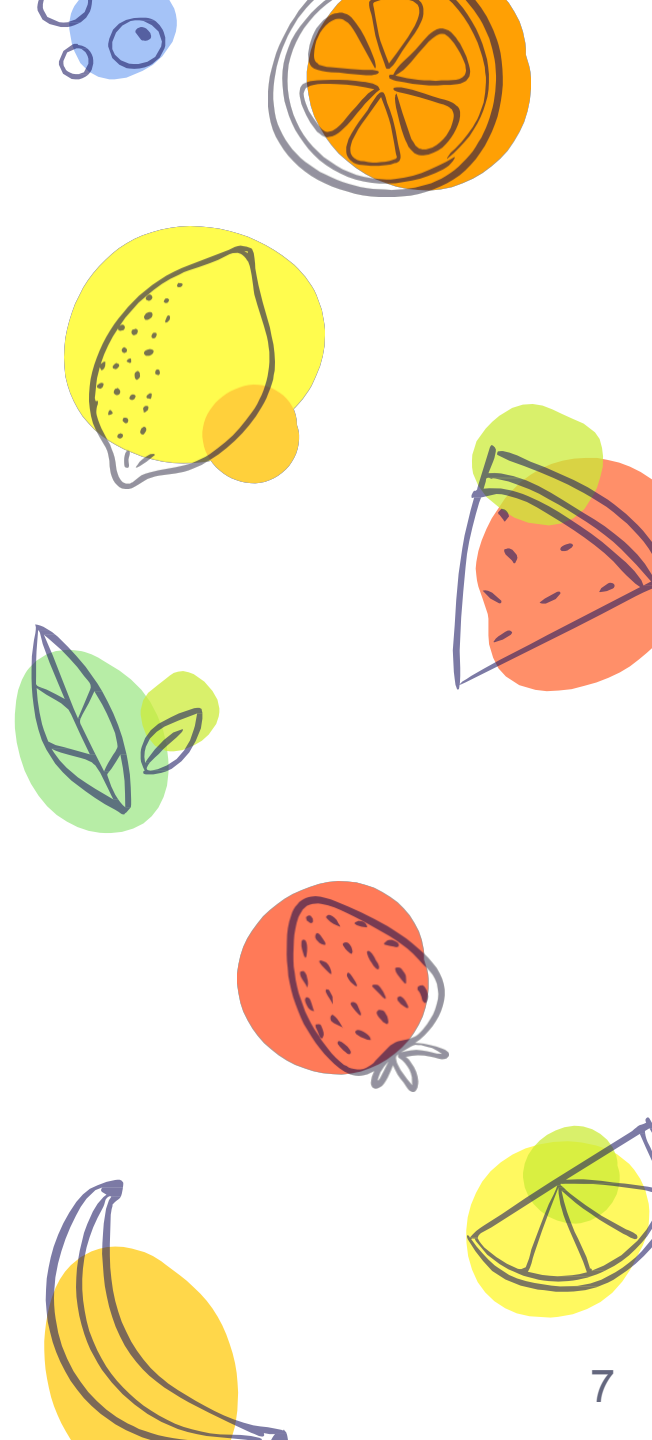
California's Timeline

January 1, 2017	Fixed statewide clock began
September 1, 2018	Statewide waiver expired, time limits began in three counties: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• San Francisco• San Mateo• Santa Clara
Present	Implementation planning continues – workgroups, reconvening for special projects, ongoing county technical assistance, staff training, and more...
September 1, 2019	Next wave of counties anticipated to implement the ABAWD time limit: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Marin• Alameda• Contra Costa
January 1, 2020	Fixed statewide clock resets



