

Emergency Feeding Program Framework

Governor's Office of Emergency Services



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EMERGENCY FEEDING PROGRAM FRAMEWORK

Situation

On March 4, 2020, Governor Newsom issued Executive Order (EO) N-33-20 requiring all residents in the State of California to stay home or at their place of residence. EO N-33-20 further stated that the supply chain must continue, and Californians must have access to such necessities as food, prescriptions, and health care.

The purpose of the Emergency Feeding Program is to ensure Californians that are the age of 65 and over or individuals who have been exposed to or contracted COVID-19, but do not need hospitalization, or are high-risk with underlying health conditions have regular access to prepared meals. Extending wrap-around services to this at-risk population will reduce the amount of people that will need to be in non-congregate shelters while fulfilling the mission of taking care of the most vulnerable population during this pandemic.

These individuals are not eligible for public nutrition programs, such as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP [CalFresh in California]) or Home Delivered Meals, they are also unable to prepare meals or do not have access to food resources, as a result of self-isolation and abiding by EO N-33-20. Furthermore, these individuals do not have a family or community support system to provide consistent access to food resources or prepare meals on their behalf.

Based on the California Health Interview Survey, there are 5.7 million Californians over the age of 65, with 1.2 million living alone. Of that population of individuals, 155,000 Californians over the age of 60 received congregate or meal delivered meals through the Older Americans Act prior to issuance of the stay at home orders.

Purpose

The purpose of this emergency feeding program is to ensure that older and high-risk Californians, as specified, are connected to local restaurants to ensure they are getting prepared meals as they are under the state Stay-at-Home order. This multi-agency plan developed by the California Governor's Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES), the California Health and Human Services, and the California Department of Aging (CDA) will serve as an integrated strategy that leverages available federal, state, and local resources.

Scope

The authority to administer this program on behalf of the State of California will reside primarily with local governments, with state support only if necessary. A local administrator can be any of the following local jurisdiction/agency, either independently or as a coordinated effort, such as the local Area Agency on Aging (AAA), the local government's Aging & Adult services, a county office of emergency services, or a municipality.

In addition, the local administrator may execute, as necessary, contracts with delivery platform network for distribution services and manage or assist with consistent reporting values across jurisdictions. The state can support contract administration if necessary.

The local administrator will ensure that the emergency feeding program executes the following:

- Serve nutritionally appropriate and balanced meals to eligible participants.
- Source local produce when applicable.
- Ensure the utilization of and support of existing local restaurant and industrial kitchen operations that demonstrate commitment to employment retention, re-employment as well as commitment to standards of workplace safety and health, liveable wages, fair employment practices, and wage equity across race and gender.
- Ensure program compliance with Federal procurement [standards](#) and FEMA Public Assistance procurement [requirements](#).

Planning Assumptions

- The capacity of local jurisdiction/agency to serve this population varies widely. The local administrator should be prepared to put appropriate program support mechanisms in place as needed.

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- Costs will be limited to \$66 for three (3) meals, inclusive of delivery and reasonable administrative costs. This is based on an average of the U.S General Services Administration per diem rates for California as follows: \$16 for breakfast, \$17 for lunch, \$28 for dinner, and incidental expenses of \$5.
- Program cost breakdown is as follows: 75% FEMA share, 19% state share, and 6% local share.
- Individual participation eligibility verification can be completed over the phone and can be obtained through self-certification, similar to other eligibility verification for disaster programs including Disaster CalFresh benefits.
- Individuals providing delivery of meals must complete a background check to ensure safety of participants.
- Recent state investments in local 2-1-1 operations will allow for this to be a major entry point for seniors and individuals at-risk seeking access to nutritionally appropriate meals.
- Local administrators must capture the minimum data elements identified in the Data Requirements section of this framework.

Operational Considerations

Local administrators will be selected based on program experience as well as ability to scale meal delivery operations and workforce and to coordinate with county emergency operations. Local administrators will:

- Enroll eligible older Californians through a self-certification process;
- Select participating licensed local restaurants, to include those in hotels as well as licensed industrial kitchens operated within event venues, airports, and other entities;
- Encourage local restaurants to source locally; and
- Establish delivery services through delivery platform network or another workforce.

Local administrators must collaborate with local jurisdictions (i.e., County, City or Tribes), given need for scale, essential personnel, and connection to emergency-operations of government. The State is willing to provide assistance if the local jurisdiction/agencies are unable to administer the program effectively.

