

California LifeLine Public Assistance Programs

Medicaid/Medi-Cal: Medicaid is a joint federal and state program that provides health insurance coverage to low-income children, seniors and people with disabilities. Each state runs its own program. There are core rules that apply at the federal level as well as eligibility rules that are established by each state. California's Medicaid program is called Medi-Cal. For more information on eligibility or to apply, visit the state website: <http://www.medi-cal.ca.gov>.

CalFresh Program: The CalFresh Program, formerly known as Food Stamps and federally known as Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), enables low-income families to buy nutritious food with Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) cards. CalFresh participants are able to spend their benefits in authorized retail food stores. For more information about program eligibility or to apply online, visit <http://www.calfresh.ca.gov/PG847.htm>. To find a local food stamp office to apply or to request an application, visit <http://www.calfresh.ca.gov/PG839.htm> or your county welfare department.

Supplemental Security Income: Supplemental Security Income (SSI) is a federal income supplement program funded by general tax revenues and not Social Security taxes. It provides cash to aged, blind and disabled individuals who have limited or no income. The income supplement is designed to meet basic needs for food, shelter and clothing. For more information about the program or to apply, visit the national website: <http://www.socialsecurity.gov/ssi/index.htm>.

Federal Public Housing Assistance (Section 8): The Section 8 program is also referred to as the Housing Choice Voucher Program. The Housing Choice Voucher Program allows very low-income families to choose and lease or purchase safe, decent and affordable privately-owned rental housing. The program is federally subsidized and administered by local housing authorities and public housing authorities. For more details on the Section 8 program, visit the national website: <http://www.hud.gov/offices/pih/programs/hcv/about/index.cfm>.

Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP): The Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program provides two basic types of services to eligible low-income individuals: 1) financial assistance to offset the costs of heating or cooling dwelling units (their homes), and 2) free weatherization services to make their dwelling unit (home) more energy efficient. For program details, call 866-675-6623 or visit the state website at <http://www.csd.ca.gov/Programs> and click on Low-Income Home Energy Assistance in the left sidebar.

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF): This program replaced the Aid to Families with Dependent Children program (AFDC). The program provides cash assistance to needy families with dependent children; reduces the dependency of needy parents by promoting job preparation, work and marriage; prevents out-of-wedlock pregnancies; and encourages the formation and maintenance of two-parent families. For a more detailed description of the program and the work requirements, visit the national website: http://www.acf.hhs.gov/opa/fact_sheets/tanf_factsheet.html.

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National School Lunch's FREE Lunch Program: The National School Lunch Program (NSLP) is a federally funded program operating in public and nonprofit private schools and in residential childcare institutions. It is designed to give kids the healthy meal they need to learn. Children in low-income families can receive reduced price or free meals at school or childcare. For more details on the program, visit the national website: <http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/lunch/>.

Healthy Families Category A: The Healthy Families Category A is a low-cost insurance program that provides health, dental and vision coverage to children ages 0–19 who do not have insurance and do not qualify for Medi-Cal. There are three different income categories: A, B and C. Category A is just above the Medi-Cal income eligibility levels. Clients in the Healthy Families Category A pay lower premiums than the other categories. For more details, visit the state website: <http://www.healthyfamilies.ca.gov>. Or call 800-880-5305 to ask questions, receive an enrollment packet or find a Certified Application Assistant who can help you in person.

Tribal TANF: The Tribal TANF program is a cash assistance welfare program for federally-recognized Indian Tribes or certain Alaskan Native families with dependent children. This program operates under the same premise as the regular TANF program, but is administered by the Indian Tribes or Alaskan Native organizations rather than by local social services agencies. For more details, visit the national website: <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ofa/dts/>.

Bureau of Indian Affairs General Assistance: The General Assistance program is a state-mandated program that provides financial assistance to unemployed or incapacitated indigent people who are not eligible for assistance from any other source. The programs are administered at a county level and also by various Indian Tribes. The program was formerly referred to as "General Relief." To find the Department of Social or Human Services in any California county, visit the following state website: <http://www.csac.counties.org/default.asp?id=7>.

Tribal NSL/Tribal Head Start: Tribal National School Lunch program is a nutrition program for children whose families are low-income and members of federally-recognized Indian Tribes or Alaskan Natives. The program mirrors the National School Lunch's FREE Lunch Program but is administered by the Indian Tribes or Alaskan Native organizations and is for children living on tribal lands. Tribal Head Start is a development program for low-income preschoolers and their families who are members of various federally-recognized Indian Tribes or Alaskan Native organizations. For more information about the California National School Breakfast and Lunch program, visit: <http://www.benefits.gov/benefits/benefit-details/1953>. For more information about Head Start, visit the California Head Start website: <http://www.benefits.gov/benefits/benefit-details/1899>.

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Women, Infants and Children (WIC) Program: Women, Infants and Children, more commonly referred to as WIC, is a federally subsidized special supplemental nutrition program for low-income pregnant, post-partum and breast-feeding women, and for infants and children up to age 5. WIC provides checks that can be used at local food chains to buy milk, juice, eggs, cheese, cereal, dry beans/peas, iron-fortified formula and peanut butter. The programs are administered at a state level through local agencies and clinic sites. To help clients to apply or to learn more about the program, visit the national website:

<http://www.fns.usda.gov/wic/howtoapply/whogetswicandhowtoapply.htm>.

For more information and resources for California LifeLine, contact **Consumer Action:**

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