

CSFP Caseload Management: Best Practices and Lessons Learned

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Overview

Caseload & the Caseload Allocation Process

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Caseload Management Best Practices

Katie Clifford, Senior Program Specialist, USDA Western Regional Office

Caseload Management Best Practices for State Agencies

Matt McElhaney, Coordinator for Commodity Operations, Texas
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Caseload Management Best Practices for Local Agencies

Shelly Parks, Director of Programs, Jacobs & Cushman San Diego Food
Bank



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Caseload & the Caseload Allocation Process

Erica Antonson
Policy Branch Chief
USDA National Office



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What is “caseload”?

The total number of people that may be served a CSFP food package on an average monthly basis from January 1 through December 31.



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Determining Caseload Levels

- Caseload levels are set each year. First at the national level, then for individual States.
- The national caseload level is determined by the amount of funding appropriated by Congress.
- Once Congress passes the Agriculture Appropriations Bill, FNS staff from the Office of Financial Management calculate the number of caseload slots that can be supported nationally based on the funding level provided by Congress, as well as other factors.

How Caseload is Allocated

- **Step 1:** Determine “Base Caseload” for currently participating States, should resources support it.
- **Step 2:** If “Base Caseload” for all States equals less than the total caseload available nationally, consider “Additional Caseload” requests from currently participating States.
- **Step 3:** If “Base Caseload” + “Additional Caseload” equals less than the total caseload available nationally, consider caseload requests from new States.
- **Step 4:** Assign Caseload

Caseload Management: Why is it Important?

- CSFP is a discretionary program with limited resources.
- Because resources are limited, State agencies are required to ensure that program participation does not exceed the State's caseload allocation on an average monthly basis. See 7 CFR 247.6.
- Conversely, using less caseload than what is assigned means that food resources could be going unused when individuals are in need of food assistance.

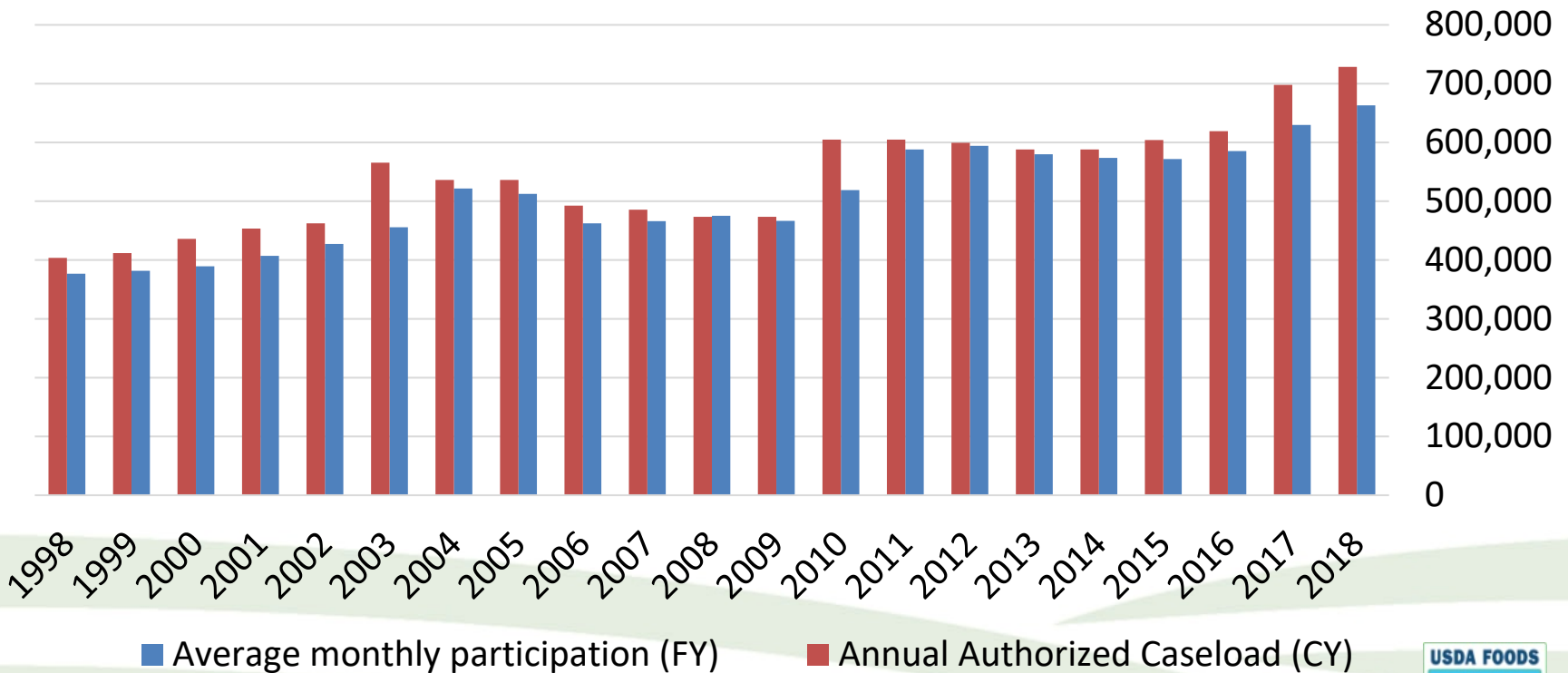
Active Monitoring of Participation & Caseload Use

