

Strategy #1... *Quick!*

1. Goal for Clients in Need of Food:

Ensure that people's applications for CalFresh food assistance are processed quickly and efficiently in 3-5 days.

2. Key Numbers for Measuring Outcomes:

Applying for CalFresh Benefits	Your County (Past Month)
Total Number of Applications	
Percent of applications approved	
Percent of applications denied	
Percent of non-expedited applications receiving a determination within 5 days	
Percent of applications denied for procedural reasons (e.g. missed interview)	
Telephonic application and signature available? (Y/N)	

Communication between County and Client	Your County (Past Month)
Percent applying a) on-line b) in person c) by telephone and d) other (fax, mail)	
Average lobby wait time	
Average telephone wait time	
Telephone abandon rate (inbound calls)	
Telephone reach rate (outbound calls)	
Telephone task completion rate	

Interviewing	Your County (Past Month)
Average days from application to completed interviews	
Denials based on incomplete interview (procedural)	
Percent provided telephone interview	

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Verifying Information	Your County (Past Month)
Average days from application to completed verifications	
Denials based on incomplete verifications (procedural)	

* **Keep in mind:** Not all of these data points are calculated in each county, and calculation methods may differ slightly from county to county. For example, some metrics may be calculated quarterly instead of monthly, or some counties may differ in how they code denials. Advocates should work with their counties in finding good ways to calculate and track these metrics.

3. *Practices to Replicate:*

- a) **Full-service call center telephone, text, and e-mail services.** People can apply, interview, report changes and ask questions via the center. Key features include: calls, emails and texts are both in-bound and outbound; automated reminder calls, emails, and texts are generated; interpreters are readily available; service is available evenings and weekends; and additional capacity is available at peak times.
- b) **Lobby re-design for in-person services:** including initial check-in and line-management system, document drop-offs with receipts, self-service stations, clear signage, and more.
- c) **User-friendly on-line services:** including on-line applications (with low abandon rates and high completion rates), reporting, and checking of application status.
- d) **Document management system:** including electronic imaging, to submit, scan, store, and share verifications, such as identifications.

Strategy #2... *Consistent!*

1. Goal for Clients in Need of Food:

Ensure that qualified people aren't losing CalFresh food assistance for administrative reasons.

2. Key Numbers for Measuring Outcomes:

Churn Rates	CA (Q3 '14)	Your County (Past Month)
Percent of new applicants that were participating in the last 90 days	20.2%	
Percent of new applicants that were participating in the last 30 days	12.6%	
Percent of participants due for annual recertification who 1) do not recertify but 2) are re-enrolled within 30 days of case closure	14.5%	
Percent of participants due for annual recertification who 1) do not recertify but 2) are re-enrolled within 30 days of case closure	11.4%	

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Also, none of these data are required by USDA or CDSS, but are self-reported quarterly by all of the counties in the new CDSS Data Dashboard posted at <http://www.cdss.ca.gov/research/PG3575.htm>

3. Practices to Replicate:

- a) **Maximize new, shorter recertification form** (replacing full reapplication required by CDSS by 10/1/2015).
- b) **Redesign "business processes" for annual recertification and other reporting:** aim for "one and done" contact with client to update information: specifically, allow more ways for client to contact county (on-line, telephone, mail, and office); pre-populate the recertification forms with current information; and maximize use of electronic verifications and document management to avoid redundant work and new barriers.
- c) **Initiate proactive, clear communications** with clients by telephone, text, emails, and mail.
- d) **Follow best practices** for written notices (USDA 5/14), including plain language, clear identification of the proposed action, specific case information, no "legalese," and excellent translations.
- e) **Make automated reminder calls and texts**, such as the "Promptly" text notification pilot developed by Code for America and San Francisco County.

Strategy #3... *Connected!*

1. Goal for Clients in Need of Food:

Ensure that families are easily connected both to CalFresh and all the programs they need to thrive – especially Medi-Cal and other health insurance, School Breakfast and Lunch, and WIC (Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children).

2. Key Numbers for Measuring Outcomes:

Dual Enrollment Rates	CA (Q4 '14)	Your County (Past Month)
Percent of Medi-Cal participants under 65 enrolled in CalFresh (national projection: more than 60%)	62.2%	
Percent of CalFresh participants under 65 enrolled in Medi-Cal (national projection: more than 90%)	65%	

*** Keep in mind:** Not all of these data points are calculated in each county, and calculation methods may differ slightly from county to county. For example, some metrics may be calculated quarterly instead of monthly, or some counties may differ in how they code denials. Advocates should work with their counties in finding good ways to calculate and track these metrics.

Also, these data are not required by USDA or by CDSS, but are calculated quarterly by CDSS using DHCS's Medi-Cal database (MEDS) and reported in the new CDSS Data Dashboard at: <http://www.cdss.ca.gov/research/PG3575.htm>

***Programs note:** Connections between CalFresh and Medi-Cal are the initial focus, but additional numbers and practices to better connect a) children participating in CalFresh with School Meals and with WIC, as well as b) seniors participating in CalFresh with health insurance, will be provided in future versions.

3. Practices to Replicate:

a) The best approach is dual-enrollment with Medi-Cal at time of application for either program:

- When clients seek health coverage only, counties encourage clients to apply for CalFresh and offer an integrated process, via cross-trained workers and use of the multi-program application SAWS2PLUS and the on-line application equivalent.
- When clients seek CalFresh only (and/or CalWORKS), counties offer Express Lane enrollment in Medi-Cal (client does not need a new eligibility determination; client only has to pick health plan).
- When clients seek health coverage via Covered California and also request a referral to their counties for CalFresh, counties follow-up to initiate and assist the client with a CalFresh application.
- In Alameda County, eight community groups are contracted to provide application assistance for joint Medi-Cal and CalFresh applications.

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b) Also important is “in-reach” to current participants in Medi-Cal, who seem eligible but are not participating in CalFresh. Counties are experimenting:

- Alameda: In 2013, the County did a targeted direct-mail campaign to 67,500 Medi-Cal participants without CalFresh, inviting phone calls or return of a postcard to the food bank: yielded 3% return and increased number of applications submitted by the food bank to the County by 45%. The same households were targeted with door hangers in 2014. A 2015 mailer is now under way.
- Contra Costa: The County is mailing postcards to Medi-Cal participants without CalFresh encouraging them to contact the food bank for assistance in applying for CalFresh.
- Los Angeles: At annual renewal of Medi-Cal, the County mails participants without CalFresh a flyer encouraging applications to CalFresh.
- San Francisco: 1) The County is contracting with San Diego 211 to call and mail to 12,000 Medi-Cal recipients without CalFresh; goal is 1,000 new CalFresh cases each year for the next two years. 2) The County is also exploring out stationing eligibility workers at SF General to do enrollment in CalFresh as part of Medi-Cal intake process.
- San Diego: 1) The County is incorporating CalFresh enrollment into public health nurse home visits; public health clinics; and Federally Qualified Health Centers’ training of medical residency students and electronic medical records. 2) The County is also developing an in-reach strategy for Medi-Cal participants without CalFresh.
- Santa Clara: In May 2014, the County did a one-time mailing to all Medi-Cal participants without CalFresh (around 180,000 people) with a flyer encouraging CalFresh applications. At annual renewal of Medi-Cal, the County mails participants without CalFresh a flyer encouraging applications to CalFresh. This flyer is the food bank’s 4th most popular source of referral for application assistance, after friend/word of mouth, food bank agency, and walk-ins.