Helping You Navigate Upcoming Changes to CalFresh & Medi-Cal Benefits

NOTE:

This information is current as of **October 12, 2026.**

If this information is being reviewed after that date, please refer to the **Toolkit** for the most up-to-date information.

The Bottom Line

1. The County is **here to help** and is being proactive to help people maintain benefits.

2. **Most people will remain eligible** by qualifying for exemptions or meeting the requirements.

3. Top priorities for customers:
    i. Ensure **contact information is updated.**
    ii. Submit requested documentation timely.

4. Federal changes are significant. Resources are available to **share clear, consistent messaging** to the community.

What is Changing?

House Resolution 1 (H.R. 1) or the “One Big Beautiful Bill Act” was signed into law on July 4, 2025. This law includes changes to CalFresh and Medi-Cal for some individuals.

CalFresh Changes

April 1, 2026:
CalFresh non-citizen eligibility categories changed

June 1, 2026:
Work requirements applied to “Able-Bodied Adults Without Dependents”

Medi-Cal Changes

January 1, 2026:
New Medi-Cal enrollment frozen for individuals with “Unsatisfactory Immigration Status” (i.e., undocumented)

October 1, 2026:
Federal changes to immigration statuses go into effect, switching some to State-funded, full scope Medi-Cal

January 1, 2027:
Medi-Cal work requirements begin

Six-month eligibility checks set to begin

Some non-citizens switch to Fee-for-Service Medi-Cal

CalFresh Changes

Application assistance is free.

Please be aware of anyone charging a fee, as any request for payment may be a scam.

CalFresh Changes: Non-Citizens

APRIL 1, 2026

- Some non-citizens are no longer eligible to receive CalFresh benefits

~13,000 Impacted

Who is Still Eligible for CalFresh?

As of **April 1, 2026,** customers **are eligible** for CalFresh if they are one of the following:

- United States (US) citizen
- US National
- Lawful Permanent Resident (LPR)
- Cuban or Haitian Entrant (CHE)
- Compacts of Free Association (COFA) citizen

Who is No Longer Eligible for CalFresh?

As of April 1, 2026, these individuals are **no longer eligible:**

Asylee	**Refugee**	**Parolee (unless CHE)**	**Individual with deportation or removal withheld**
Conditional entrant	**Victim of trafficking**	**Battered non-citizen**	**Iraqis and Afghans with Special Immigrant Visas (SIVs)**
Some Afghan nationals granted parole July 31, 2021 - Sept 30, 2023	**Some Ukrainian nationals granted parole** Feb 24, 2022 - Sept 30, 2024		

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CalFresh Changes: Able-Bodied Adults Without Dependents

JUNE 1, 2026

- **Work requirements** began for some 18 to 64 year olds, unless they meet an exemption
- Many exemptions exist, including:
  - Having child(ren) under 14 in the home
  - Physically or mentally unable to work

~93,500 Impacted

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CalFresh Work Requirements

People who may need to meet work requirements include:

- Adults 18-64
- Do not have children under 14 at home
- Are physically and mentally able to work
- Do not meet any other exemptions

Can be met by completing 20 hours/week (80 hours/month) of:

Work	Self-Employment	Training	Volunteering

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CalFresh Work Requirements

THESE RULES WILL NOT APPLY IF:

- Under 18
- Over 64
- Pregnant
- Child Under 14 in the Home
- Physically or mentally unfit to work
- Attend Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) training program at least half time
- Indian, Urban Indian, or California Indian under the Indian Health Care Improvement Act (IHCIA)
- Being disabled or caring for a person with a disability
- Receiving or applying for unemployment or disability benefits
- Attending school, college, or a training program at least half time
- Meeting the work requirement for CalWORKs
- Being in a drug or alcohol abuse treatment program

Medi-Cal Changes

Application assistance is free.

Please be aware of anyone charging a fee, as any request for payment may be a scam.

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Medi-Cal Changes: Non-Citizens

January 1, 2026

- **Enrollment freeze** for adults with “Unsatisfactory Immigration Status” (UIS)

October 1, 2026

- Federal **changes to immigration statuses** go into effect, switching some non-citizens to State-funded, full scope Medi-Cal

January 1, 2027

- Grandfathered undocumented individuals and those affected by immigration status redefinitions **switch to Fee-for-Service** Medi-Cal

~67,000 IMPACTED

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Who Will Still Be Eligible for Medi-Cal?

