



SAN FRANCISCO  
HUMAN SERVICES AGENCY

# Benefits 101: Helping Community Providers Connect People to Services and Benefits

April 2026

The meeting will begin shortly.

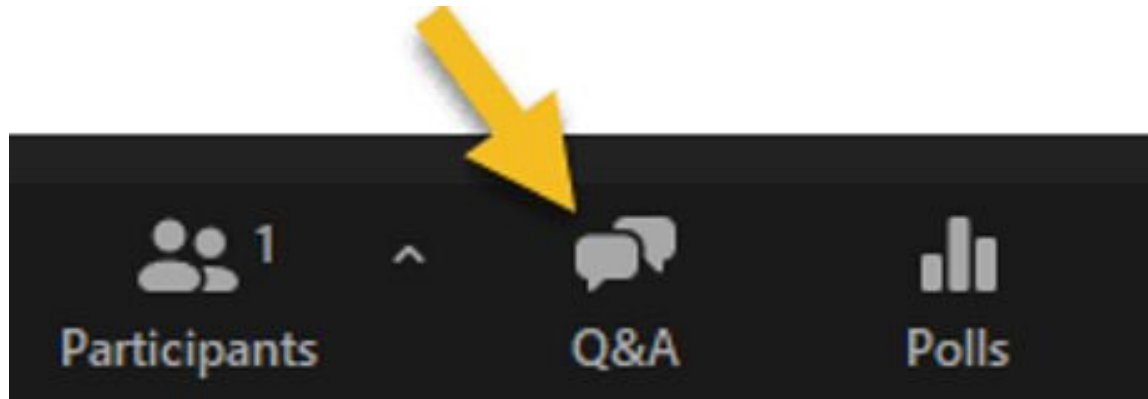


# To Connect to Zoom Interpretation

- On your computer, move your mouse so that the bar at the bottom of your screen appears. You'll find a small globe there. Click on it and select your preferred language.
- On your smartphone, tablet or iPad, touch your screen so that the options menu appears. Click on the three dots or MORE option and then select LANGUAGE INTERPRETATION, then press your preferred language and then click DONE.
- You should see the globe on your computer. If you joined from a smartphone, tablet or iPad, look for the interpretation function in the MORE section or in the three dots menu. Don't forget to press DONE once you select your preferred language.

# Q&A Logistics

Please locate the Q&A button on your screen to submit your questions in your preferred language throughout the presentation.





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## We serve 1 in 4 people in San Francisco

San Francisco social safety net:  
Services, supports, and public  
benefits designed to meet the  
unique needs of low-income  
individuals, children, and  
families, older adults, and  
adults with disabilities.



# Agenda

1. State and Federal Policy Changes to Medi-Cal: Dental Benefits
2. State and Federal Policy Changes to CalFresh: Updates
3. Client Impacts and What SFHSA is Doing
4. What to Expect, What Clients Can Do, and How Partners Can Help
5. Update from ILRC
6. Update from OCEIA
7. Q&A



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# **Medi-Cal: State and Federal Policy Changes Updates**



# Medi-Cal: Dental Benefits

**Implementation Date: July 1, 2026**

Dental benefits end for undocumented adults:

Full Medi-Cal coverage recipients age 19 and older who are undocumented or have temporary immigration status will lose dental benefits.

# Medi-Cal: Limited Immigrant Eligibility

## Implementation Date: October 1, 2026

Ends federal Medicaid funding for certain immigrants without Lawful Permanent Resident (LPR, or green card) status including:

- Refugees
- Asylees
- Trafficking victims
- Other certain noncitizens that were previously eligible\*

State would need to **cover entire cost of** full-scope Medi-Cal for these groups. The Governor's 2026-2027 budget proposal as of January 9, 2026 did **not** include this funding.



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# CalFresh: State and Federal Policy Changes Updates



# CalFresh: Limited Immigrant Eligibility

## Implementation Date: April 1, 2026

Ended CalFresh eligibility for certain immigrants without Lawful Permanent Resident (LPR, or green card) status including:

- Refugees
- Asylees
- Trafficking survivors\*
- Other certain noncitizens that were previously eligible\*

Impacts new applications starting April 1. Ongoing households will be impacted at their next recertification, starting for households with recertifications due in April.

