

California LifeLine qualifying public assistance programs

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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 or to apply, visit <http://www.medi-cal.ca.gov>.

Supplemental Security Income: Supplemental Security Income (SSI) is a federal income supplement program funded by general tax revenues, 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 or to apply, visit <https://www.ssa.gov/ssi/index.htm>.

CalFresh: The CalFresh program, federally known as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) (formerly "Food Stamps"), enables low-income families to buy nutritious food with funds loaded onto Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) cards. CalFresh participants are able to spend their benefits at authorized retail food stores. For more information or to apply, visit <http://www.calfresh.ca.gov/PG847.htm>.

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 (CalWORKs) program, but is administered by the tribes or native organizations rather than by local social services agencies. To find your county's Tribal TANF program, visit <http://www.cdss.ca.gov/inforesources/Tribal-TANF>.

Women, Infants and Children (WIC): Women, Infants and Children, commonly referred to as WIC, is a federally subsidized supplemental nutrition program for low-income pregnant, post-partum and breast-feeding women, and for infants and children up to the age of five years. WIC provides checks that can be used at local retailers to buy milk, juice, eggs, cheese, cereal, dry beans/peas, iron-fortified formula and peanut butter. The program is administered at a state level through local agencies and clinic sites. For more information or to apply, visit <https://www.fns.usda.gov/wic/who-gets-wic-and-how-apply>.

Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP): The Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program provides two basic types of service to eligible low-income individuals: 1) financial assistance to offset the costs of heating or cooling their home, and 2) free weatherization services to make their home more energy efficient. For more information or to apply, call 866-675-6623 or visit <http://www.csd.ca.gov/Services/HelpPayingUtilityBills.aspx>.

Federal Public Housing Assistance (Section 8): The Housing Choice Voucher Program, also known as Section 8, enables very low-income families to choose and lease or purchase safe, decent and affordable privately-owned housing. Housing choice vouchers are federally funded and administered locally by public housing agencies. For more information or to apply, visit https://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/topics/housing_choice_voucher_program_section_8.

National School Lunch Program: The National School Lunch Program (NSLP) is a federally funded program operating in public and non-profit 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. (Applicants for California LifeLine must receive *free*, not reduced price, school meals.) For more information or to apply, visit <https://www.fns.usda.gov/nslp/national-school-lunch-program-nslp>.

Bureau of Indian Affairs Financial Assistance and Social Services: This general assistance program provides financial assistance to unemployed or incapacitated qualifying individuals. The program, formerly referred to as “General Relief,” is administered at a county level by various Indian Tribes. For more information or to apply, visit <https://www.benefits.gov/benefits/benefit-details/801>.

Head Start (income eligible, tribal only): Head Start is a federal program that promotes the school readiness of children from low-income families from birth to age five. Tribal Head Start serves low-income preschoolers and their families who are members of various federally-recognized Indian Tribes or Alaskan Native organizations. For more information or to apply, visit <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/ohs>.

Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR): FDPIR allows Indian Tribal Organizations (ITOs) to operate a food distribution program as an alternative to the federal food stamp program (SNAP) for those living on or near an Indian reservation. For more information or to apply, visit <https://www.fns.usda.gov/fdpir/fdpir-contacts>.

Federal Veterans and Survivors Pension Benefit Program: This is a tax-free monetary benefit payable to a low-income, un-remarried surviving spouse and/or unmarried child(ren) of a deceased veteran with wartime service. For more information or to apply, visit <https://www.benefits.gov/benefits/benefit-details/285>.

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF/CalWORKs): CalWORKs, which replaced the Aid to Families with Dependent Children program (AFDC) in California, 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 more information or to apply, visit <http://www.cdss.ca.gov/CalWORKS>.

For more information and resources related to California LifeLine, contact Consumer Action:

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