



MEDIA ADVISORY

July 23, 2019

Media Contact

Allison Glader

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PRESS EVENT AND APPLICATION IN-TAKE FOR CALFRESH EXPANSION TO SSI, THE LARGEST ANTI-HUNGER LEGISLATION IN RECENT CALIFORNIA HISTORY

WHAT: Feeding San Diego, in partnership with Serving Seniors, 211 San Diego, and the County of San Diego Health and Human Services, is hosting a community event to drive awareness about the new legislation that expanded CalFresh eligibility for Supplemental Security Income (SSI) recipients on June 1, 2019 and to help seniors currently on waiting lists apply for CalFresh.

Formerly known as food stamps, CalFresh is a public assistance program that provides monthly benefits to help low-income households purchase enough food to meet their daily needs. Nationally referred to as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), CalFresh can be used to buy food from any participating supermarket and/or farmers market.

WHY: For the first time in 45 years, SSI recipients are now eligible to apply for CalFresh benefits.

“The new law is a big step in the right direction. The expansion of CalFresh to SSI recipients will help thousands of vulnerable groups in our community, especially seniors, gain access to fresh food regularly. With support from our partners, our teams are working fast to spread the word and help SSI recipients gain these critical benefits,” shared Vince Hall, CEO of Feeding San Diego.

This event will aim to drive awareness among senior SSI recipients on the CalFresh expansion, the largest anti-hunger initiative in recent California history, and to educate the community about the resources available to help them apply.

WHEN: Tuesday, July 23, 2019
Application In-Take: 9:00 – 12:00 pm
Speaking Program: 10:00 am

WHERE: Serving Seniors Gary and Mary West Senior Wellness Center
1525 Fourth Avenue, San Diego, CA 92101
(metered parking and two pay parking lots nearby)

Application In-take Location: Lifelong Learning Room
Press Event Location: Dining Room



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SPEAKERS: Toni Atkins, Senator, San Diego
Paul Downey, President and CEO of Serving Seniors
Vince Hall, CEO of Feeding San Diego
Albert Garcia, Chief - CalFresh Program, County of San Diego Health and Human Services Agency
Paul Redfern, COO of 211 San Diego

Note: Interviews for speakers and select seniors are available during and/or after the event.

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ABOUT FEEDING SAN DIEGO

Feeding San Diego (FSD) is a non-profit organization on a mission to solve hunger while ending food waste. Established in 2007, FSD is the leading hunger-relief and food rescue organization in San Diego County and the only Feeding America affiliate in the region. FSD provides 500,000 meals every week to children, adults and seniors in partnership with a network of 245 local charities, schools, faith communities, and food pantries. Through an efficient model focused on reducing our impact on the environment, every dollar donated helps provide four nutritious meals to people facing hunger. To learn more about Feeding San Diego and its hunger-relief initiatives, visit feedingsandiego.org.

ABOUT SERVING SENIORS

Serving Seniors is a nonprofit agency dedicated to helping seniors in poverty live healthy and fulfilling lives. For nearly 50 years, Serving Seniors has been transforming the aging experience through an innovative model of comprehensive wraparound services including nutritious meals, housing, social services, healthcare and enrichment. This innovative model has earned national recognition for helping seniors remain healthy and independent, and Serving Seniors is the only organization in San Diego County – and one of the few in the United States – that provides such a broad base of vital services to vulnerable older adults.

Since its inception in 1970, Serving Seniors has served over 12 million meals. Every year, the organization serves nearly 620,000 meals to seniors at 10 congregate dining sites and via home-delivered to over 600 homebound seniors, as well as 400 units of permanent supportive housing. Serving Seniors changes the lives of about 5,000 seniors annually.

The agency has been skillfully led for nearly 25 years by president and CEO Paul Downey. Downey is the past chair and two-time appointed commissioner of the California Commission on Aging, board member and public policy chair for the American Society on Aging (ASA), and is also past president of the National Serving Seniors has been named a Top Workplace five out of the last six



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years by the *San Diego Union-Tribune*. For more information, please visit www.servingseniors.org, [Facebook](#) or [Twitter](#), or call (619) 487-0701.

ABOUT COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

The Health and Human Services Agency (HHSA) is one of five groups or divisions of San Diego County government. The Agency provides a broad range of health and social services to promote wellness, self-sufficiency, and a better quality of life for individuals and families in San Diego County. The Agency integrates health and social services through a unified service-delivery system that supports *Live Well San Diego*, the County vision for healthy, safe and thriving communities. CalFresh is one of the programs administered by HHSA. Formerly known as food stamps, CalFresh is a supplemental nutrition program for families and individuals who meet certain income guidelines. It's designed to help reduce food insecurity and help increase access to fresh and healthy food. There are 257,000 San Diego County residents receiving CalFresh benefits, including over 35,000 older adults.

ABOUT 211

2-1-1 San Diego's mission is to serve as a nexus to bring community organizations together to help people efficiently access social services. Every year, we make over 500,000 connections with our community members to educate people on new resources and connect our most vulnerable to the information that they need; a major focus has always been addressing food insecurity. For many years, we have been completing over the phone applications for CalFresh and always had to turn away seniors and disabled people who had SSI. Seniors comprise 20% of 2-1-1's clients and within San Diego county one in four seniors are food insecure, largely due to the increased cost in health care and housing. To assess levels of food insecurity, 2-1-1 uses measures from the USDA Food Security Survey and our analysis indicates that 68% of our seniors had other priorities to pay for before being able to address their nutritional needs. For these reasons, we are incredibly excited that California has expanded access to CalFresh for people on SSI. We know that this is just the beginning, and we look forward to continuing to work together with the food advocates in the community to reduce food insecurity and help people thrive.