



CalFresh & Medi-Cal: College Students

College Students may be eligible to receive CalFresh

To be eligible for CalFresh benefits, college students between the ages of 18 and 49 years old who are enrolled at least half-time per CalFresh rules (varies by degree requirements, often 7.5 units) must meet any one of the following exemptions:

- Are employed for a minimum of 80 hours per month or, if self-employed and working at least 80 hours/month with gross monthly earnings at least equal to the Federal minimum wage multiplied by 80 hours.
- Have been approved for state or federally financed work study.
- Are employed on campus by the school or an auxiliary organization.
- Are a single parent with responsibility for the care of a child under age 12.
- In a two-parent household and have parental control over a child under the age of 6.
- In a two-parent household and have parental control over a child who has reached age 6 but is under age 12 and for whom adequate childcare is not available.
- Are receiving TANF (CalWORKs/Tribal TANF) cash aid.
- Are receiving TANF-funded Cal Grant A or B and 25 or younger, currently unmarried, and CalFresh Household income is under \$50,000/year. Students can email or call the California Student Aid Commission to find out their Cal Grant funding source: (888)224-7268 or studentsupport@csac.ca.gov
- Are participating in a program or major that is a Local Program to Increase Employability at a public institution (this list is available online from CDSS).
- In a Teaching or Research Assistantship.
- Enrolled in a Career & Technical Education program at College of the Redwoods.
- Currently receiving disabled services or disability benefits, or unable to work 20 hours a week while in school due to a physical or mental condition.
- Experiencing chronic homelessness.
- In treatment for or dependent upon drugs or alcohol.
- Experiencing domestic violence.

A student must report financial aid and enrollment information for an eligibility determination to be made. It is a good idea for students to review their financial aid award or have it handy for an interview. If a student doesn't think they meet one of the above criteria, it's okay to apply anyway. These rules are tricky and eligibility staff are trained to find exemptions the student may have missed. Remember, a student can also apply for other people in their home. If a college student is under 22 and living with their parents, their parent(s) must be included on the CalFresh case.

College Students in Dorms with Meals

CalFresh is not available to anyone who has housing that provides at least 11 meals in a week. Because of this rule, students in the Cal Poly Humboldt dorms who receive All Access meal plans are ineligible to CalFresh. Students in the Cal Poly Humboldt dorms who have Lumberjack Meal Plans and students who are at College of the Redwoods in the dorms are

not blocked from receiving CalFresh by the food they receive on campus at this time. Students who live off campus and have purchased meal plans are not subject to this rule.

College Students are likely eligible for Health Care Coverage

Generally, a college student will be eligible to some form of health care coverage. The questions are who can apply for the student and who is included in the student's household.

Factors that affect applications:

- Is the student a tax dependent?
- Does the student live with parents?
- How old is the student?

Common Student Questions and Concerns

I'm on my parent's Medi-Cal case in another County. What do I do?

It is possible that reporting the change of residence address is all that is needed. It is also possible that a new application is needed. Call Social Services for assistance figuring out which route to go.

Do I have to include my parents?

For CalFresh anyone under the age of 22 must include any parent(s) living in the same home.

For Medi-Cal, factors include:

- Your age
- Whether you are a tax dependent
- Whether you live with your parent(s)
- Whether you still consider your parent's home your permanent home, and,
- Whether your parents live in the same county, another county, or outside of California.

Students living on their own who are not tax dependents are able to apply on their own. Students 18 and older can apply on their own, however, in some circumstances they may need to provide their parent's information. More rarely, for some special Medi-Cal programs a parent may need to make the actual application for a student under age 21.

Do I have to get proof of my loans, grants, and scholarships?

For CalFresh, students must report the details of their financial aid award for a full determination to be completed. Financial Aid Award letters and proof of enrollment showing units are sometimes required. Having good information during the interview will help our office determine eligibility without requiring further verification.

For Medi-Cal it is possible that income can be electronically verified without any paper verification. Medi-Cal counts the "Adjusted Gross Income" on a tax return, with some exceptions.

Why is my friend's CalFresh and Medi-Cal status different?

There are a lot of rules for Medi-Cal and CalFresh, and the rules for each program are different. Situations may seem the same and be very different for our programs. If you are

denied you will get a Notice of Action explaining why. If you don't understand the reason, call Social Services. It is possible to reassess a denial or discontinuance.