

CalFresh for College Students - FAQ

Eligibility Questions

Can both undergraduate and graduate students be eligible for CalFresh?

Yes, both undergraduate and graduate students can be eligible for CalFresh if they meet a student eligibility exemption (a list can be found on our CalFresh student eligibility guide).

Does a student need to be working in a work study job to qualify for CalFresh?

No, the student does not need to be working in a work study job to qualify for the work study exemption. If the student is eligible for work study and intends to find a work study placement, they will qualify for this exemption and could be eligible if they meet the other CalFresh requirements. However, if the client refuses work study or a work study placement, they will no longer qualify for this exemption but may be eligible under other student exemption rules.

**Additional information on work study can found in the COVID-19 section of the FAQ*

Does income earned from a work study job need to be reported?

Yes, all income, including income earned from a work study job, should be reported. However, this income should not be accounted for the monthly income limit.

Can undocumented/international students be eligible for CalFresh?

Undocumented students and international students here on a student Visa are not eligible for CalFresh since they are not of qualifying legal status. However, some schools have programs dedicated to international and undocumented students. Reach out to your school to find out about additional resources available.

Will receiving CalFresh benefits affect my immigration status?

No, receiving CalFresh benefits will not affect your immigration status. Please refer to our page for more information about how CalFresh is safe to use:

<https://www.sandiegohungercoalition.org/safe>

What happens if the student has a roommate? Do they have to apply together?

It will depend on how the household prepares meals. If the student and the roommate cook and prepare meals together, they must apply together. If they do not purchase and prepare meals together, then they can apply separately.

What happens during the summer months? Are students still eligible for CalFresh?

The student status is reported at application and at the recertification. If a student is determined to be an eligible college student during the initial application, they will continue to be eligible even during the summer and winter breaks. Please note work study students must be working over breaks to maintain eligibility unless they meet another student exemption.

What if a college student wants to apply for CalFresh during summer/an academic break?



If the student is taking summer classes, then that student would apply for CalFresh as a college student. If the student is not enrolled their college's summer courses, then they can still apply for CalFresh, but not as a college student.

What happens for students who live on campus during the school year but during the summer/winter breaks leave San Diego County or California? Are they still eligible during these breaks?

These students will still be eligible to use their CalFresh benefits in another county or state during these breaks and will continue to be considered San Diego residents as they are considered visiting and intend to come back to their permanent residence. Students should contact the Access Call Center (1-866-262- 9881) and inform the County about any mailing address changes to ensure the student does not miss any relevant letters from the County about their case.

If the student does not intend to return to San Diego County but they still live in California, they should contact the County about transferring their case to another county. If the student is leaving California permanently, they will need to reapply in the new state.

What is LPIE?

LPIE (Local Programs that Increase Employability) are government-run programs that increase an enrolled student's employability. Students are considered exempt from the CalFresh student eligibility rule if they are participating in an LPIE in their higher education institution.

Programs found to meet the LPIE definition are *institution-specific*. A list of approved LPIE's can be found on the CalFresh Resource Center Policy Page by CDSS, under "CalFresh Student Eligibility: List of Approved LPIEs" in the Student Resources Tab. This list will be updated on the 1st of each month.

Additional Information on LPIE and the LPIE Submission Process can be found in the CalFresh Student Exemptions Page by CSU Chico.

How do students show proof of eligibility if they are a part of a Local Program that Increase Employability (LPIE) program?

According to an ACL (21-58) released by CDSS, client statement alone is sufficient, and college student verification should be requested only when information provided by the applicant is questionable. County eligibility workers should not be requesting the student exemption verification on the CW2200 or VCL. This applies to initial application, SAR-7, and recertification.

Link to ACL 21-58: <https://www.cdss.ca.gov/Portals/9/Additional-Resources/Letters-and-Notices/ACLs/2021/21-58.pdf?ver=2021-05-21-162533-693>

Are student campus employees eligible for CalFresh?

Yes, student campus employees can be eligible for CalFresh. Working a campus job is an eligibility exemption that can be used on the CalFresh application. Documentation may be required, such as a campus employment letter and proof of income.



What is WIOA? What programs qualify under WIOA?

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) amends the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) of 1998. The WIAO offers a range of workforce development activities including but not limited to one-stop career centers, training and employment programs, and youth workforce activities. If a student is enrolled in a WIOA activity, they will meet one of the exemptions and could be eligible for CalFresh. It is the responsibility of the county eligibility worker to determine if the workforce development activity the students is participating in is a part of WIOA.

Application Process Questions**What are typical verifications for college students?**

Common documentation required for college students includes, but is not limited to:

- Financial Aid Award Letter
- Including scholarship information
- CSF 50 may be requested
- Work Study
- On-campus employment letters
- Class Schedule
- Meal Plan (if living on campus)
- Proof of income (if working)

What is the CSF 50 form and how do students fill it out?

The CSF 50 is the Student Income Verification Form, and students will need to have it filled out by the financial aid office. The form details all financial aid received for the academic year.

How can students submit additional documentation?

Students can submit additional verification virtually via LaterDocs:

<https://www.sandiegocounty.gov/content/sdc/hhsa/programs/ssp/LaterDocs.html>

How does the benefit renewal process work for students?

Students will need to renew their benefits 6 months after their initial application in order to continue receiving them. They will be mailed a copy of the SAR-7 Form, but it can be filled out virtually via GetCalFresh SAR-7.



COVID-19 Related CalFresh Questions

How has student eligibility changed due to COVID-19?

The Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021 has temporarily expanded CalFresh student eligibility. Eligibility has expanded to include students who are eligible for Federal work study and students with a \$0 EFC (expected family contribution).

This expansion is temporary and will stay in effect until 30 days after the COVID-19 public health emergency is lifted at the federal level.

What if students aren't sure if they're eligible for work study? What if a student is eligible for work study, but it's not shown on their financial aid?

Students can check in with their financial aid office to determine if they are eligible for work study. If they are found to be eligible, students can get the Work Study Verification Letter filled out by their financial aid office and upload the form to their application as verification.

What are emergency allotments and how does that affect allotted benefits for approved students?

Emergency Allotments are additional benefits that are approved monthly. They allot CalFresh recipients with a minimum of \$95 or the amount required to bring their benefits up to the maximum for their household size.

These are approved monthly and will be distributed the month after approval. Approvals will be updated CDSS County Letters website.

Example of the latest emergency allotment approval:

https://www.cdss.ca.gov/Portals/9/Additional-Resources/Letters-and-Notices/ACWDL/2022/CL_9-2-22.pdf?ver=2022-09-02-112232-153

