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DPSS Launches Annual CalFresh Awareness Month Campaign in the Fight Against Food Insecurity

The Department of Public Social Services (DPSS) has launched its annual CalFresh Awareness Month campaign to publicize the CalFresh Nutrition Program and acknowledge community partners throughout the month of May for helping to raise public awareness year-round.

"Hunger impacts all aspects of human life from healthcare to education, and it is essential that we increase awareness of CalFresh," said DPSS Director Antonia Jiménez. "Families who were just barely getting by paycheck-to-paycheck before the pandemic have been hit even harder by the COVID-19 crisis. Unfortunately, food insecurity has impacted many L.A. County residents: older adults, working people, students, children and youth. DPSS is so proud to promote CalFresh because it truly is an effective anti-hunger program."

This year's campaign comes at a time when many households are experiencing continual food insecurity as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Over the past year, food insecurity hit an all-time high in Los Angeles County with an estimated 873,000 households experiencing at least one instance of food insecurity. In 2020, the County utilized \$137 million in CARES Act funding to distribute 10 million pounds of food at more than 100 drive-through events. While this funding was temporary, CalFresh offers a long-term solution for everyone.

On **May 11 at 9 a.m.**, Jiménez will host a CalFresh Virtual Town Hall to promote the benefits of CalFresh and answer community questions. The event will be livestreamed via DPSS' Facebook account at @LACoDPSS. She will be joined by Michael Flood, President and CEO of the L.A. Regional Food Bank, and Amy Zhao, Project Lead at the Chinatown Service Center. A special video message from Hilda Solis, Chair of the L.A. County Board of Supervisors, will be featured. Representatives from local news media outlets, community-based organizations, and the general public are all invited to join the virtual community gathering.

During the month of May, DPSS urges all County residents to support the CalFresh Awareness Month campaign by sharing CalFresh information with those in their community who need it most. The department is also encouraging the public to follow DPSS on social media and share the hashtag #ChooseCalFresh on their social media platforms.

