



**OFFICE OF TRIBAL AFFAIRS**  
CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

## ***OTA Bulletin***

*Sharing CDSS tribal stakeholder opportunities, useful resources and events.*

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# **CDSS COVID-19 Tribal Engagement Digest, Volume 4**

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This digest is intended to inform tribes and tribal stakeholders of the continuing COVID-19 response efforts by California Department of Social Services (CDSS) and state and federal partners, as appropriate. Please read below for the most up-to-date requirements, flexibilities, guidance, resources and funding opportunities related to the Coronavirus (COVID-19) and click the appropriate subject matter links to read

content in its entirety.

### Digest Highlights

- Farmers to Families Food Box Program
- CalFresh Food Benefits Now Can Be Used to Purchase Groceries Online
- Home Visit Videoconferencing
- Paycheck Protection Program Interim Rule Updated to Allow Gaming Eligibility
- Child Care Portal

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### **HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS:**

#### [Project Roomkey](#)

The goal of this effort is to provide non-congregate

shelter options for people experiencing homelessness, to protect human life, and minimize strain on health care system capacity. The project will be based on the individual needs in your community. We understand that will look different for tribal communities and have a team to be a thought partner to support that. The majority of Project Roomkey expenditures are federally reimbursable under FEMA, for both hotel/motel room occupancy agreements and operating services, at 75 percent federal share of cost. [Care should be taken to ensure that adequate information is collected, and processes followed, to ensure such reimbursement is possible. See FEMA's procurement guidance for more information.]

If there are any questions on Project Roomkey, please send those to the Housing and Homelessness Branch at [housing@dss.ca.gov](mailto:housing@dss.ca.gov)

Additional Project Roomkey Resources:

[Project Roomkey Announcement](#)

[Project Roomkey Fact Sheet](#)

[FEMA Guidance](#)

[HUD definition of homelessness](#)

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## **FOOD SECURITY:**

[Farmers to Families Food Box Program](#)

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) today announced that it is exercising authority under the

Families First Coronavirus Response Act to purchase and distribute up to \$3 billion of agricultural products to those in need. USDA will directly partner with regional and local distributors, whose workforce has been significantly impacted by the closure of many restaurants, hotels, and other food service entities, to purchase \$3 billion in fresh produce, dairy, and meat products.

USDA will award contracts for the purchase of the agricultural products, the assembly of commodity boxes and delivery to identified non-profit organizations that can receive, store and distribute food items. Although the CDSS and the CalFresh and Nutrition Branch are not responsible for administration of this USDA program, they are actively encouraging entities planning to submit

bids for the Farmers to Families Food Box Program to include food delivery directly to tribes due to gaps in food security identified by California Tribes through the Office of Tribal Affairs. The CDSS similarly encourages California Tribes to monitor the progress of this program and to reach out to distributors who are awarded USDA contracts to ensure they are included in distributions of these resources.

For more information on the Farmers to Families Food Box Program, see the informational links below.

[USDA Farmers to Families Food Box](#)

[Farmers to Families Food Box Program FAQs](#)

[Request for Proposals Frequently Asked Questions](#)

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## **CALFRESH & NUTRITION BRANCH**

### **UPDATES:**

[Governor Newsom Announces Expansion of Farm to Family Program and New Initiatives to Combat Food Insecurity](#)

[CalFresh Food Benefits Now Can Be Used to Purchase Groceries Online](#)

To help ensure that California children, families, and individuals have access to food during the COVID-19 emergency, Californians who receive CalFresh food assistance can now use their Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) cards to make online food purchases through Amazon and

Walmart. Allowing for EBT online purchases will support vulnerable populations in meeting their nutrition needs, especially while a statewide stay at home order remains in place.

**EBT Resources:**

[Electronic Benefit Transfer \(EBT\) Online](#)

[CalFresh Benefits COMING SOON! Flyer](#)

[Q&A Fact Sheet](#)

[Pandemic EBT](#)

Because schools are closed due to COVID-19, children who are eligible for free or reduced-price meals can get up to \$365 in food benefits in addition to their pickup meals from school. These food benefits are called Pandemic EBT or P-EBT. Most families with children who applied for

CalFresh or Medi-Cal benefits do not need to apply. They will get their P-EBT card in the mail during the month of May. P-EBT cards will begin arriving around May 12, 2020 through May 22, 2020. Families with children who are eligible for free and reduced-price meals and who do not get their P-EBT card in the mail by May 22, 2020 must apply online before June 30, 2020.

#### [CalFresh COVID-19 Fact Sheet](#)

CalFresh food benefits are available to individuals and families who have been impacted by COVID-19. CalFresh provides monthly food benefits based on household income and expenses at the time of application. Even if temporary, individuals and families who have experienced a change in their circumstances may apply for CalFresh

through one of California's 58 counties.

Californian's can visit [GetCalFresh.org](http://GetCalFresh.org) to apply or call 1-877-847-3663 (FOOD) to be connected to their local county social service office.

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## **CHILD WELFARE UPDATES:**

### [ALL COUNTY LETTER NO. 20-47](#)

The purpose of this letter is to provide guidance pertaining to Adoption Assistance Program eligibility reassessment and Kin-GAP eligibility redetermination requirements to ensure that children who achieved permanence through adoption and guardianship continue to be supported during the COVID-19 state of emergency.