*\*Certain noncitizens losing Federal eligibility may be eligible for State benefits under the California Food Access Program (CFAP). We encourage noncitizens to apply or contact SFHSA for more details about their specific case.*

# CalFresh: Expanded Work Requirements

## Implementation Date: June 1, 2026

California's waiver of the CalFresh work requirement has ended. Starting June 1, 2026, many CalFresh recipients are required to meet federal work requirements under newly-expanded definitions.

The work requirements apply to Able-Bodied Adults Without Dependents (ABAWDs) or people who:

- Are adults 18-64
- Can work
- Do not live with a child under 14

People subject to these requirements can only get 3 months of benefits in a 3-year period unless they meet certain work requirements or qualify for an exemption.

**Starting June 2026, new applicants will be subject to HR-1 screening and work rules, while existing clients will be subject at their next renewal.**

# CalFresh: Expanded Work Requirements (continued)

## Implementation Date: June 1, 2026

### Exemptions remain for anyone who:

- Lives with a for a child under 14
- Physically or mentally unfit to work (based on interview)
- Works 30+ hours/week or earns \$217.50+ per week
- Is in school at least half-time
- Is pregnant
- Has substance use disorder or is in treatment
- Receives/applies for Unemployment Insurance or disability benefits
- Cares for an ill or disabled person
- Meeting CalWORKs work requirement
- Is U.S. Native American (new exemption)

People experiencing homelessness, veterans, and individuals age 24 or younger in foster care are no longer categorically exempt.

# CalFresh: Expanded Work Requirements (continued)

## Implementation Date: June 1, 2026

**If not exempt, someone can meet work requirements by doing one or more of the following:**

- Working on average 20 hours per week, at least 80 hours per month
- Volunteering or performing community service 20 hours per week, at least 80 hours per month
- Employment training 20 hours per week, at least 80 hours per month
- Participating in CalFresh-established workfare by SFHSA
  - The number of workfare hours required per month is determined by dividing the CalFresh benefit amount by the City's minimum wage (e.g., \$298 monthly benefit / \$19 SF minimum wage = *only* 15 hours per month)
  - Workfare can be a placement in a City Agency or with a nonprofit

# CalFresh: Expanded Work Requirements (continued)

## Implementation Date: June 1, 2026

### Implementation Rollout:

- **New Applicants** will be subject to screening and the expanded work requirements starting June 1.
- **Ongoing Households** will be subject to screening and the expanded work requirements at their next recertification, starting for households with recertifications due in June.

**Example:** A person applies and is approved for CalFresh in January 2026 with a 12-month certification period. This person will not be subject to the HR-1 screening and rules until their recertification in December 2026.

If screened and found not exempt, this person will be required to meet work rules starting January 2027 to keep getting CalFresh after the three-month limit.



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# Client Impacts, What We're Doing, and How Changes Impact Your Work

