



**CWDA**

Advancing Human Services  
for the Welfare of *All* Californians

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February 22, 2019

To: The Honorable Dr. Joaquin Arambula  
Chair, Assembly Budget Subcommittee No. 1

Honorable Members  
Assembly Budget Subcommittee No. 1

From: Frank J. Mecca, Executive Director

**RE: FUND DISASTER CALFRESH AUTOMATION IN SAWS**

The County Welfare Directors Association of California (CWDA) respectfully requests your consideration and support for funding to automate Disaster CalFresh eligibility determinations and add related forms and notices and required state reports in the CalACES systems, which will ultimately become the CalSAWS system that will be used by all counties, as part of the 2019-20 budget. Currently, the Disaster CalFresh process is largely not automated, and counties must manually track applications and outcomes. Automation would eliminate this unfunded workload and also support faster issuance of mass replacement benefits and provide support for cross-county access to enable other counties to more readily assist those impacted by a disaster. As California has faced numerous recent disasters and we unfortunately anticipate will face more in the future, the need for automation improvements has become critical, as manual processes delay and divert county staff who could otherwise be providing direct services to disaster victims.

Based on estimates gathered from CalACES, we anticipate it will cost \$1.8 million (\$900,000 state general fund) total for automation, which is anticipated to take 9 to 12 months from the time that funding is available and the changes are approved for implementation. As the CalWIN counties convert to CalSAWS, this functionality will ultimately be available statewide.

We urge you to include funding in the 2019-20 budget to automate Disaster CalFresh. This will enable counties to provide faster benefits to disaster victims, reduce manual reporting and tracking, and enable counties to support each other during disasters. Thank you for your consideration of this request.

cc: Gail Gronert, Office of the Assembly Speaker  
Jason Sisney, Office of the Assembly Speaker  
Nicole Vazquez, Assembly Budget Subcommittee No. 1  
Cyndi Hillery, Assembly Republican Fiscal Office  
Marla Cowan, Office of Assembly Member Joaquin Arambula  
Mark Newton, Legislative Analyst's Office  
Ginni Bella Navarre, Legislative Analyst's Office  
Marko Mijic, Health and Human Services Agency  
Pat Leary, California Department of Social Services  
Robert Smith, California Department of Social Services  
Kären Dickerson, California Department of Social Services  
Adam Dorsey, HHS, Department of Finance  
Jay Kapoor, HHS, Department of Finance  
Justin Garrett, California State Association of Counties  
Nick Cronenwett, California Association of Counties  
Cara Martinson, California Association of Counties  
County Caucus