Other operational considerations include the following:

- Participant Promotion & Outreach
 - Local 211, CBOs, AAA/Local Government, State COVID19 Web & Info Line

- Participant Eligibility
 - Must be 65 or older, or otherwise at high-risk, as defined by the CDC¹.
 - High-risk includes those who are COVID-19 positive or COVID-19 exposed as documented by a public health official or medical professional or individuals with an underlying condition.
 - Must live alone or with one other program-eligible adult.
 - Must not be currently receiving assistance from other federal nutrition assistance programs and receive no more than \$74,940 in income for a household of one (1) and \$101,460 for a household of two (2), this equates to 600% of the federal poverty limit.
 - Must affirm an inability to prepare or obtain meals.
- Restaurant Selection
 - Locally determined
 - Criteria includes ability to meet volume, ability to meet nutritional standards, ability to source locally, and cultural needs.
 - 100% of meals must be provided by a restaurant not currently participating in a state or federal meal service program.
 - Local administrator executes purchase order or contract for fixed order of meals.
 - Can include community restaurant projects as well as labor-management partnerships that prioritize local jobs, worker retention, worker health and safety, and standards of equity and fairness in employment practices, wages, hiring, and promotion
- Meal requirements
 - A maximum of three, per day, per participant.
 - Breakfast low in sodium, no sugary drinks (<24 calories /8 oz. and of fruit juice, must be only 100 percent fruit juice allowed); and
 - Lunch and dinner a piece of fresh fruit or vegetable on each dish, and low in sodium, no sugary drinks (<24 calories /8 oz. and of fruit juice, must be only 100 percent fruit juice allowed).
- Cost
 - All claimed costs must be necessary and reasonable in order to respond to the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency and are subject to standard program eligibility and other Federal Requirements, including the prevailing cost-share for the respective declaration.
- Delivery
 - Locally determined

¹ <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/need-extra-precautions/people-at-higher-risk.html>

- Options include restaurant workers, hospitality workers under collective bargaining agreements, school bus drivers, a delivery platform network, AAA/local government workforce, or volunteers.
- Individuals must be subject to a background check to ensure safety of participants.

Data Requirements

Each participating local jurisdiction is required to document the following data:

- Number of individuals that were receiving meal support (at peak);
- Number of individuals that are continuing to receive meal support and number of meals that have been provided per individual;
- Number of individuals that are 65 and over that are receiving meal support and average length of time that they have been receiving meal support;
- Number of individuals who are otherwise at high risk (as defined by the CDC), such as those undergoing cancer treatment or dialysis and people with severe obesity or kidney disease, that are receiving meal support and average length of time that they have been receiving meal support;
- Number of individuals that are COVID-19 positive or have been exposed to COVID-19 and receiving meal support; and
- Average cost per eligible recipient of meal support.
- Documentation of the lack of other State or local resources to fill the need including, but not limited to food banks, PNPs, State funding sources, and additional federal resources, including ones that may be available under the multiple Congressional Supplemental Funding Bills known as the CARES Act, or any other additional resources made available at the time of your request.

Timeline

FEMA approval is limited to costs associated with providing emergency feeding services through May 10, 2020, unless the public health need end sooner or an extension is granted by FEMA. The State, on behalf of itself and participating Tribal or local governments, must obtain FEMA's approval for any time extensions. While it is anticipated that, upon successful program execution, the State will request an extension, there is no guarantee it will be granted.

Short-Term Tasks:

- Evaluate capacity for local program administration based on current service network capacity and performance, number of meals provided, and existing collaborative efforts with other jurisdictions.

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- Evaluate the availability of a delivery option, i.e., delivery network provider, for areas where this resource is unavailable.
- Determine best mechanism to ensure uniform and consistent reporting values across local programs and appropriate public assistance expenditures.
- Provide daily data reports to CDA to inform the Governor's office.

Examples of Locally Administer Programs:

- Los Angeles County AAA, which has a robust county infrastructure, currently contracts with 8 restaurants to each provide 200-400 meals per day. County AAA provides workers for delivery, provides for participant enrollment, and establishes restaurant participation.
- Sacramento regional AAA, its subcontractor Meals on Wheels (both non-profits) and a governmental partner, the City of Sacramento operate the program. A senior can dial into the 2-1-1 call center, Meals on Wheels, or the Adult Services Division, to participate. Meals on Wheels verifies participant eligibility, the City assists Meals on Wheels to scale, including establishing restaurant program partners and partnering with a delivery platform network for distribution.
- Los Angeles Hospitality Training Academy, a labor-management partnership with capacity to provide thousands of meals per day through industrial kitchens in hotel restaurants and other venues.
- High Road Kitchens project currently operating in San Diego, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Sacramento, and Monterey provides food relief through local community restaurants committed to standards of equity and fairness in wages, hiring, and promotion.