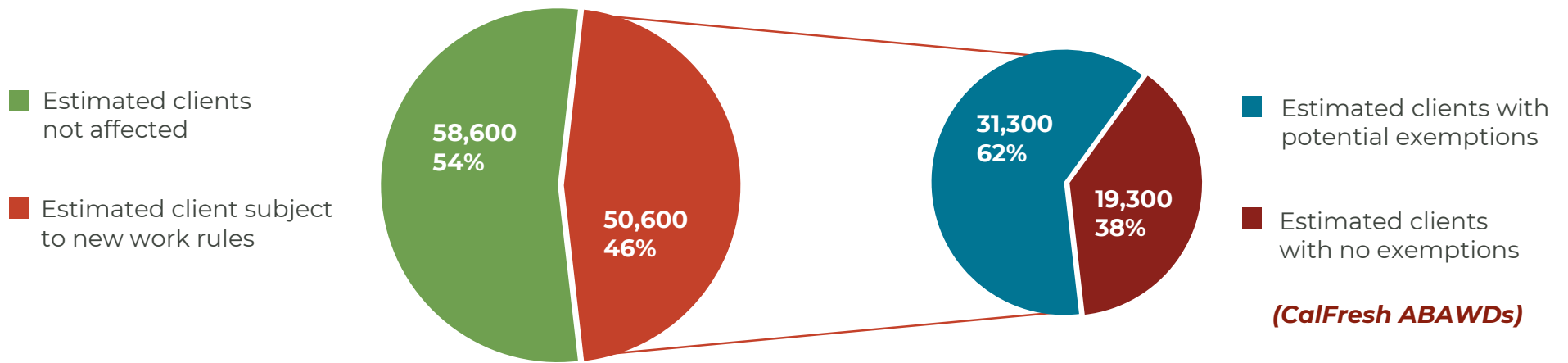


## Client Impact Estimates

- Approximately 19,300 CalFresh clients likely subject to work requirements and unlikely to qualify for exemption.
- They represent about 18% of San Francisco's CalFresh caseload.