- State agency staff must actively monitor program participation rates and overall caseload use each month.
- The FNS-153 Report is due to FNS each month. The data provided on this report will help you monitor participation and caseload use.
- Many States use computer software to monitor and manage caseload use, such as Microsoft Excel. Trends can then be identified and addressed.



Participation vs. Caseload

CSFP Average Monthly
Participation vs. Caseload
Fiscal Year (FY) 1998 – 2018*
(*FY 2018 Data Available through January)



Caseload Management Best Practices

Katie Clifford
Senior Program Specialist
USDA Western Regional
Office



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Caseload Management Best Practices

- Use of Waiting Lists
- Communication between State and local agencies
- Early Distributions
- Allowance of Proxies
- No-Show Policies
- In-State Caseload Adjustments
- CSFP Outreach Initiatives



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Waiting Lists

- To fully use caseload, State agencies may permit issuance of temporary benefits to individuals on waiting lists.
- Notification of placement back on the waiting list is required at the time of issuance.

Communication

- **Critical between the State and local agencies, and the local agencies and applicants/participants**
- **Local agency should inform the new participant of the time, location, and means of food distribution, as well as the length of the certification period. See 7 CFR 247.15.**

Early Distributions

- To the extent feasible, local agencies should distribute CSFP food packages early in the month.
- This gives local agencies additional time to make alternate arrangements if a participant is unable to make a scheduled distribution, or unforeseen circumstances (e.g., hazardous weather) prevent the local agency from distributing CSFP food packages.



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Proxies

- **State agencies may permit their local agencies to use proxies.**
- **A proxy is any person designated by the participant, or the caretaker of the participant, to obtain CSFP foods on behalf of the participant.**
- **Allowing the use of proxies in CSFP significantly reduces a barrier to participation in the program for eligible homebound seniors and other qualified individuals with limited mobility.**



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No-Show Policies

- States may institute no-show policies, or permit their local agencies to do so.
- In some States, after a participant misses two or three consecutive distributions, that individual is discontinued from the program with at least 15 days' written notice prior to the effective date. See 7 CFR 247.17.
- No-show policies enable local agencies to better serve individuals on the waiting list.



In-State Caseload Adjustments

- **State agencies are permitted to adjust local agencies' caseload and administrative funding allocations, based on past performance.**
- **Adjustments may be performed annually or at another frequency, provided the State communicates its performance expectations up front.**
- **State should ensure that participants currently being served are not discontinued from CSFP due to performance adjustments.**



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CSFP Outreach Initiatives

Rhode Island CSFP-SNAP Outreach Pilot

- **CSFP-SNAP collaboration to increase CSFP participation in a newer State**
- **Outreach included a flyer with information about CSFP mailed to eligible SNAP households with seniors ages 60 years and older**
- **Can serve as a model for similar outreach partnerships in other CSFP States**

CSFP Caseload Management Best Practices for State Agencies

Matt McElhaney
Coordinator for Commodity
Operations
Texas Department of
Agriculture



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CSFP in Texas (General Overview)

