



LEGISLATIVE INFORMATION

[Home](#) | [Bill Information](#) | [California Law](#) | [Publications](#) | [Other Resources](#) | [My Subscriptions](#) | [My Favorites](#)

AB-1952 Social services: access to food. (2017-2018)

SHARE THIS:



Date Published: 01/29/2018 09:00 PM

CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE— 2017-2018 REGULAR SESSION

ASSEMBLY BILL**No. 1952**

**Introduced by Assembly Members Mayes, Arambula, and Steinorth
(Coauthor: Senator Wiener)**

January 29, 2018

An act relating to food access.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 1952, as introduced, Mayes. Social services: access to food.

Existing law provides the federal Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), administered in California as CalFresh, under which each county distributes nutrition assistance benefits provided by the federal government to eligible households. Existing state law authorizes a county to deliver CalFresh benefits through the use of an electronic benefits transfer (EBT) acceptance system.

Existing law, until January 1, 2022, encourages the Regents of the University of California, and requires the Trustees of the California State University and the Board of Governors of the California Community Colleges, to designate as a "hunger-free campus" each of the institutions' respective campuses that meet specified criteria, including having a campus employee designated to help ensure that students have the information they need to enroll in CalFresh.

This bill would require the State Department of Social Services, the State Department of Public Health, the State Department of Education, and the Department of Food and Agriculture, to develop a plan to end hunger. The bill would require the plan to be distributed to the Legislature no later than January 1, 2020, and would establish criteria for the plan, including that the plan request the Regents of the University of California, and direct the Trustees of the California State University and the Board of Governors of the California Community Colleges, to develop systems that allow EBT cards to be used on their respective campuses, and present a

report to the Assembly Select Committee on Campus Climate on the progress that has been made, by March 1, 2019.

Vote: majority Appropriation: no Fiscal Committee: yes Local Program: no

THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA DO ENACT AS FOLLOWS:

SECTION 1. This act shall be known, and may be cited, as the Envision a Hunger-Free California Act of 2018.

SEC. 2. The Legislature hereby finds and declares all of the following:

(a) Access to adequate, nutritious food benefits the health and welfare of all Californians at every income level.

(b) California produces about 25 percent of the world's food, but in many communities throughout the state there is limited access to quality food, which negatively affects those living at or near the poverty line, cash-poor college graduates, working families, single parents, and disadvantaged communities.

(c) California's diverse geography and demographics unfortunately increase the likelihood of food deserts, as defined by the United States Department of Food and Agriculture, that limit food access for hundreds of thousands of California residents, and this results in poor health outcomes.

(d) High-cost and congested areas of the state also experience limited access to food and often provide few opportunities for food businesses to relocate to those "food-poor" areas.

(e) California should take steps to ensure access to adequate, nutritious food in all communities across the state.

(f) The food insecurity rate is the percentage of a state's population that experience limited or uncertain access to adequate healthy food at some point during the year. People who experience food insecurity often have to reduce the quality or variety of their diet, and sometimes experience hunger. California's food insecurity rate is 12.5 percent.

(g) Food insecurity is primarily a symptom of poverty, and poverty is substantially higher among Latinos and other communities of color.

(h) Research in child brain development has shown that even one experience of hunger as a child can impact the health and mental well-being of a person into their adult years. Research has similarly demonstrated the long-term academic and economic consequences of how hunger limits a person's life chances.

(i) Hunger, food insecurity and lack of healthy food choices contribute to our state's high childhood obesity rate. California's childhood obesity rate is 16.6 percent for children who are two to four years of age, inclusive, and are beneficiaries of the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children, also known as WIC. The obesity rate is 31.2 percent for children in California who are 10 to 17 years of age, inclusive, and the current obesity rate for high school pupils in California is 13.9 percent.

(j) Lack of adequate healthy food options increases the likelihood and impact of diabetes and prediabetes. Care and treatment cost an estimated \$37.1 billion in California each year and affect almost 15 million Californians, limiting their life possibilities.

(k) The Legislature is calling on all partners to make eradication of hunger and food insecurity in our bountiful state a priority and work with us to collectively envision and enact a future without hunger.

(l) The Legislature resolves to support a process by which all food system stakeholders will be engaged and collaborate at the local, regional, and state levels to remove barriers to adequate, nutritious food choices and ensure that a vibrant and sustainable food system is available across all communities statewide.

SEC. 3. The State Department of Social Services, the State Department of Public Health, the State

Department of Education, and the Department of Food and Agriculture, in consultation with a robust stakeholder group, shall jointly develop a plan to end hunger. The plan shall be distributed to the Legislature no later than January 1, 2020, in accordance with Section 9795 of the Government Code. The plan shall, at a minimum, do all of the following:

- (a) Identify food deserts, as defined by the United States Department of Food and Agriculture, and make maps of food deserts available online.
- (b) Identify barriers in bringing retailers to certain locations, such as those in food deserts. These barriers may include, but are not limited to, certain city zoning ordinances, restrictive covenants, the requirements imposed by the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) process, the limitations of the public transportation system, and other restrictions imposed in order to protect public safety.
- (c) Identify infrastructure needs to develop food hubs and consult with the Department of General Services in order to conduct an inventory of state-owned property that would be suitable for food hub locations.
- (d) Explore methods to use new and existing resources to develop a food hub infrastructure and to utilize county fairgrounds as food hub locations.
- (e) Establish a budget of ____ dollars (\$____), contingent on an appropriation in the annual Budget Act or another measure, for the Department of Food and Agriculture to identify grant opportunities, with a priority given to regional planning connection strategy models between rural and urban areas demonstrating economic development, job benefits, and green house gas emission reductions. The Department of Food and Agriculture is authorized to use these funds to support other local food hub efforts, taking into consideration the need in the community and geographic diversity.
- (f) Identify and facilitate stakeholder engagement, including representatives from impacted communities.
- (g) Make recommendations for improving food access, including funding.
- (h) Include a plan, which shall be presented to the Director of Social Services by May 1, 2019, to encourage the use of electronic benefits transfer (EBT) at farmers' markets and retailers in a food desert, or a retailer that can ship to a food desert, for the purchase of fruits and vegetables.
- (i) Include a plan, which shall be presented to the Legislature by May 1, 2019, for statewide universal school feeding programs, prioritizing schools with the neediest populations, including a summer lunch EBT program serving children in food deserts who cannot access feeding sites in the event the federal government does not act. The plan shall be submitted in compliance with Section 9795 of the Government Code. The plan shall identify a system for measuring outcomes that include, but are not limited to, all of the following:
 - (1) Increased time spent in school through enrollment, attendance, and reduced dropout rates.
 - (2) Increased cognition and improved learning.
 - (3) Improved healthcare outcomes and fewer days of school missed due to illness.
- (j) (1) Request the Regents of the University of California, and direct the Trustees of the California State University and the Board of Governors of the California Community Colleges, to develop systems that allow EBT cards to be used on their respective campuses, and prepare and present to the Assembly Select Committee on Campus Climate a report on the progress that has been made, by March 1, 2019.
 - (2) The requirement to submit a report under this subdivision shall be inoperative on January 1, 2023.