

If someone loses their CalFresh benefits due to a misfortune, they may be able to have benefits replaced on their Electronic Benefit Transaction (EBT) card. The steps taken to get benefits replaced and how much can be put back on a card, depends on the cause of the loss.

Household or Individual Unexpected Food Loss

Sometimes a customer needs benefits replaced due to a personal misfortune. When someone loses food bought with CalFresh due to a power outage, natural disaster, appliance failure, fire or other isolated incident, they can make a request to our county to have their CalFresh benefits replaced. To make the request they follow the following steps:

- **The customer must self-report the loss within 10 days and complete the Replacement or Disaster Supplement Affidavit (CF 303) form.**
- This form can be completed on BenefitsCal.com, over the phone with an eligibility specialist or in office. It can also be mailed if preferred.
- The customer can also print the CF 303 form from online, fill it out and return to our office by mail, fax, drop off or have a community partner agency return it to us.
- On the CF 303 the customer will provide details about the loss such as what kind of event led to the food loss, and the estimated value of lost or spoiled food. Verification of the event is required. For many disasters or misfortunes such as power outages and fires our office is often able to verify the event through local news reports, weather reports or PG&E power outage records.
- Once the form is submitted, our office will review. We check to make sure we have all the information needed to determine benefit amount, that the request was made within the required 10-day time frame and that event is something we are allowed to replace benefits for.
- They may be able to have an amount up to their full month of benefits replaced on their Electronic Benefit Transaction (EBT) card.
- They will get a notice of the approval with amount reissued or notice of the denial with the reason the request was denied listed.
- If the loss is from a lost or stolen card, and PIN was given/written on card, they should complete a police report. These benefits will not be replaced by our office and any request for replacement will be denied.

EBT Scams and Skimming

If a person says that their CalFresh benefits were stolen through either skimming or a scam text, call or email they responded to:

- **They must self-report the loss within 90 days** and complete the required form that will be provided.
 - **EBT 2259 is for both skimming and scams.**
 - **EBT 2259A is in addition to the 2259 when it's a scam.**
- The form can be submitted to the county in all the same ways as the CF 303.
- Complete as much of the form as possible. We do need as much information as possible.

- They need to be in possession of the EBT card. If they gave their card to someone or the card was stolen the request will be denied.
- They may be able to have an amount up to two months of their current monthly benefit amount replaced on their Electronic Benefit Transaction (EBT) card.
- For CalFresh skimmed benefits, they can be reimbursed a maximum of two times in a fiscal year. For CalFresh scammed benefits, they can be reimbursed once in a 36 month period.

Timely Reporting Waiver

CDSS may get a waiver approved by FNS for the timely household reporting requirements for CalFresh replacement requests when there are events that likely impacted larger populations of customers, such as wildfires. When this happens the date a customer must report the loss to our office by is extended beyond 10 days. This waiver normally gets approved for customers in specified zip codes when multiple areas are impacted by something like a storm, but mass replacement is not authorized.

Automated Mass Replacement Waiver

The California Department of Social Services (CDSS) requests automated mass replacement from Federal Nutrition Services (FNS) when large areas are likely to have experienced food loss due to an event such as power outages from winter storms, fires, or PG&E Public Safety Power Shutoffs. This allows for benefits to be automatically reissued onto all the EBT cards on a specified date for people in certain zip codes. Counties receive notification from CDSS of the approved zip codes once FNS has approved.

- Households in approved zip codes will have CalFresh replaced without having to contact the county or complete any forms.
- The benefits will be based on the amount each individual case was issued in the month that the event occurred and how many days have passed since benefits issued. Usually only a percentage of monthly benefits is approved for replacement.
- We do not send out a notice, as the benefits are automatically uploaded by CDSS.
- Customers can still request benefit replacement for their case in the affected areas using the CF 303. They may have more benefits reissued by our county office than would have been issued in the mass replacement.
- The automated benefit replacement will only be issued to households who have not already had benefits replaced for the month of the loss event.

Disaster CalFresh

Disaster CalFresh (D-CalFresh) provides a month's worth of benefits on an EBT card issued to disaster victims following a natural disaster like an earthquake or any other natural disaster. D-CalFresh is only available when a Presidential Declaration for Individual Assistance has been declared for the affected area, commercial channels for food distribution have then been restored after being disrupted, and CDSS has been approved to operate D-CalFresh. This is very rare and there will be campaigns in the county if it happens. More information about D-CalFresh can be found on CDSS' website.

Cash Aid

Cash aid like CalWORKs has different rules. Customers who have lost cash aid benefits need to contact their local office to get information on what to do and if they can have the benefits replaced.