

# CCWRO Welfare News

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## Expedited Service Food Stamps Not Being Considered Uniformly in California

Hungry people living in California should get the same treatment for food stamps in all 58 counties.

We have been receiving complaints from advocates that households in some counties are being considered for emergency food stamp benefits, while in other counties they are not. In order to verify this anecdotal assertion we examined the DSS reports CA 237, DFA 296 and DFA 296X.

Any HH who needs emergency food stamps, also known as FS-ES, shall receive food stamps in three days.

The only verification for FS-ES is identity which can be done through documentary evidence or "collateral contact", which means talking to somebody who knows the applicant.

State 33% of the food stamp applicants were not considered for emergency food stamp assistance.

Although the rules for FS-ES are the same statewide, there is puzzling differences between counties located next to each other;

Large & Medium Counties	April -June 2009 CW & Food Stamp Applications.	April - June Applications Considered for FS-ES	April -June % of Applications Considered for FS-ES
<b>Statewide</b>	<b>775,059</b>	<b>258,563</b>	<b>33.36%</b>
San Francisco	12,557	149	1.19%
San Joaquin	21,982	472	2.15%
Madera	5,457	300	5.50%
Orange	25,301	1,517	6.00%
Butte	12,456	1,052	8.45%
Marin	3,409	290	8.51%
Calaveras	2,052	177	8.63%
Kings	8,610	794	9.22%
Kern	20,473	3,169	15.48%
Santa Barbara	8,182	1,301	15.90%
Sutter	1,848	369	19.97%
Alameda	26,783	5,964	22.27%
Santa Cruz	9,158	2,061	22.50%
Solano	8,380	1,914	22.84%
Shasta	4,891	1,138	23.27%
Fresno	32,298	7,654	23.70%
Monterey	6,529	1,673	25.62%
San Diego	52,941	17,288	32.66%
Santa Clara	19,365	6,600	34.08%
Yolo	4,651	1,599	34.38%
Contra Costa	17,275	6,443	37.30%
Merced	9,386	3,522	37.52%
Riverside	35,023	15,022	42.89%
Ventura	8,359	3,886	46.49%
Tulare	14,159	6,825	48.20%
Los Angeles	180,854	87,641	48.46%
Placer	3,800	1,974	51.95%
Yuba	1,977	1,031	52.15%
Sacramento	31,231	19,071	61.06%
Stanislaus	11,590	7,136	61.57%
San Mateo	6,664	4,741	71.14%
San Bernardino	41,196	30,575	74.22%

### ⇒ San Bernardino County

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considers 79% of its applicants for ES-FS, while **Riverside County** is only 48%. Why are there 31% less food stamp applicants considered for FS-ES in Riverside County? Could it be that there is a 31% difference in the economic status of the population between San Bernardino County and Riverside County? Doubtful;

⇒ In **San Joaquin County** only 2% of the applicants are considered for FS-ES, one of the poorest counties in the country. Meanwhile neighboring **Stanislaus County** considers 64% of their food stamp applicants for FS-ES. Could it be that there is a 62% difference in the economic status of the population between **San Joaquin County** and **Stanislaus County**?

⇒ On the other hand **San Francisco County** only considers 1% of the applicants. We have been told that the county disagrees with the numbers that they have transmitted to the state and the state has posted on the internet.

⇒ **Sutter County** only considered 21% for FS-ES while in **Yuba County** across the street considered 52%. Why?

⇒ **Sacramento County** considers FS-ES for 61% of the cases. The county right across the river, **Yolo County** is only 34%

⇒ **Santa Barbara County** only considers 15% of the applicants for FS-ES, while neighboring **Ventura County** is 46%.

⇒ **Madera County**, another poverty stricken county only considers 5% of their applicants for FS-ES. Neighboring **Fresno County** is 24%, which is pretty low, but better than 5%

## FS-ES Consideration Process

What is the process to determine whether or not the applicant may be eligible for FS-ES?

Every applicant for food stamps completes a SAWS-1 or a DFA 285. (<http://www.dss.cah-wnet.gov/cdssweb/PG164.htm#dfa>)

Both of these applications solicit the basic information needed to be considered for FS-ES. Why are people in some counties being denied the opportunity to be considered for the benefits that they are entitled to by law?

### FS-ES Eligibility Requirements

1. Less than \$150 gross income
2. Less than \$100 in liquid resources
3. HH whose gross income is less than their rent and utilities; MPP § 63-301.51

California is a county run system. Every county does whatever it wants. There is little real supervision by the California single state agency, DSS, that required by law to supervise counties. In reality, the supervision that DSS provides to counties is very limited.

But there is **HOPE**. The state Legislature has enacted **AB 7** ([http://www.leginfo.ca.gov/cgi-bin/postquery?bill\\_number=abx4\\_7&sess=CUR&house=B&author=evans](http://www.leginfo.ca.gov/cgi-bin/postquery?bill_number=abx4_7&sess=CUR&house=B&author=evans)) that may create a statewide computer application system.

The **California Welfare Direc-**

**tors Association (CWDA)** is opposed to a single statewide computer system.

Currently there are three computer systems operated by counties. This means when there is a change, money is taken away from the poor and given to computer programmers to program three (3) different computer systems rather than just paying once to program the computer that would do the same thing.

**We are hoping for** a system where all applicants can be treated the same throughout the State of California.

**We are hoping for** a system where no child will go hungry just because of the county they live in.

**LEGAL ISSUE:** There is a legal issue in that federal and state law mandates that counties consider FS-ES. They are not. This is a potential violation of the law. W&IC §18914; MPP §63-30.52 and 7 CFR §283.2(i)(2).

### WHERE TO FIND THE DATA?

The **CA 237 CW** - CalWORKs Cash Grant Caseload Movement Report (<http://www.dss.cah-wnet.gov/research/PG281.htm>) is a CalWORKs report that shows how many people applied for CalWORKs each month among other things.

**DFA 296** (<http://www.dss.cah-wnet.gov/research/PG353.htm>) is a monthly report showing, among other things, how many households (HH) applied for Food Stamp benefits.

**DFA 296X** (<http://www.dss.cah-wnet.gov/research/PG354.htm>) is a quarterly report that reveals how many HH were considered for expedited service food stamps. Expedited service is the program for hungry people in America and California.