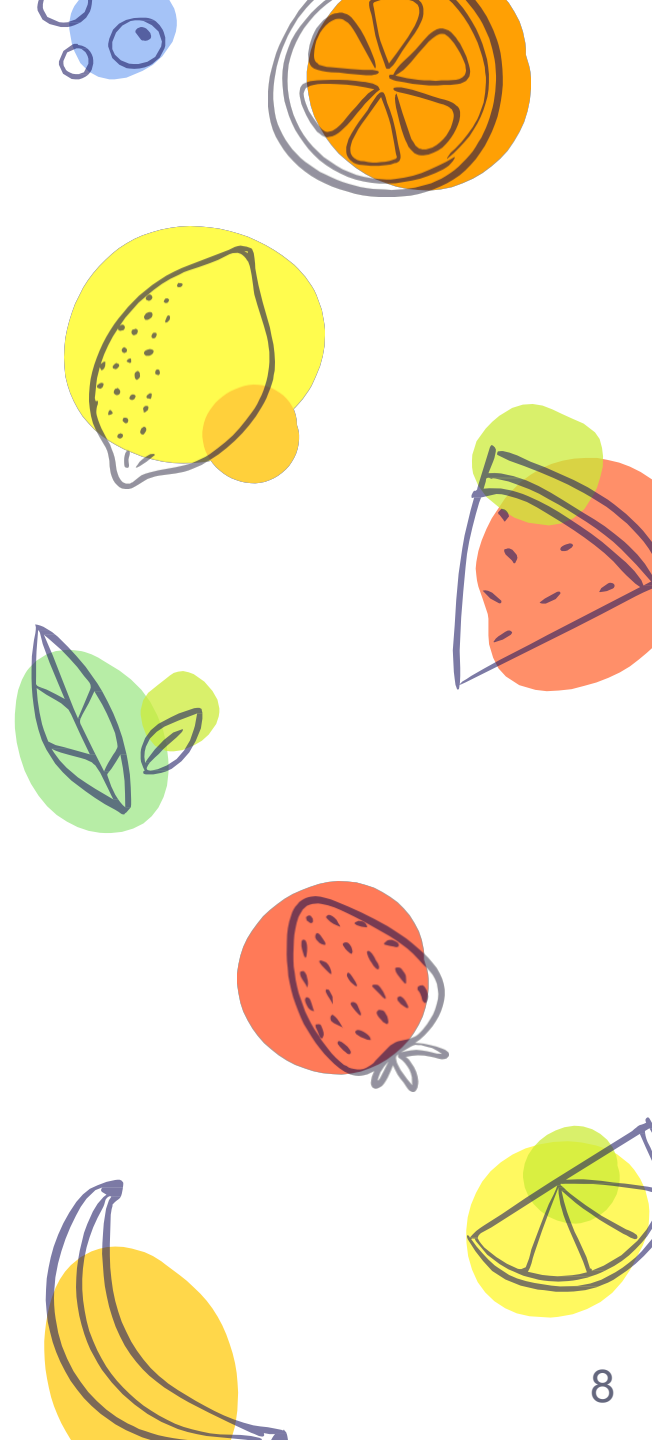
California's Implementation Planning

- × Current Workgroups
 - Executive Leadership
 - Technical Assistance
 - All Stakeholders (as needed)
 - Automation
- × County Trainings
 - ABAWD Road Shows



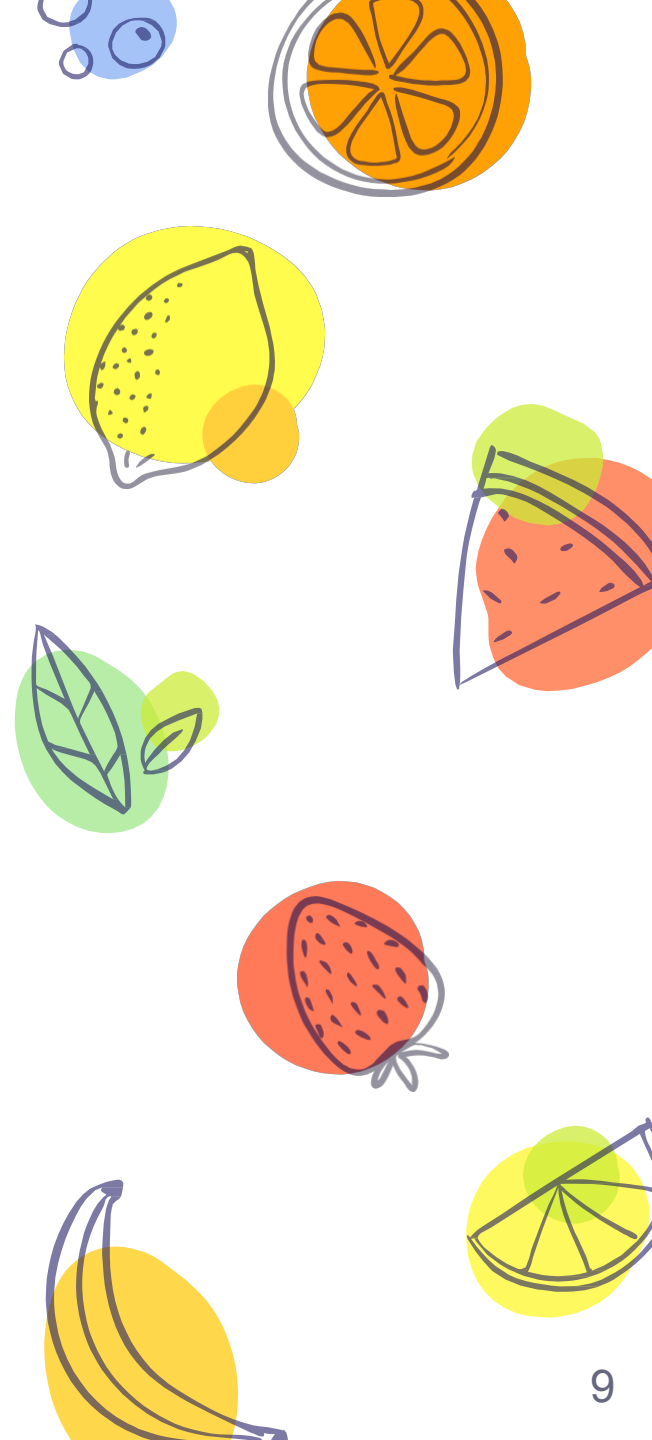
Up Next...