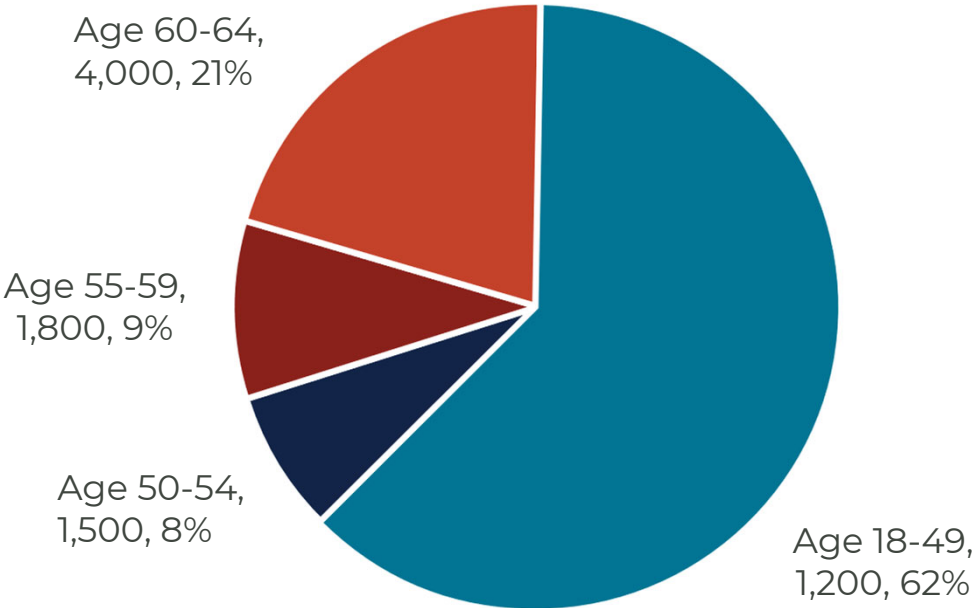


# Projected Impact for CalFresh Caseload



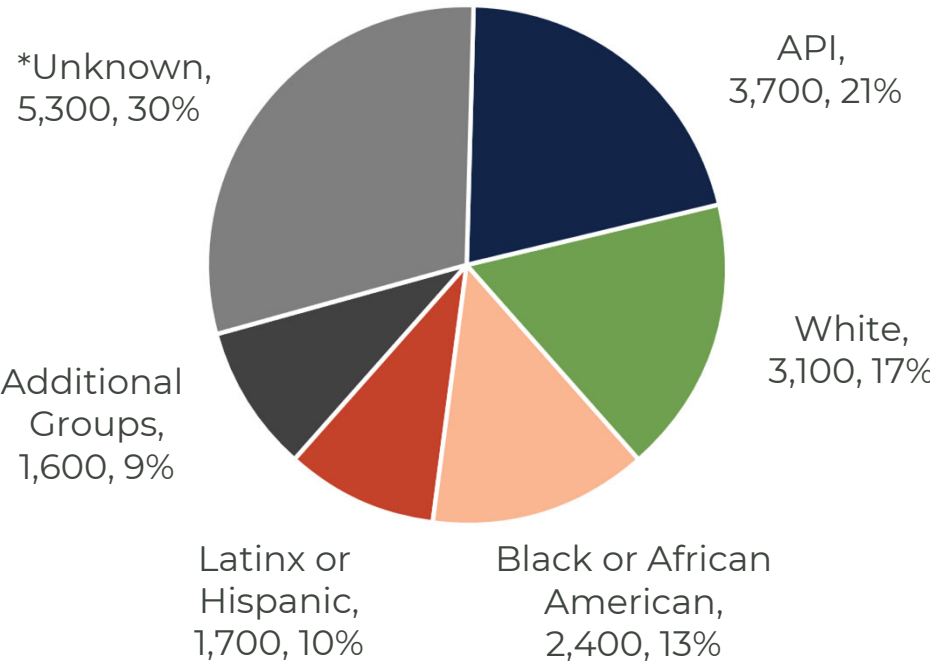
Source: CalSAWS December 2025

# CalFresh ABAWDs by Age



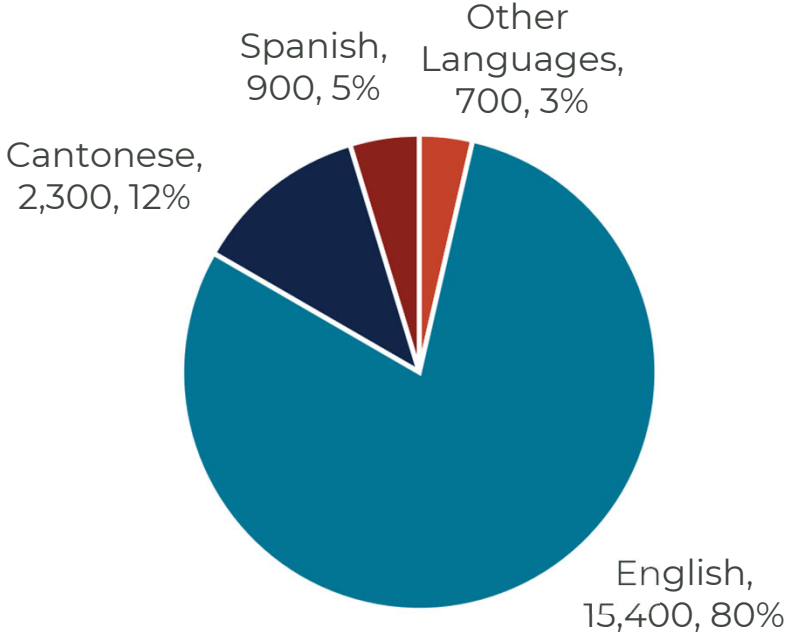
Source: CalSAWS December 2025

# CalFresh ABAWDs by Race/Ethnicity



Source: CalSAWS December 2025; \*race and ethnicity are not required fields in CalSAWS

# CalFresh ABAWDs by Language



Source: CalSAWS December 2025  
Other languages include Vietnamese (300 clients), Russian (100), and Filipino (100) among others

# ABAWDs by Location

Zip	Neighborhood	#
94102	Hayes Valley/Civic Center/ Tenderloin	5,250
94103	South of Market	1,450
94112	Ingleside/Excelsior	1,400
94124	Bayview/Hunters Point	1,400
94109	Polk/Russian Hill/Nob Hill	1,300
94110	Mission District/Bernal Heights	1,100
94134	Visitacion Valley	950
94122	Sunset	750
94133	North Beach	550
94115	Western Addition/Japantown	500
94116	Sunset/Parkside	500
94121	Outer Richmond	500

Source: CalSAWS December 2025

# ABAWDs by Location (continued)

Zip	Neighborhood	#
94107	Potrero Hill/SOMA	450
94117	Haight-Ashbury	400
94118	Inner Richmond	400
94132	Lake Merced/ Lakeside	400
94108	Chinatown	300
94114	Castro/Noe Valley	250
94131	Twin Peaks/Glen Park	250
94142	General Delivery	150
94158	Mission Bay	150
94105	Rincon Hill	100
94111	Embarcadero	100
94123	Marina/Cow Hollow	100
94127	St. Francis Wood/West Portal	100
94130	Treasure Island	100
94104	Financial District	-
94129	Presidio	-

