Frequently Asked Questions
Temporary Changes to the CalFresh Student Eligibility Rule

1. What Changed with the CalFresh Student Eligibility Rule?

The Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021 (H.R. 133) (the Act) temporarily changes the CalFresh student eligibility rule due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The changes are effective immediately and will remain in place until 30 days after the COVID-19 public health emergency is lifted.

If a student meets one of the following criteria, they are encouraged to apply for CalFresh:

- The student is eligible for state or federally financed work study during the regular school year, as determined by the campus financial aid office, OR
- The student has an Expected Family Contribution (EFC) of $0, as determined by the California Student Aid Commission (CSAC).

2. How has the Work Study Exemption Changed?

- Before the Act was passed, students had to be approved for work study and anticipate working during the approved term(s).
- The Act temporarily expands the work study exemption to all eligible students. In other words, it is no longer required that a student be officially approved for work study or anticipate getting a work study job.

3. What are Acceptable Verifications for Work Study Eligibility?

Acceptable verification of work study eligibility may include, but is not limited to:

- A letter from the financial aid office confirming work study eligibility.
- A completed work study verification form confirming work study eligibility.

CDSS has created a Work Study Verification Letter and Form, reflecting these temporary changes, for suggested use by financial aid offices. A sample of both can be found on the CalFresh Resource Center: Policy Guidance webpage under Student Resources.

4. What are Acceptable Verifications for $0 EFC?

Acceptable verification of $0 EFC may include, but is not limited to:

- A CSAC letter, which will be sent via email to all students with a $0 EFC for the current school year.
- A copy of the student’s Student Aid Report (SAR) showing a $0 EFC.
- A copy of the student’s Financial Aid Offer letter showing a $0 EFC.