



"Hunger among the elderly is not a new phenomenon. Unlike other diseases that afflict a person or a group of people, hunger seeks no magical potion that has yet to be invented in a laboratory. The solutions to this disease are out there."

- Enid Borden, Founder & President of National Foundation to End Senior Hunger

Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP)

The number of older adults is projected to increase over the next decade and continue to rise in the following decade. In 2040 there will be 79.7 million older adults, more than twice as many as in 2000.¹ Furthermore, the number of food insecure seniors is projected to increase by 50% by the year 2025.² These changing demographics will have profound impacts on the demand for social services, especially the need for adequate and culturally appropriate nutrition services.

The Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP) is the only USDA nutrition program that provides monthly food assistance specially targeted at low-income seniors.³ With one in 12 households with seniors at risk of hunger nationwide, CSFP prevents vulnerable seniors from having to choose between food and other basic needs.⁴ This whitepaper will explain CSFP, how it operates in Alaska, and how to connect senior clients with this great resource.

What is CSFP?

The Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP) is a federal food program designed to meet the unique nutritional needs of participants, supplementing diets with a monthly package of healthy, nutritious USDA commodities.⁵ While CSFP does not provide a complete diet, the senior food package is designed to provide nutrients typically lacking in the diet of that population, including protein, calcium, potassium, magnesium, several vitamins, and fiber.⁶ Food packages contain a variety of foods, such as dry beans, canned fruits and vegetables, cheese, and milk.

How Does it Operate in Alaska?



USDA purchases food and makes it available to the State of Alaska Department of Health and Social Services. This food is then made available to Food Bank of Alaska and the Fairbanks Community Food Bank, who determine client eligibility and coordinate distribution. Food packages are typically distributed through partner agencies located in various communities around the state. Clients get one box a month, and usually have set pick up days, although some options exist for home delivery. Distributions occur at 34 different sites around the state.

¹ U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration on Aging. (2012). A profile of Older Americans: 2012

² [Feeding America, Senior Hunger Facts.](#)

³ While the program serves a small number of low-income women, infants and children, roughly 98% of participants are elderly people.

⁴ [Feeding America, Commodity Supplemental Food Program \(CSFP\).](#)

⁵ [Feeding America, Commodity Supplemental Food Program \(CSFP\).](#)

⁶ [Feeding America, Commodity Supplemental Food Program \(CSFP\).](#)

How your Clients can Participate

Alaska residents over 60 who meet the income guidelines (130% of the federal poverty level) are eligible for CSFP. Income guidelines for 2014-15 are:

Family Size	Annual Income	Monthly Income
1	\$18,954	\$1,580
2	\$25,558	\$2,130
3	\$32,162	\$2,681
4	\$38,766	\$3,231
5	\$45,370	\$3,781
6	\$51,974	\$4,332
7	\$58,578	\$4,882
8	\$65,182	\$5,432
For each additional family member add...	+ \$6,604	+ \$551

Currently, the state allows a caseload of 2119 participants in CSFP each month, but both Food Bank of Alaska and Fairbanks Community Food Bank are looking to expand their client lists. If you have clients who would like to participate in CSFP, there are two options: 1) match them up with an existing CSFP distribution site, or 2) start a new distribution site. To determine the best option for clients in your community, contact your local CSFP manager:

For communities north of Tok:

Pam DeMeritt
Fairbanks Community Food Bank
907-374-0555
prothwell@fairbanksfoodbank.org

For communities south of Tok:

Sandra Mitchell
Food Bank of Alaska
907-222-3104
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Copies of Alaska Food Coalition White Papers are available online:

<http://www.alaskafood.org/whitepapers.shtml>

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