From **October 1, 2026,** customers **remain eligible** for federally-funded, full scope Medi-Cal if they are one of the following:

- United States Citizen
- US National
- Lawful Permanent Resident
- Cuban or Haitian Entrant (CHE)
- Compacts of Free Association (COFA) Citizen

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Medi-Cal Changes for Certain Groups

Starting **October 1, 2026**, these groups transition to State-funded, full-scope benefits, then Fee-for-Service **January 1, 2027:**

Asylee	**Refugee**	**Parolee (unless CHE)**	**Individual with deportation or removal withheld**
Conditional entrant	**Victim of trafficking**	**Battered non-citizen**	**Iraqis and Afghans with Special Immigrant Visas (SIVs)**
	Some Afghan nationals granted parole July 31, 2021 - Sept 30, 2023	**Some Ukrainian nationals granted parole** Feb 24, 2022 - Sept 30, 2024	

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Medi-Cal Changes

January 1, 2027

- **Work requirements** begin for some 19–64 year-olds
- **Six-month eligibility** checks will begin for some adults
- **Retroactive coverage** limited from 3 months prior to application to 1 or 2 months

~310,000 IMPACTED

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Medi-Cal Work Requirements

People who may need to meet new requirements:

- Adults 19-64 years old without dependents
- Do not have an exception

Can be met by completing 20 hours/week (or 80 hours/month) of:

Work or earning at least $580/month	Education	Training	Volunteering

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Medi-Cal Work Requirements

THE REQUIREMENTS WILL NOT APPLY TO:

Under 19 **Over 64**	**Former Foster Youths**	**Pregnant** (and 1 year post partum)	**Parents with children age 0-13**
Medically Frail (physically unable to work)	**American Indians or Alaska Natives**	**Disabled** (physically unable to work)	**Released from jail/prison in last 90 days**

What Customers and Organizations Can Do

Need help navigating Work Requirements?

Browse and connect with job training, volunteer, work resources and more.

Visit the WorkReady Hub

Call 2-1-1 or scan the QR code

211sandiego.org/work

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For individuals

What should I do next?

BenefitsCal Account: Update contact info	Family Resource Centers: Benefits Support (in-person support)
Visit your BenefitsCal account and make sure your contact information is up to date.	Visit a Family Resource Center.
Website	**Access Customer Service: Benefits Support (phone support)**
Visit the Changes to CalFresh and Medi-Cal webpage to view changes to benefits.	Call 1-866-262-9881.
Email: You can send documents and update your contact information by emailing DPC.HHSA@sdcounty.ca.gov	

If someone is impacted by these changes, they will be contacted or informed during their intake interview or next re-certification

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For individuals

Look Out for Communications from the County

If you are using a County of San Diego P.O. Box, check your mail at least monthly to ensure you do not miss any communication.

Respond to communications that come from County of San Diego staff.

If you are impacted by any of these changes, you will be contacted or informed during your intake interview or next recertification

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For orgs

Call to Action for Organizations

Inform	Share information with your clients and staff: CalFresh and Medi-Cal Changes	**Create or Promote Volunteer Opportunities**	Partner with organizations that promote volunteer opportunities like HandsOn San Diego
Enrollment Support	See if your organization is a good fit for the Access CBO Line Request the Live Well on Wheels for events	**Stay Engaged**	Provide feedback & ask questions at EngageSD
Create or Promote Work Opportunities	List open job opportunities with San Diego Workforce Partnership (SDWP) Employer Job Posting Website		Request a presentation on CalFresh/Medi-Cal changes

Check out the CalFresh/Medi-Cal Changes Toolkit

For orgs

Does your organization offer work programs, job training, education, or volunteer programs?

Add or update your information in 211 San Diego's Resource Database so customers can be connected to your services in the *new* **WorkReady Hub**!

211SanDiego.org/Partners

Additional Community & Food Resources

Self-Sufficiency Programs
(866) 262-9881

211sandiego.org
2-1-1

Feeding San Diego
(858) 452-3663

San Diego Food Bank
(858) 527-1419

San Diego Hunger Coalition

Catholic Charities
(619) 323-2841

Jewish Family Service
(858) 637-3210

San Diego Workforce Partnership
(619) 319-9675

HandsOn San Diego

For the most up-to-date information:

- **CalFresh –**
  CA Department of Social Services:
  www.cdss.ca.gov/inforesources/calfresh

- **Medi-Cal -**
  CA Department of Healthcare Services (DHCS):
  www.dhcs.ca.gov/medi-cal/updates/medi-cal-changes

AlertSanDiego Website

El Niño- Severe Weather Preparedness: Know your hazards, make a plan, and sign up for **Alert San Diego**.

