

# Research for Change



California has one of the world's **largest economies** and the country's highest rate of **child poverty.**



**4+ million Californians,** our friends, family, neighbors, and co-workers, cannot afford enough to eat.

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We strive toward an **equitable, hunger-free California.**



**What we understand, we can change.** CFPA harnesses research to illuminate problems, develop solutions, and measure impact. Our 2018 research agenda tackles persistent inequities and emerging challenges facing Californians in need. We envision our state as a place of wellbeing and opportunity for all. We commit to evidence-based policy advocacy in pursuit of that vision.

## An Invitation

Your input and insights helped shape this agenda. We are grateful. Now, please join us in bringing this work to life. We will need the partnership of funders, administrators, elected leaders, community-based organizations, researchers, and all stakeholders in pursuing these questions to guide policy change.

## Food & Shelter

Housing costs are the single largest expense for Californians throughout the state. These costs leave many without enough resources to cover other basic needs like food, medicine, and childcare. While the State pursues long-term solutions to the housing crisis, more immediate solutions are needed to counter California's harmfully high housing costs.

CalFresh provides benefits for struggling Californians to purchase food. Current CalFresh rules are supposed to account for housing costs when determining who is eligible and the amount of benefits due. But these rules have not changed to reflect California's extraordinarily high housing costs.

We need to understand

- How housing costs affect the number of households that are eligible for CalFresh;
- How housing costs affect the adequacy of CalFresh benefits in truly meeting people's food needs;
- How these measures vary by household characteristics and region; and
- What policy changes would make CalFresh more responsive to housing costs – and levels of need – across the state.

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## Immigrants & Hunger

As neighbors and loved ones, parents and children, workers and students, California's immigrants are deeply rooted in communities across the state. When everyone – regardless of immigration status – is able to meet their basic needs, we build a stronger, more productive California. To make California a place of real opportunity for all, we must guarantee access to nutritious, affordable food by protecting and strengthening critical programs like CalFresh, WIC, Head Start, and school meals.

We need to understand

- How many immigrants and mixed-status families struggle with food insecurity;
- How many eligible immigrants and mixed-status families are reached by nutrition programs;
- How nutrition programs affect – and can better serve – immigrants and mixed-status households; and
- How all of these measures vary by household characteristics and geographic location.

## Inclusive Access

Free and low-cost school meals help protect students from the harmful effects of poverty and food insecurity. School meal programs nourish children and help their families stretch limited household budgets. These programs should be inclusive of all California students in need – and that can start with a school meal application that is accessible and inviting to all.

We need to understand

- What elements of current school meal applications -- from language to literacy to fears about immigration status -- keep eligible students from applying;
- What content and design changes are necessary to better reach all students, especially eligible immigrants and children from mixed-status families; and
- How a redesigned application changes school meal enrollment as well as perceptions of school meal programs.

## Join Us!

To ask questions, share ideas, or otherwise partner on research for change, please contact Tia Shimada at [tia@cfpa.net](mailto:tia@cfpa.net) or 510.433.1122 ext 109.