- × Release of ABAWD Handbook Version 2.0
- × ABAWD Management Evaluations
- × Identifying Measures and Outcomes
- × Farm Bill Implementation
- × Assessing Proposed Rule Change
 - ABAWD Waivers
 - 15 Percent Exemptions



Hot Topic: 15 Percent Exemption Policy

- × Individual exemptions
- × One 15 percent exemption = one month of benefits for one ABAWD
- × Maximum flexibility – allocation criteria includes, but it not limited to:
 - Overissuance/error protection
 - Eligibility extension
 - Special circumstances



15 Percent Exemption Allocation

FNS



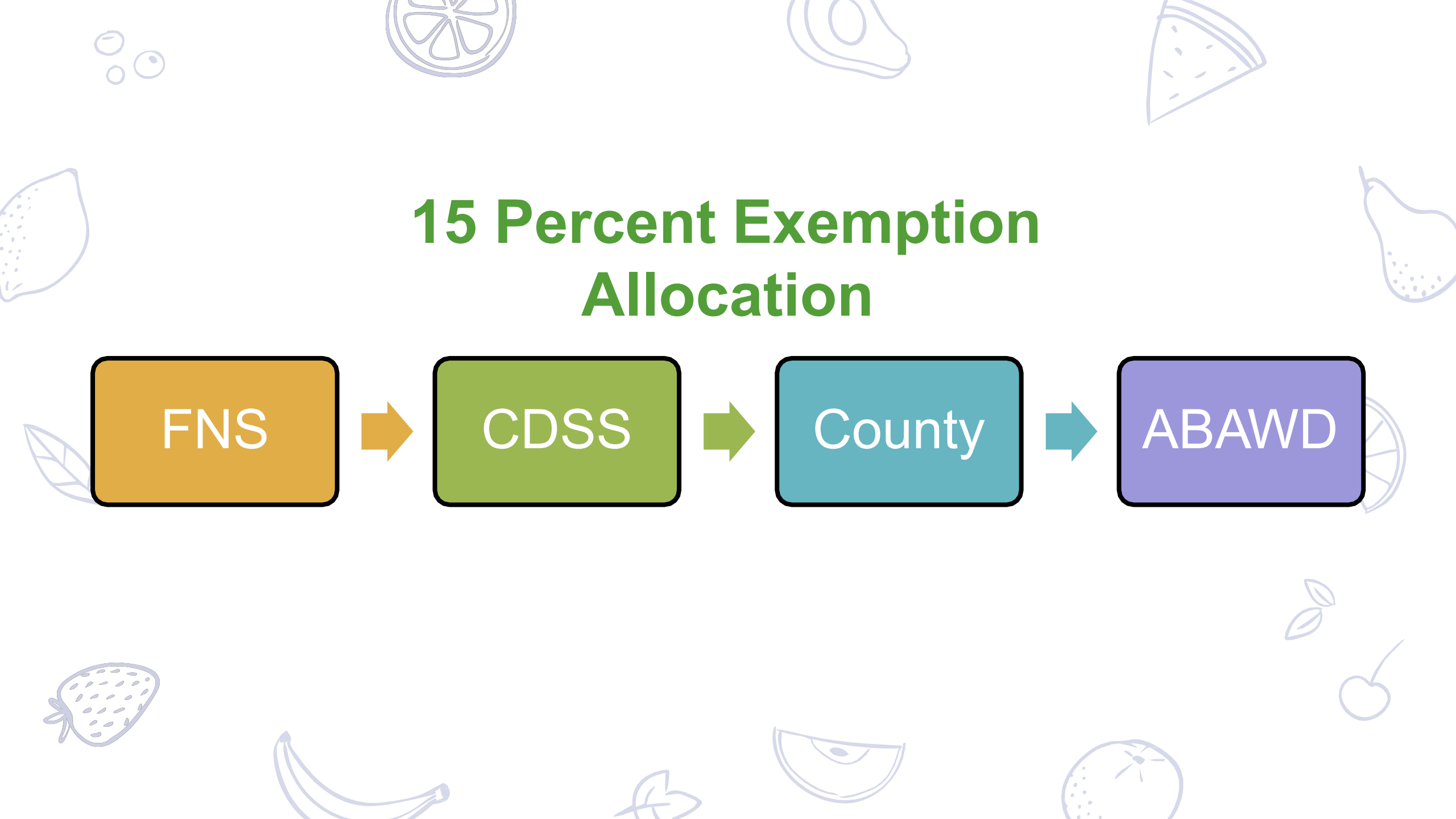
CDSS



County



ABAWD





Questions?

Contact the ABAWD Squad:

Amber Bonilla, Manager | Amber.Bonilla@dss.ca.gov

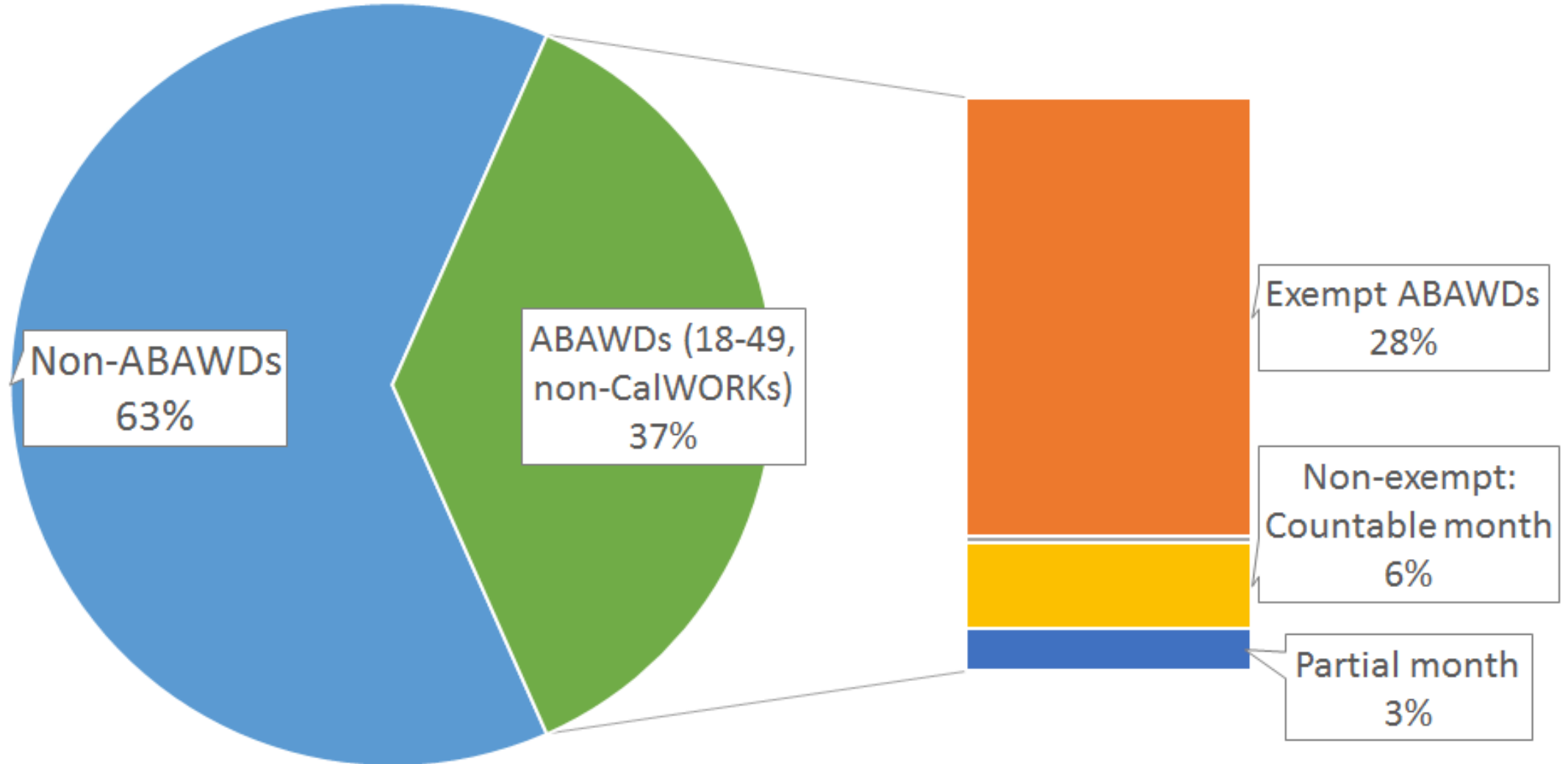
Sheng Vue, Analyst | Sheng.Vue@dss.ca.gov

Hares Rahimzei, Analyst | Hares.Rahimzei@dss.ca.gov

San Francisco ABAWD Implementation

Peri Weisberg, San Francisco Human Services Agency
Francesca Costa, San Francisco-Marin Food Bank