AlertSanDiego Registration

<u>Stay informed and ready</u> by registering for emergency alerts and keeping your contact information up to date.

El Niño: Stay Informed & Prepared

Opt-In System: Alert San Diego

Build a Kit: Alert San Diego BuildAKit

FEMA Flood Zone Lookup

Free Sand and Bags: Sand and Sandbag Locations

Purchase flood insurance, renew flood insurance policy: Flood Insurance Providers

San Diego "Know Your Hazards“ Tool: Know Your Hazards

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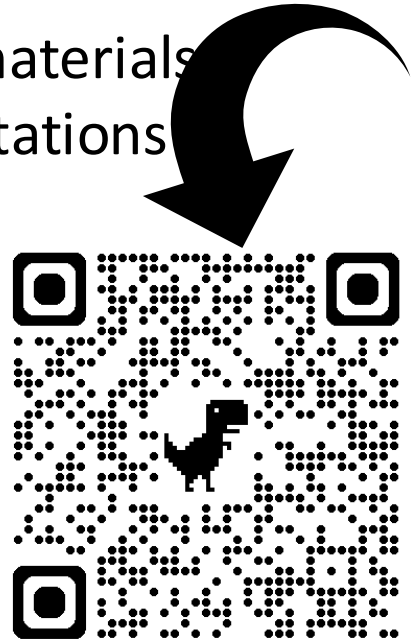
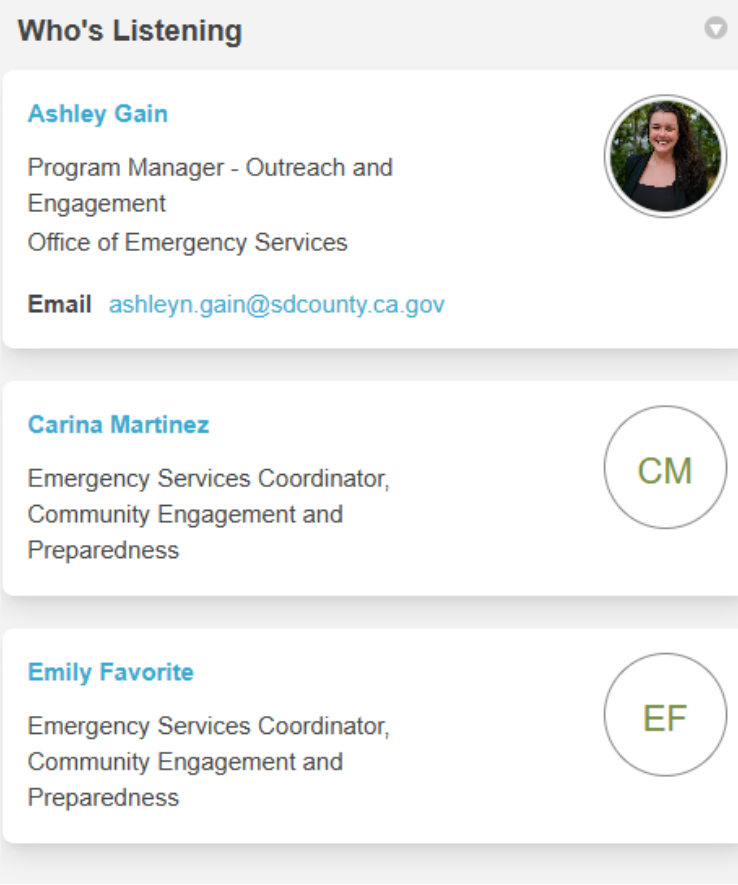
Engage San Diego County: El Niño

Explore this page to:

- Learn what impacts to expect in your area
- Find simple steps to prepare
- Access and review resources and tools to stay safe and informed
- Share feedback on our communications materials
- Request emergency preparedness presentations
- Request materials in another language
- Ask questions





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Please provide your Presentation Feedback