



# COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO

## BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

1600 PACIFIC HIGHWAY, ROOM 335, SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA 92101-2470

### AGENDA ITEM

**DATE:** January 11, 2011

**04**

**TO:** Board of Supervisors

**SUBJECT:** IMPROVING MEAL OPTIONS FOR SENIORS, DISABLED AND HOMELESS UNDER THE SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM – SNAP (DISTRICT: ALL)

#### **SUMMARY:**

##### **Overview**

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), administered in San Diego County by the Health And Human Services Agency, is a federal benefit program with the purpose of providing improved levels of nutrition to low-income households while also strengthening the local economy.

On April 21, 2009, this Board of Supervisors, at the recommendation of Supervisors Ron Roberts and Bill Horn, unanimously approved the Nutrition Security Plan with a goal of increasing SNAP participation by 50,000 kids and seniors by June 2012. As of November 30, 2010, 42,851 kids and seniors have been added, bringing us nearly 86 percent of the way to that goal. Indeed, participation in SNAP, once called Food Stamps but now known as CalFresh, has increased greatly in recent years. As of November 2010, SNAP participation exceeded 210,000 recipients and was up 79 percent compared to November 2008. A report approved by this Board on December 7, 2010, set in motion changes to further bring this benefit to those who are eligible.

Unfortunately, a segment of our eligible SNAP population struggles daily to use the benefit to acquire hot or prepared food. They may be without a residence, lack a proper cooking appliance or deal with a handicap that limits their ability to prepare certain foods.

It is our recommendation that the Board of Supervisors direct staff to report back in 90 days with the design of a program that would allow the County of San Diego to develop a feasible implementation plan allowing seniors, disabled and homeless to use their SNAP benefits at qualified restaurants while ensuring low-cost healthy options are available.

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**Recommendation(s)**

**CHAIRMAN HORN AND VICE CHAIRMAN ROBERTS**

Direct the Chief Administrative Office to report back to the Board of Supervisors within 90 days with an analysis of the feasibility, timeline, costs and resources required to implement a program that allows the senior, disabled and homeless populations to use their SNAP benefits at qualified restaurants while ensuring low-cost healthy options are available.

**Fiscal Impact**

There is no immediate fiscal impact to the County General Fund for the requested actions. Staff will return to the Board with an implementation plan that outlines the costs and sources of funding for this program.

**Business Impact Statement**

N/A

**Advisory Board Statement**

N/A

**BACKGROUND:**

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), administered in San Diego County by the Health And Human Services Agency, is a federal benefit program with the purpose of providing improved levels of nutrition to low-income households while also strengthening the local economy.

On April 21, 2009, this Board of Supervisors, at the recommendation of Supervisors Ron Roberts and Bill Horn, unanimously approved the Nutrition Security Plan with a goal of increasing SNAP participation by 50,000 kids and seniors by June 2012. As of November 2010, 42,851 kids and seniors have been added, bringing us nearly 86 percent of the way to that goal. Indeed, participation in SNAP, once called Food Stamps but now known as CalFresh, has increased greatly in recent years. As of November 2010, SNAP participation exceeded 210,000 recipients and was up 79 percent compared to November 2008. A report approved by this Board on December 7, 2010, set in motion changes to further bring this benefit to those who are eligible.

Unfortunately, a segment of our eligible SNAP population struggles daily to use the benefit to acquire hot or prepared food. They may be without a residence, lack a proper cooking appliance or deal with a handicap that limits their ability to prepare certain foods.

The United States Department of Agriculture's Food and Nutrition Service division oversees the nation's SNAP program. It allows individual states to determine whether they want to participate under federal guidelines in a program that allows certain SNAP recipients who are homeless,

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elderly or disabled to use their benefits to purchase prepared foods from restaurants. Along with Arizona, Florida and Michigan, California is one of four states authorized to take part in the program and five counties – San Francisco, Los Angeles, Sacramento, Santa Clara and Tuolumne – are now participating.

Generally speaking, the restaurant owner must first sign a Memorandum of Understanding with the county that certifies the restaurant meets state and federal requirements for participation. The owner will fill out the USDA application and the signed agreement will be filed with the state. An application must be completed for each restaurant location that wishes to accept SNAP benefits. Federal and state regulations require that restaurants provide low-cost or discounted meals during regular hours. SNAP benefits cannot be used for gratuities or alcohol.

Again, this program is limited to the homeless, elderly and disabled. It offers hot or prepared meals for a vulnerable population with limited food preparation and storage facilities. The San Diego Restaurant Association is interested in partnering with the County of San Diego on this program and interested restaurants are willing to offer low-cost healthy options.

It is our recommendation that the Board of Supervisors direct staff to report back in 90 days with the design of a program that would allow the County of San Diego to develop a feasible implementation plan allowing seniors, disabled and homeless to use their SNAP benefits at qualified restaurants while ensuring low-cost healthy options are available.

**Linkage to the County of San Diego Strategic Plan**

N/A

Respectfully submitted,

BILL HORN  
Chairman, District 5

RON ROBERTS  
Vice Chair man, District 4

**ATTACHMENT(S)**

N/A

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**AGENDA ITEM INFORMATION SHEET**

**REQUIRES FOUR VOTES:**          Yes        No

**WRITTEN DISCLOSURE PER COUNTY CHARTER SECTION 1000.1 REQUIRED**  
    Yes        No

**PREVIOUS RELEVANT BOARD ACTIONS:**  
N/A

**BOARD POLICIES APPLICABLE:**  
N/A

**BOARD POLICY STATEMENTS:**  
N/A

**MANDATORY COMPLIANCE:**  
N/A

**ORACLE AWARD NUMBER(S) AND CONTRACT AND/OR REQUISITION NUMBER(S):**  
N/A

**ORIGINATING DEPARTMENT:** District 5 and District 4, Board of Supervisors

**OTHER CONCURRENCE(S):**    N/A

**CONTACT PERSON(S):**

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