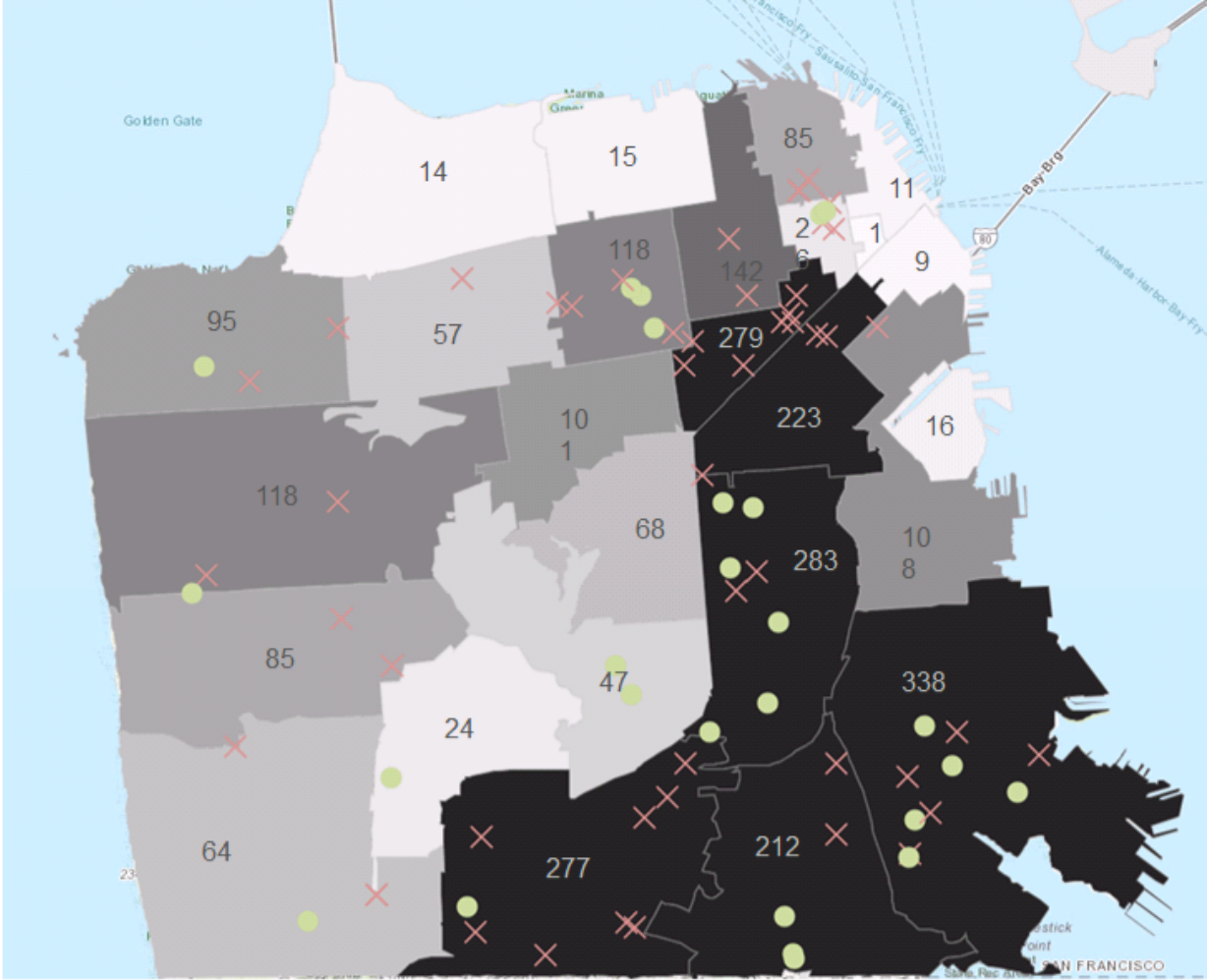
San Francisco CalFresh Population September 2018



Profile of at-risk population

- **64%** male (gender at birth)
- **89%** English as primary language
- Ethnic origin:
 - **24%** White
 - **22%** African American
 - **14%** Chinese or other Asian/Pacific Islander
 - **13%** Latino/Hispanic
 - **27%** Unknown/Other

Understanding the impact



Source: SF-Marin Food Bank, SF Human Resources Agency, updated August 2018

Training county staff

- 3-month pilot of screening and referral (to E&T) to inform training/process
- Wide-scale screening and referral began prior to September
- Specialty ABAWD eligibility unit
- Key learnings:
 - Understanding workforce services available to clients
 - Identifying data sources for exemptions

Training for community based organizations

- May '18: Food Bank folded ABAWD rules into application assister trainings
- July '18: California Association of Food Banks led interactive trainings for staff
- August '18: Food Bank hosted a training on ABAWD rules for our network
- Key learnings:
 - Role playing is invaluable; staff need time to think through and practice how to sensitively ask screening questions in second languages
 - We do not need to overload clients with questions that may be answered through the regular CalFresh application process
 - Person first language is key (and takes practice)!

HSA communication strategy

- Accessible, plain-language collateral for clients sent via mail and given in person
 - Useful for partners and staff too!
- [Webpage](#) with key messaging and resources for clients and partners
- Community forum co-hosted with the Food Bank

Food Bank communication strategy

- CalFresh Forum brought CBOs and City agencies together
 - Support from Center of Budget and Policy Priorities was invaluable
 - Over 100 attendees from various sectors brought insight to the issue
 - Small group discussion questions brought folks into the process

Discussion question #1



If in early December, a client walks into your agency saying that their CalFresh benefits have been discontinued, what steps would you take to assist them?

Discussion question #2



Think through the neighborhoods and communities in which you have the strongest connections. What other agencies, partners, and community leaders provide an opportunity to communicate these changes to impacted clients?

Discussion question #3



What are your next steps for sharing the information you learned here within your own networks and community?

Food Bank communication strategy

- Monthly check-ins between the Food Bank and HSA
 - Shared notes helped move such a multifaceted project forward
 - Shared Q&A google doc ensured questions wouldn't be asked multiple times
- Collateral!

Employment & training

- Employment & training programs are complex - some training/education is required for staff to make effective referrals
- “Warm up” handoffs to reduce barriers
- Aligning General Assistance work requirements eases compliance for dual clients
- Employment and training programs require thoughtful structure, incentives, and supports. CalFresh ABAWD rules aren’t a substitute!

Employment & training

- A whole new world for CalFresh Outreach staff!
 - More acronyms, more layers of programs
- The CalFresh team's intern compiled an E&T resource guide for San Francisco
 - Who can the program serve?
 - Is it paid or unpaid?
 - How should we best refer clients?

Insights we gleaned

- Don't discourage any applicants - it's possible to identify an exemption for the vast majority of clients if you look hard enough.
- Contacting clients is hard, but make use of case documentation and other data sources to identify exemptions and work activities.
- Prepare for a learning curve when connecting clients with employment & training opportunities.
- Outreach staff should think about folding in screening for ABAWD time limits after all other elements of eligibility have been considered.
- Use this opportunity to work closely with and support your county!