Source: CalSAWS December 2025

# Community Partnerships



- **Support clients with applying & keeping benefits**
  - Help tech-comfortable clients set up online BenefitsCal accounts so clients can submit documentation electronically
- **Offer volunteer opportunities to help clients meet requirements**
- **Share accurate information**
  - Regularly check SFHSA's website for updates:  
<https://www.sfhsa.org/community-partner-resources>
  - Subscribe to the [Quarterly Partners Newsletter](#) about our services' updates and events, and potential opportunities to help clients meet requirements

# Partnership Spotlight

## Mayor's Office of Innovation



- MOI is partnering with SFHSA to review current business processes, identify pain points, and create solutions. Project examples include:
  - Improving connections between the eligibility process and workforce programs
  - Mapping and centralizing employment and training opportunities
  - Exploring ways to improve client communication, such as two-way texting
- Hoping to build model, replicable in counties and the nation.

# Workforce Services Supports

## Mayor's Office of Innovation



- Various pathways responsive to different clients and their needs:
  - CalFresh Employment and Training component: workfare, education, job retention, self-employment training, supervised job search and work experience
  - On-site training and subsidized employment opportunities: Public Service Trainee Program and Private Sector Wage Subsidy Program
  - Unsubsidized job offerings: private sector employer partnerships
  - Connection with CCSF adult education
  - Partnership with OEWD and other city agencies with workforce programming

# Mobile Benefits Center

## SFHSA benefits hub on wheels

- Grant-funded program designed to support people less likely to seek services at a government office
- All core benefits available on board: Medi-Cal, CalFresh, CalWORKs, CAAP
- EBT printing and support on site
- Service schedule based on bookings from community partners

[SFHSA.org/MobileBenefits](https://www.sfhsa.org/MobileBenefits)





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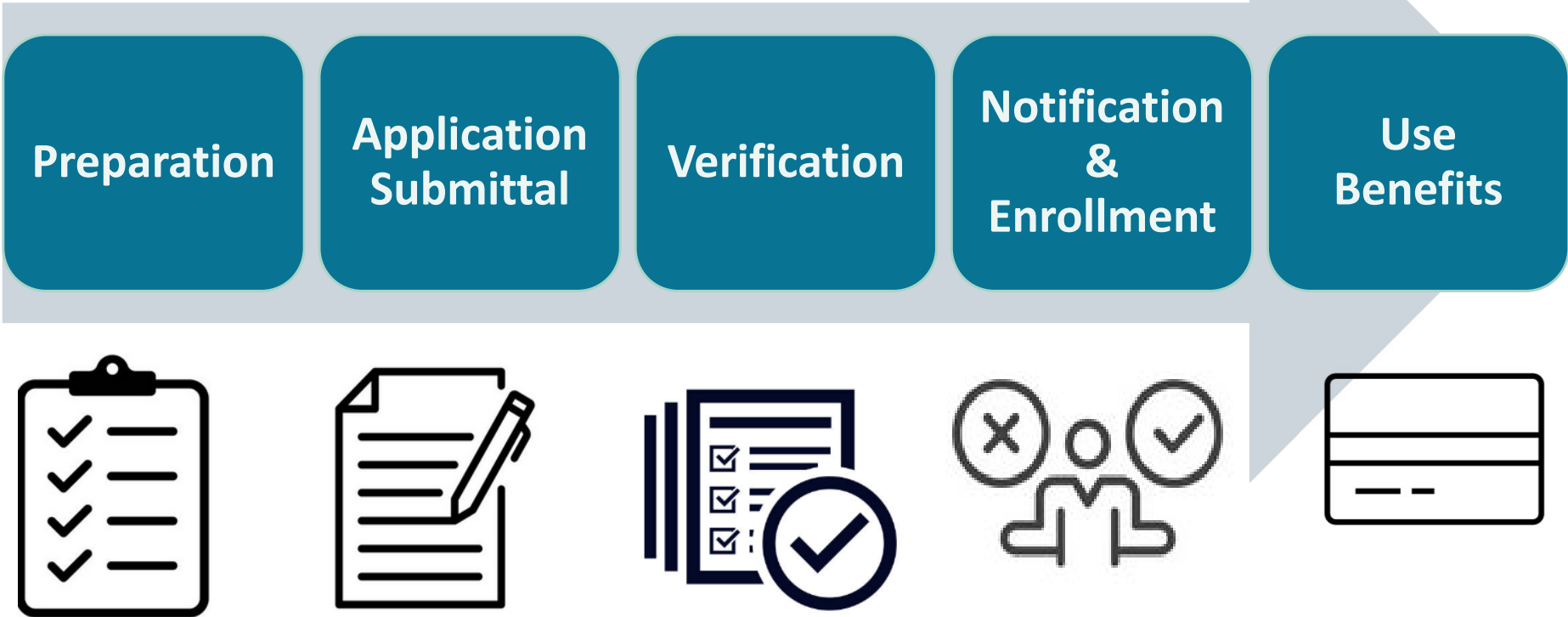
# What to Expect, What Clients Can Do, and How Partners Can Help