- Administered by the Texas Dept. of Agriculture
- 10 local agencies in direct agreement (all food banks) / Under 600 distribution sites
- Available in 74 of 254 counties
- Caseload Expansion:
 - 2015: 34,627
 - 2016: 37,229 (increase of 2,602)
 - 2017: 49,952 (increase of 12,723)
 - 2018: 60,187 (increase of 10,235)



State Caseload Management Strategies

Caseload Assignment

- **Application/Plan of Operation is the foundation**
 - Local agencies provide their caseload capability
 - Also provide number of applicants on waiting list
- **Expansion to New Areas for CSFP?**
 - State sets minimum starting point; LA agrees
 - Existing LAs receive temporary increase

State Caseload Management Strategies

Best Practices

- **Take Advantage of USDA's Allowances:**
 - One Month Certification / Waiting List
 - Advance Issuance / Bi-Monthly Distributions
 - In-state Caseload Adjustments
 - Local Agency No-Show Policies
 - Hit Average Markers (if not annual, make final qtr.)

State Caseload Management Strategies

Additional Best Practices

- Provide local agencies an “open door” policy
- Give local agencies a chance...to a certain point
- Tie food orders to caseload performance
 - Texas orders on behalf of LAs due to logistics
 - 98% direct delivery
 - Orders all but one CSFP item



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State Caseload Management Strategies

Additional Best Practices – cont'd.

- Keep an active network
- Provide resources
- Stick to mission/vision
- Entrust your local agencies



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CSFP Caseload Management Best Practices for Local Agencies

Shelly Parks
Director of Programs
Jacobs & Cushman
San Diego Food Bank



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Context: Scope of Services



San Diego

- Population: 3.3M (more people than 22 states)
- Area: 4,526 mi²

Jacobs & Cushman San Diego Food Bank

- 26M lbs distributed annually
- 370,000 people served monthly
- 57-61 staff; 25,000 volunteers
- 11,700 CSFP caseload



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Build Your Infrastructure for Success

- Pre-assemble CSFP boxes
- Use live, real-time database
- Adequate staff & volunteer support
- Staff & volunteer training
- Add produce/bread to distributions



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Outreach, Outreach, Outreach

- Leverage food pantry partners
- Engage in community collaboratives
- Conduct physical outreach



Food Locator Service FEEDING SAN DIEGO

Map Satellite

Search Search Radius (miles) Search Print

Food Program	Foods Typically Available	Hours of Operation	Holiday Closures	Eligibility Requirements
Agape Christian Center 2107 I Avenue, National City, 91950 (619) 434-1686	bread and pastries, snacks, fresh produce	Every Wednesday at 6:00 pm	none scheduled	None



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Inreach, Inreach, Inreach

- Mailers
- Emails
- Phone calls
- “Bring a Friend”
- Tracking and correcting patterns of low attendance
- Proxies

Jacobs & Cushman San Diego Food Bank's
SENIOR FOOD PROGRAM
Open enrollment is happening now
for seniors 60+ years of age!

BRING A FRIEND!
What to bring?
- Photo I.D.
- Proof of address

Income guidelines:

Household Size	Gross Monthly Income	Annual Gross Income
1	\$1,307	\$15,678
2	\$1,760	\$21,112
3	\$2,213	\$26,546

SanDiegoFoodBank.org/Senior
USDA is an equal opportunity employer

SENIOR FOOD PROGRAM
We've missed you!

Please remember to visit your local distribution site to pick up your food box this month.

For your local distribution site, call the Food Bank
1-866-350-FOOD (3663) or call 2-1-1
SanDiegoFoodBank.org/Senior

SENIOR FOOD PROGRAM PROXY FORM

DATE: _____

AUTHORIZATION:
I hereby authorize _____
to pick up my food box this month. I am unable to pick up my food personally and understand if I miss my pick up for consecutive months that I am at risk of being dropped from the program.

CARD ENROLLMENT #	PARTICIPANT NAME	BIRTHDAY

Participant Signature _____
"This institution is an equal opportunity provider."

FNS

State Agency



Local Agency

Through strong collaboration, CSFP's goal to provide nutritious food and a healthier lifestyle to low-income seniors will be accomplished.



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Q&A



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