Looking forward

- Considering opportunities to refer clients with disabilities (impacted by ABAWD rules or not) to apply for SSI, especially if advocacy resources are available.
- Food Bank will begin conversations again about how to prepare to absorb anyone who may lose benefits in August
- While implementing this policy was nobody's first choice, the process fostered a deeper relationship between HSA and the Food Bank, and we continue to build on that as we prepare for next August!

Thank you!

Peri Weisberg

Senior Analyst, Planning Unit
San Francisco Human Services Agency

peri.weisberg@sfgov.org

Francesca Costa

CalFresh Outreach Program Manager
San Francisco-Marin Food Bank

fcosta@sfmfoodbank.org

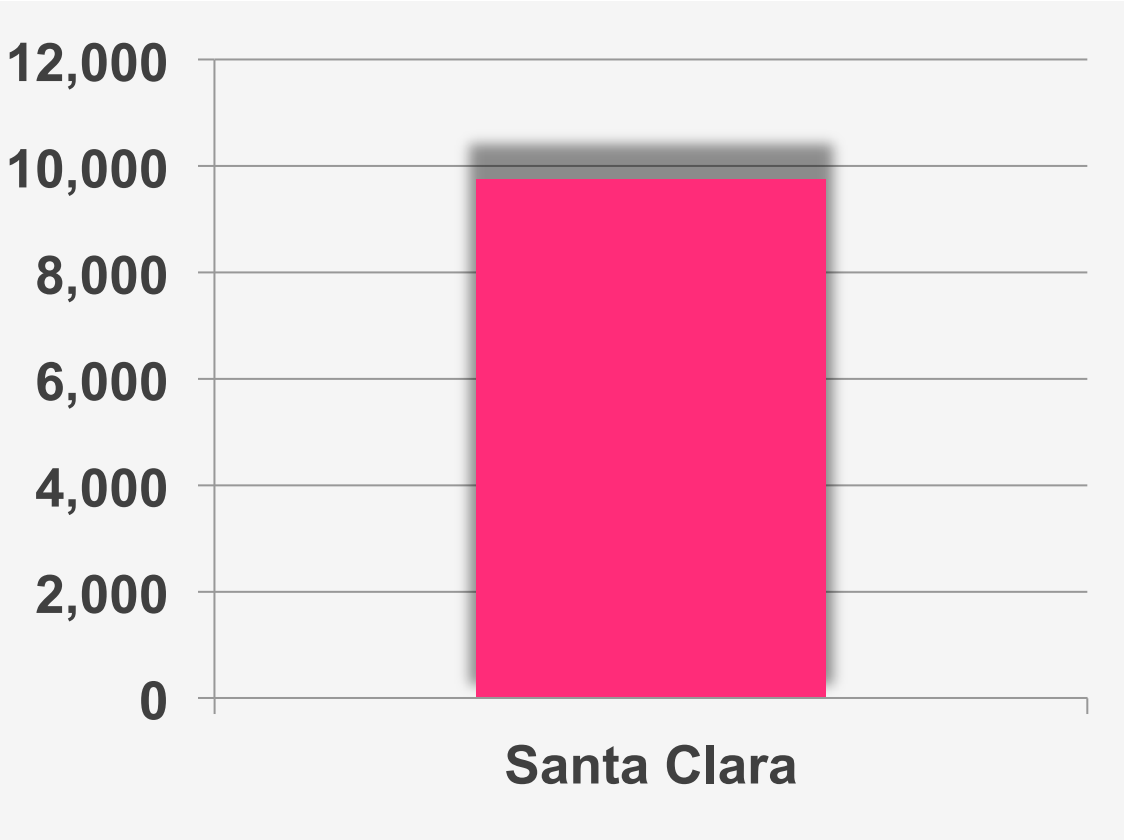
W E L C O M E



ABAWD Implementation in First Wave County

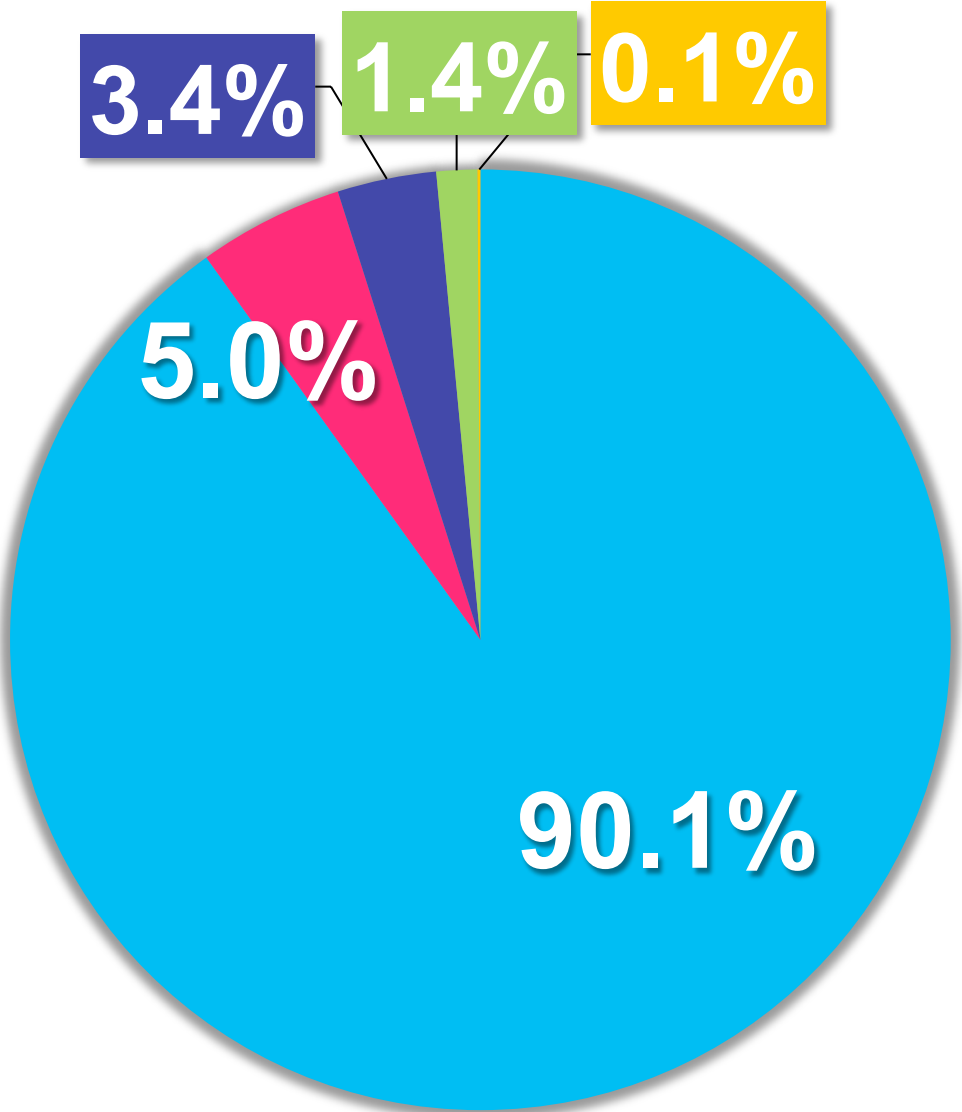
Santa Clara County

A B A W D C o u n t s



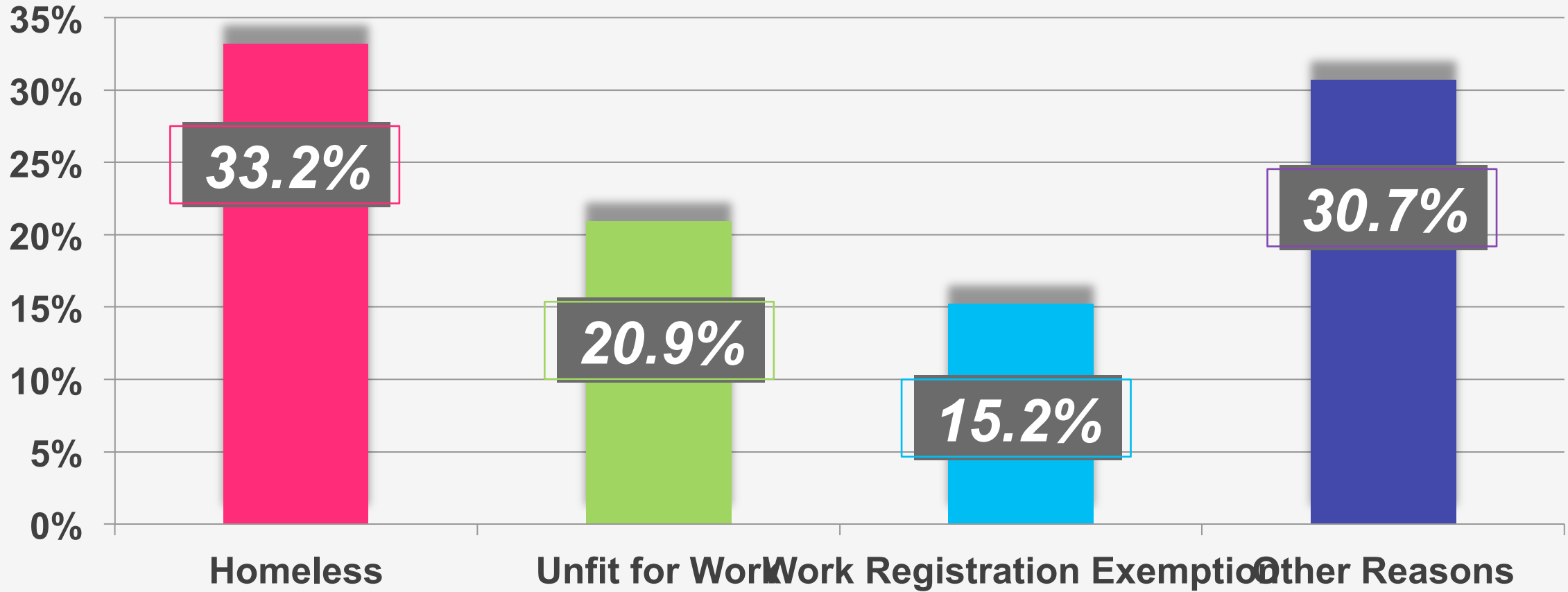
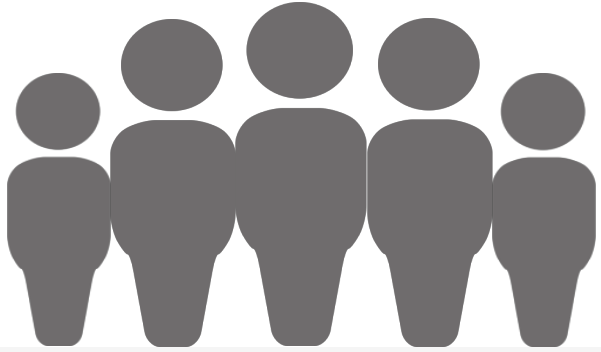
Santa Clara 9,765