## What Clients Can Do Now

- Keep contact information current
- Engage in required activities
- Set up linked BenefitsCal account if tech-comfortable
- Report asset, shelter, and utility expenses if required
- Visit [SFHSA.org](https://www.sfhhsa.org) often for information about benefit program changes, including new requirements and eligibility updates

# Application Journey



# After Application Submittal

## When will you hear from SFHSA?

### **CalFresh:**

- 30 days for SFHSA to review the application
- 3 days for Expedited Service

### **Medi-Cal:**

- 45 days for SFHSA to review the application

# While Clients Wait for Their Benefits



## Need Food Now?

- Request an Emergency Food Box from SFHSA
- Visit [Neighborhood Food Access Points](#)
- Use [San Francisco-Marín Food Bank Locator](#) to locate nearby options

## Health Concerns?

- Go to San Francisco General Hospital if you need care
- Call 911 for a medical emergency
- Please don't wait – you can still see a doctor even if your Medi-Cal is pending

# Keeping Benefits



## **CalFresh:**

- Complete a SAR-7 every 6 months
- Renew every 12 months
- Report changes like income, address, household size

## **Medi-Cal:**

- Renew every 12 months\*
- Watch for mail and respond quickly to keep coverage

***\*Changing for many clients age 19-64 starting January 2027***

## Client Data and Privacy

SFHSA takes your privacy very seriously. We use client personal information only to determine their eligibility for benefits.

By law, our agency is required to share information with the State of California, which, in turn, is required to share demographic information with the federal Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services.

Clients should also be aware that disenrolling from benefits will not retroactively remove their personal information from the state-run database.



# How Partners Can Help

## Help clients stay enrolled and avoid benefit interruptions

- 1. Encourage clients to create their own BenefitsCal account**
  - Client accounts have an in-app online renewal and recertification flow
- 2. Use client accounts whenever possible to resolve renewal issues**
  - Some renewal steps are only available in the client login
- 3. Help clients check notices and submit documents quickly**
  - Responding to requests early can help prevent case closures
- 4. Remind clients to keep their contact information updated**
  - Correct address, phone, and email help ensure clients receive renewal notices
  - Opt-in to receive text messages to receive notifications on renewals and emergencies



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## Legal Update on Immigrants and Public Benefits

Ariel Brown, Senior Staff Attorney  
Immigrant Legal Resource Center  
(ILRC)



# Immigrants Should Get the Help They Need!

## **“Public Charge” rules do not change who is eligible for public benefits**

Public Charge rule only impacts those applying for their green card through a family petition or an employer petition or entering the U.S. :

- U.S. citizens can use any benefit without fear.
- Permanent residents, asylees, refugees, people with U visas, T visas, VAWA, many others can use all programs they qualify for.
- It is okay for family members of immigrants to get benefits, including citizen children.
- There is no public charge test to become a citizen! You can use benefits and apply for citizenship.

# Immigrants Should Get the Help They Need!

So far, there have been no changes to public charge by the current Trump administration

But changes could be coming soon – make sure to check for updates with a trusted immigration legal services provider if you are applying for a green card or entry to the U.S.

