

ASSEMBLY BILL

No. 309

Introduced by Assembly Member Mitchell

February 12, 2013

An act to amend Sections 18901 and 18904.25 of, and to amend and repeal Section 18914 of, the Welfare and Institutions Code, relating to public social services.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 309, as introduced, Mitchell. CalFresh: homeless youth.

Existing federal law provides for the federal Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), known in California as CalFresh, formerly the Food Stamp Program, under which supplemental nutrition assistance benefits allocated to the state by the federal government are distributed to eligible individuals by each county. Under existing law, households are eligible to receive CalFresh benefits to the extent permitted by federal law. Further, existing law requires county welfare departments to develop information, and make that information available to homeless shelters, emergency food programs, and other community agencies that provide services to homeless people, on expedited services targeted to the homeless and to provide training to homeless shelter operators on CalFresh application procedures.

This bill would clarify that eligibility for CalFresh benefits, including expedited services, is not dependent on the age of an applicant and that county welfare departments must accept applications from unaccompanied homeless children and youths. This bill would also require that county welfare departments make information about CalFresh expedited services targeted to the homeless population available to local educational agency liaisons, as defined, and include

information regarding CalFresh eligibility for unaccompanied homeless children and youths in the training provided to homeless shelter operators.

By expanding the number of people a county welfare department must make information available to, and requiring county welfare departments to augment the training they provide to homeless shelter operators, this bill would impose a state-mandated local program.

The California Constitution requires the state to reimburse local agencies and school districts for certain costs mandated by the state. Statutory provisions establish procedures for making that reimbursement.

This bill would provide that, if the Commission on State Mandates determines that the bill contains costs mandated by the state, reimbursement for those costs shall be made pursuant to these statutory provisions.

Vote: majority. Appropriation: no. Fiscal committee: yes.
State-mandated local program: yes.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

- 1 SECTION 1. Section 18901 of the Welfare and Institutions
- 2 Code is amended to read:
- 3 18901. (a) The eligibility of households shall be determined
- 4 to the extent permitted by federal law.
- 5 (b) *In determining eligibility for CalFresh, no minimum age*
- 6 *requirement shall be imposed other than those that exist under*
- 7 *federal law.*
- 8 SEC. 2. Section 18904.25 of the Welfare and Institutions Code
- 9 is amended to read:
- 10 18904.25. (a) Pursuant to the federal Stewart B. McKinney
- 11 Homeless Assistance Act (Public Law 100-77), the department
- 12 shall develop CalFresh information on expedited services targeted
- 13 to the homeless—~~population.~~ *These population, including*
- 14 *unaccompanied homeless children and youths, as those terms are*
- 15 *defined Section 1434a of Title 42 of the United States Code. This*
- 16 *information shall be made available to homeless shelters,*
- 17 *emergency food programs, local educational agency liaisons for*
- 18 *homeless children and youths, designated pursuant to Section*
- 19 *11432(g)(1)(J)(ii) of Title 42 of the United States Code, and other*
- 20 *community agencies who provide services to homeless people.*

1 (b) Each county welfare department shall annually offer training
2 on CalFresh application procedures to homeless shelter operators.
3 *That training shall include eligibility criteria and specific*
4 *information regarding the eligibility of unaccompanied homeless*
5 *children and youths.* In addition, each county welfare department,
6 upon request, shall provide homeless shelters with a supply of that
7 portion of the CalFresh application used to request CalFresh
8 expedited service.

9 (c) *Each county welfare department shall accept CalFresh*
10 *applications from unaccompanied homeless children and youths*
11 *under 18 years of age and shall determine eligibility for benefits*
12 *under CalFresh, including whether those children and youth*
13 *constitute their own household or a part of the household in which*
14 *they are temporarily staying, on an individualized basis.*

15 SEC. 3. Section 18914 of the Welfare and Institutions Code,
16 as amended by Section 1 of Chapter 468 of the Statutes of 2012,
17 is amended to read:

18 18914. (a) In accordance with, and to the extent provided by,
19 federal law, the county human services agency shall provide
20 CalFresh benefits on an expedited basis as provided in subdivision
21 (b) to households, *including households consisting of an*
22 *unaccompanied homeless child or youth,* determined to be in
23 immediate need of food assistance.

24 (b) Pursuant to the federal requirements of Section 273.2(i)(2)
25 of Title 7 of the Code of Federal Regulations, the county human
26 services agency shall screen all CalFresh applications for
27 entitlement to expedited service. Applicants who meet the federal
28 criteria for expedited service as defined in Section 273.2(i)(1) of
29 Title 7 of the Code of Federal Regulations shall receive either a
30 manual authorization to participate or automated card or the
31 immediate issuance of CalFresh benefits no later than the third
32 day following the date the application was filed. To the maximum
33 extent permitted by federal law, the amount of income to be
34 received from any source shall be deemed to be uncertain and
35 exempt from consideration in the determination of entitlement for
36 expedited service. For purposes of this subdivision, a weekend
37 shall be considered one calendar day.

38 (c) The State Department of Social Services shall develop and
39 implement for expedited issuance a uniform procedure for verifying
40 information required of an applicant.

1 SEC. 4. Section 18914 of the Welfare and Institutions Code,
2 as amended by Section 89 of Chapter 227 of the Statutes of 2011,
3 is repealed.

4 ~~18914. To the extent provided by federal law, the county~~
5 ~~welfare department shall provide CalFresh benefits on an expedited~~
6 ~~basis to households determined to be in immediate need of food~~
7 ~~assistance.~~

8 ~~This section shall become operative July 1, 1991.~~

9 SEC. 5. If the Commission on State Mandates determines that
10 this act contains costs mandated by the state, reimbursement to
11 local agencies and school districts for those costs shall be made
12 pursuant to Part 7 (commencing with Section 17500) of Division
13 4 of Title 2 of the Government Code.