A B A W D in Santa Clara



- *Exemption - 90.10%*
- *Not Meeting Work Req - 5%*
- *Meet Work Req: Thru E&T - 3.40%*
- *Meet Work Req: Thru Work Hours - 1.40%*
- *No Clock Status - 0.10%*

ABAWD Exemptions



A person in a dark suit and white trousers is captured in motion, running on a modern architectural walkway. The walkway features a series of parallel concrete slabs and a central raised section. The background shows a large, open space with a grid ceiling and bright lighting from the left, creating a sense of speed and urgency. The overall color palette is dominated by blues and greys, with a warm glow from the left side.

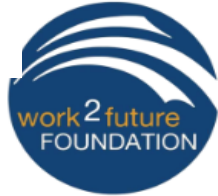
GETTING READY FOR LAUNCH DATE
SEPTEMBER 1, 2018



Expanded resources to serve ABAWD population within the CalFresh Employment & Training (CFET)



Contracted with Community Based Organizations



Created an Internal CalFresh Employment Services (CFES) Unit



WORKGROUPS DEVELOPED NEW
ABAWD BUSINESS PROCESSES



WORKGROUPS INCLUDED:

- *Eligibility*
- *CalFresh Employment Services (CFES)*
- *CalFresh Employment & Training (CFET)*
- *Staff Development*
- *Information Systems*
- *Data Research*

**PILOTED NEW BUSINESS
PROCESS PRIOR TO LAUNCH
DATE**



**Trained all Eligibility
Staff ABAWD
Regulation and New
Business Processes**



DEVELOPED OUTREACH CAMPAIGN

✓ **Community Awareness**

- *Held Informational Community Events*
- *Distributed Informational Fliers*
- *Trained Community Based Organizations (CBO)*
- *Press Release and Interviews*

✓ **Client Awareness**

- *Held Informational Client Events*
- *Sent Informational Notices and Fliers*
- *Sent Text, Email and Robo Calls*
- *Screened All Clients for ABAWD Exemptions*
- *Continue to Screen and Inform Clients*



A B A W D



KEY CHALLENGES

- Client Engagement of ABAWDs that are not exempt or do not meet the work requirements
- State granting 15% Exemption in November contradicted the marketing message of the past 6 months, lost credibility
- System functionality



- Exempted **90.1%** of all ABAWDs
 - ✓ Screened clients
 - ✓ CBOs spread the word and informed clients to contact the county



Community Outreach Efforts

- Hosted presentation by SSA for our partners and Safety Net
- Our staff (field & phone) got trained to speak about ABAWD with clients
- Updated FCAAP training
- Sent information out to all partner organizations about change





Twweatherby@shfb.org

408-694-0018

Roseann.Berthron-Arechiga@ssa.sccgov.org

408-755-7545

THANK
YOU



A B A W D

CONTRA COSTA COUNTY

2019

Community Communication

<https://ehsd.org>

Instructional Video

Who is an ABAWD

ABAWD Exemptions

Screening Tool

Download for community partners to identify and submit exemptions

Community Communication

<https://ehsd.org>

- Mailings to potential ABAWDS-informational Flyer

May

June

July

August

EHSD Staff Readiness

- Currently reviewing “potential” ABAWDs for Exemptions.
- Program Analysts and Staff Development have met with CalFresh Staff for sneak peek at ABAWD.
- March-staff begin ABAWD exemption reviews during new applications and recertifications.
- Formal ABAWD training scheduled for July and August.

Food Bank of Contra Costa and Solano

- Three pronged strategy:
 - Maximize Exemptions
 - Connect clients to Employment & Training (E&T)
 - Create volunteer opportunities

Food Bank of Contra Costa and Solano

- Community Convenings – inform stakeholders about the time limit and gather input
- Gathered three workgroups:
 - Employment and Training
 - Maximizing Exemptions, Community Education, Volunteer Opportunities
 - SSI Enrollment

Food Bank of Contra Costa and Solano

- Create a community training for CBOs:
 - Homeless providers/shelters
 - Domestic violence providers
 - Healthcare partners
 - Etc.
- Hired an ABAWD Navigator – outreach worker working specifically on potential ABAWD population
- Increased number of E&T providers in Contra Costa County – Community Colleges

Food Bank of Contra Costa and Solano

- Advocacy:
 - Mobilize public comment against rule change
 - AB 1022 (Wicks) – create state-funded bank of exemptions for those timed off federal SNAP benefits

Thank You

Audience Q & A