Also, if you will be leaving the United States to apply for your green cards at a U.S. consulate or embassy outside the United States, check in with a trusted advocate BEFORE leaving – this is where we expect to see changes in public charge first and currently there is a pause on visas for individuals from 75 countries based on public charge that could impact you

Under current law, most benefits are safe to use!

**General rule: if you qualify, you can use it.**

# Public Charge



## **Health, nutrition, and housing programs are safe to use for everyone**

If you are applying for a green card or entry into the U.S. and are subject to a public charge test, the only programs immigration officers will consider are:

- Cash aid for income maintenance programs, such as CalWORKs, CAAP, and SSI
- Institutional long-term care paid for by the government

# Public Charge

- Utilizing public benefits, including cash assistance and long-term care, are not considered public charge for many types of immigrants.
- U and T visa holders, permanent residents, U.S. citizens, refugees, asylees, and many more are eligible for benefits and do not face “public charge”.

## **Free legal advice is available:**

- Bay Area Legal Aid’s Legal Advice Line: (800) 551-5554
- [Immigrants.sfgov.org](https://immigrants.sfgov.org)

## What About My Sponsor?

- Using benefits does NOT hurt your sponsor in California.
- California does not have a system to require sponsors to “pay back” benefits used by a person that was sponsored.
- A sponsor’s income can be factored into an immigrant’s income eligibility to receive certain public benefits. This is called “deeming.” It may mean that a sponsored immigrant does not qualify for a program because they are over-income.



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# Resources for Immigrant Communities

Jamie Richardson

Office of Civic Engagement  
and Immigrant Affairs



## About OCEIA

- The Office of Civic Engagement & Immigrant Affairs (OCEIA) is a policy, compliance, direct services and grantmaking City department.
- OCEIA's mission is to promote inclusive policies and foster immigrant assistance programs that lead to full civic, economic and linguistic integration.



# San Francisco Rapid Response Network

**SF's 24-hour Rapid Response hotline: 415-200-1548**

## **Call the hotline to get help with:**

- Emergency **legal help** for someone detained by ICE
- Requests for immigration court and ICE check-in **accompaniment**
- Requests for urgent and non-urgent **legal consultations**
- To report observed immigration enforcement activity in San Francisco

**Save the number in your phone to call when needed.** The Rapid Response hotline usually has just one person answering the phone. So if the line is busy, please call back. Help is available in multiple languages.

The SF Rapid Response Network is run by a group of community non-profit organizations from SFILN and SFILDC. **Learn more:** [sfilen.org/resources/sf-rapid-response-network](https://sfilen.org/resources/sf-rapid-response-network)

**Find Regional Rapid Response Networks:** [immigrants.sf.gov/help/rapid-response](https://immigrants.sf.gov/help/rapid-response)

# SF Immigrant Forum Website

**Resource Website: [sf.gov/immigrants](https://sf.gov/immigrants)**

The SF Immigrant Forum website provides information on low-barrier resources available to immigrants, asylees, and refugees in San Francisco.

Resources include:

- Immigration legal support
- Housing and shelter
- Food, health, financial and cash assistance
- Know your rights
- Identification
- English language learning
- Child care and family
- Economic and workforce development
- Transportation
- State and regional resources
- and more!



# SF Immigrant Forum Meetings

## Bi-monthly Online Webinars

The SF Immigrant Forum meetings are topic-based convenings for service providers to connect with City departments and community organizations on relevant resources and information for immigrant communities.

**Next meeting: Wednesday, May 27, 2026, 2:30 p.m. to 4:00 pm**

**Register: <https://sf.gov/immigrants>**

### **Meeting topic:**

Presentations from Healthy San Francisco: Healthcare access and resources for immigrants regardless of status.

# San Francisco Immigrant Support Hub



**Find free to low-cost immigration legal help in San Francisco:**  
**[immigrants.sf.gov](https://immigrants.sf.gov)**

The organizations listed on this website can help immigrants find immigration legal help.

- Consultations are generally low-cost or free and the application cost may be covered for San Franciscans.
- Filter by immigration type and language need.
- Rapid Response Hotline information available.
- Full site is available to use in English, Spanish, Chinese and Filipino.



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# Questions?

[www.sfhsa.org](http://www.sfhsa.org)

