November 3, 2011

TO: ALL COUNTY WELFARE DIRECTORS
CALFRESH PROGRAM SPECIALISTS

Innovative Projects
Federal Fiscal Year 2012

Request for Application

The California Department of Social Services (CDSS) is soliciting applications for the availability of funds for Innovative Projects in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Education (SNAP-Ed) program to be administered by the County Welfare Departments (CWDs). For details, see the attachment.

All CWDs are eligible to submit applications for this project. The application must be received on or before 5:00 p.m. by the CalFresh Nutrition Education Unit on November 30, 2011. Applications received later than 5:00 p.m. that day will not be reviewed and considered for funding.

E-Mail applications to:
Brian.Tam@dss.ca.gov

For any questions relating to this Request for Application (RFA), please contact Brian Tam, Section Chief of CalFresh Management Operations, at 916-653-5420, Kristin Brinks, Manager of the Employment and Nutrition Education Unit, at 916-654-1435, Katie Lewis, Analyst, at 916-651-6556, or Afiya Boswell, Analyst, at 916-657-4563.

Sincerely,

LINDA PATTERSON, Chief
CalFresh Branch

Attachment
Background

As the cornerstone of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) nutrition assistance programs, the SNAP-Ed program plays a vital role in helping to improve nutrition in the nation, particularly among low-income individuals.

Through the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010, funding for SNAP-Ed was changed to a 100 percent federal funding through two-year grants, rather than a reimbursement plan. This provided states with more flexibility to target services where they can be most effective without the constraints of a state match.

Under current regulations (7 CFR 272.2), states have the option of providing nutrition education to SNAP recipients as part of their program operations. While optional, USDA’s Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) actively encourages states to provide nutrition education for SNAP participants and eligibles. The goal of SNAP-Ed is to improve the likelihood that persons eligible for SNAP will make healthy food choices within a limited budget and choose physically active lifestyles consistent with the current Dietary Guidelines for Americans and MyPlate [www.choosemyplate.gov](http://www.choosemyplate.gov).

Purpose/Objective of Project

The purpose of this project is to provide CWDs the opportunity and funding to partner with other organizations (e.g., local Community Based Organizations (CBOs), University of California Extension offices, food banks, etc.) in order to provide nutrition education services to their CalFresh participants.

Target Audience

CWDs are encouraged to focus on areas with a high number of CalFresh participants (130% of Federal Poverty Level (FPL) versus CalFresh nutrition education-eligible populations (185% of FPL)) as well as areas that are entirely devoid of CalFresh nutrition education services.

Application Process

CWDs will submit an RFA to CDSS for review. CDSS will then select Innovative Projects (Project) from the RFAs that are potentially eligible for the Innovative Projects funding based upon the degree to which the proposals meet the Project’s purpose/objectives and an evaluation of the Project’s merit in comparison with other proposals. From there, CWDs will be required to provide detailed information about their proposed project in Project Synopsis, Budget Cover Sheet, Budget Justification templates and any other documents that CDSS may require. The amount of the potential award will be determined after reviewing the initial applications received. Approximately $8 million is available for the entire state. The amount awarded will be based on need as justified by the proposal. The amount will be capped at the higher of the following:
• The proportionate share of the $8 million as determined by caseload size; or
• $700,000 for large counties; $500,000 for medium counties; $300,000 for small counties; and $150,000 for very small counties.

All CWDs interested in this project are eligible to submit an application. Administration costs must be capped at twenty-five percent. CWDs must adhere to the FFY 2012 SNAP-ED Plan Guidance, which is available on the SNAP-Ed Connection website at: http://www.nal.usda.gov/fsn/Guidance/FY2012SNAP-EdGuidance.pdf.

Allowable /Unallowable Activities

Applicants must describe how they will serve CalFresh participants in the RFA. Please refer to the 2012 SNAP-Ed Guidance, pages 72-75, for more information regarding allowable and unallowable nutrition education activities.

Applications must comply with the 2012 SNAP-Ed Guidance. Activities must serve the objectives of the project as outlined in the Purpose/Objective of Project section of this RFA. FNS and CDSS must approve all activities and services prior to CWDs providing the activities.

Application Evaluation

Applications will be evaluated using a combination of the following criteria:
• Degree of innovation/creativity;
• CWD has a high participation rate or the ability to impact a large population of CalFresh participants;
• Reaching an underserved population (e.g., homeless, seniors, etc.);
• Cost per participant;
• Policy relevance- deals with current policy issue;
• Strength of evaluation plan;
• Sustainability; and
• Ability to complete project within budget and timeframe guidelines

Note: CWDs who were awarded funding for the local CWD/LHD project may apply; however if otherwise equal, preference will be given to those CWDs that were not funded.

Award

Counties may be awarded less than the capped amounts detailed in the application process depending on CDSS discretion and project need/scope. Monies not obligated after initial selections of counties may be redistributed among awardees at a later date. All projects will need final approval by CDSS and FNS in order to begin SNAP-Ed activities. The funding for Innovative Projects has the ability to be spent until September 30, 2013.
**Project Description:**

For each project/intervention, the following information should be provided. Make sure all proposed activities are SNAP-Ed allowable, per the SNAP-Ed Guidance.

**Project Title:**

_______________________________________________________________

**Funding Amount Request:**

_______________________________________________________________

*Note: The funding award may be spent in FFY 2012 and FFY 2013.

**Project Contact Name, Title:**

_______________________________________________________________

**Project Contact Phone Number and Email:**

_______________________________________________________________

a. **Focus on CalFresh Recipients**- Describe how the project will focus nutrition education on CalFresh recipients.

b. **Project Description**- How you will implement the project, giving particular attention to: key educational messages, how and where it will be delivered, duration of project, the projected total number of individuals participating or reached, and the estimated number of contacts per person reached (the frequency of contacts (number of classes, mailings, billboards, etc.)). Please include key purposes, key strategies and a narrative summary.

c. **Use of Existing Educational Materials**- Give the title, author and description of existing educational materials that will be used in the delivery of the project/intervention. Specify the language(s) in which the materials will be used, including English. Please utilize only FNS approved existing educational materials.

d. **Key Performance Measures/Indicators**- List the key measures/indicators of implementation or performance that you will capture or collect. An example of a key performance measure would be fruit and vegetable consumption (behavioral change) through process evaluation, impact evaluation, or collecting pre and post surveys from a training, summaries of trainings, classes, etc. This information collected from surveys will help support your Education and Administrative Reporting System (EARS) data in the future. The SNAP-Ed guidance provides more information regarding the EARS data reporting requirements for SNAP-Ed activities.

e. **Estimated cost per participant.**