## ALL COUNTY INFORMATION NOTICE NO. I-33-20

This notice provides clarification regarding how visits conducted using videoconferencing will impact Monthly Caseworker Visits (MCV) compliance requirements.

### Remote Appearance by an Indian Child's Tribe in ICWA Proceedings – Invitation to Comment

The Tribal Court–State Court Forum and the Family and Juvenile Law Advisory Committee recommend that the Judicial Council amend rules 5.9, 5.482, and 5.531 of the California Rules of Court, effective January 1, 2021, to permit an Indian child's tribe to participate by telephone or other computerized remote means in any hearing in a proceeding governed by the Indian Child

Welfare Act.

The forum and advisory committee are interested in comments on this proposal. The deadline for comments is June 9, 2020, 5:00 PM Pacific.

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### **iFoster and Boost Mobile Phones for Foster Youth Pilot Program**

The iFoster and Boost Mobile Phones for Foster Youth Pilot Program provides a free smartphone with unlimited voice, text, high speed data, and hotspot capability to current and former foster youth residing in California.

Phones for Foster Youth Resources:

- [Phones for Foster Youth Application](#)

- [iFoster Phones for Foster Youth Frequently Asked Questions](#)

### **Foster Care Ombudsperson Hotline:**

If you are concerned about the care, placement, services or rights of children in foster care, call the Foster Care Ombudsperson hotline: (877) 846-1602. Service is available 7 days a week, 8 a.m. - 5 p.m.

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### **2021 Annual Progress and Services Report (APSR) Tribal Consultation**

The CDSS respectfully invites all California Tribal Leader and or their designees to participate in a government-to-government consultation on the

2021 APSR. This is the first annual update to the California Child and Family Services Report (CFSP) for Federal Fiscal Years 2020-2024. The APSR includes the Chafee Foster Care Program for Successful Transition to Adulthood and Education and Training programs. Due to the current state of emergency, consultation will take place via webinar on May 19, 2020 and May 27, 2020.

To register as tribal government for purposes of tribal consultation, please email [Tribal.Consultation@dss.ca.gov](mailto:Tribal.Consultation@dss.ca.gov) for more information.

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**COMMUNITY CARE LICENSING UPDATE:**

## [Child Care Portal](#)

On April 30, 2020, Governor Newsom announced a new portal to help Californians working in essential sectors find safe, reliable and accessible child care options. Use the statewide portal to find open childcare providers near you.

To find child care

1. Go to [MyChildCare.ca.gov](https://mychildcare.ca.gov).
2. Search by location, health and safety details, ages of children, capacity, and hours of care.

If you have questions about the provider, your [local child care resource and referral agency](#) can help.

They can also help you understand child care options and how to access child care subsidies.

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## **FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES:**

### [Paycheck Protection Program Interim Rule Updated to Allow Gaming Eligibility](#)

On April 24, 2020, after weeks of inter-tribal advocacy, the Small Business Administration (SBA), in consultation with the United States Treasury Department, updated its [Interim Rule](#) to provide that businesses that receive revenue from gaming are eligible for the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP). The rule has been revised to read that a business that is otherwise eligible for a PPP Loan is not rendered ineligible due to its receipt of legal gaming revenues.

The PPP will be available through June 30, 2020. Consult the official [SBA website](#) for more

information.

The [COVID-19 Emergency Grant](#) is made available through the Tribal Nation Grant Fund to eligible tribes to prepare for and respond to the threat of COVID-19. COVID-19 Emergency Grant funds may be used to fund programs, procurement of supplies, and actions taken in response to guidance of public health officials to address the threat of COVID-19, so long as those programs, supplies, and actions are not otherwise funded or provided by sources outside of the Tribal Nation Grant Fund. Please note that the filing deadline for applications is April 30, 2020 11:59 PM (Eastern).

**FY 2020 Coronavirus Emergency  
Supplemental Funding Program:**

The Coronavirus Emergency Supplemental Funding Program will provide funding to assist eligible states, local units of government, and tribes in preventing, preparing for, and responding to the coronavirus. Allowable projects and purchases include, but are not limited to, overtime, equipment (including law enforcement and medical personal protective equipment), hiring, supplies (such as gloves, masks, sanitizer), training, travel expenses, and addressing the medical needs of inmates in state, local, and tribal prisons, jails, and detention centers.

The application deadline is May 29, 2020, 11:59 PM (Eastern).

[Supporting Tribal Public Health Capacity in Coronavirus Preparedness and Response](#)

The Centers for Disease Control has announced a new notice of funding opportunity, Supporting Tribal Public Health Capacity in Coronavirus Preparedness and Response. Visit the [COVID-19 Funding for Tribes web page](#) to learn more. The purpose of this funding opportunity is to provide emergency funding for federally recognized tribes, tribal organizations, consortia of federally recognized tribes, or their bona fide agents that represent tribal components of the public health system to carry out COVID-19 preparedness and response activities. Applications are due 11:59:59 pm (EDT), May 31, 2020. If you have questions about this funding opportunity, email [TribalCOVIDnofo@cdc.gov](mailto:TribalCOVIDnofo@cdc.gov).

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**ASSEMBLY SELECT COMMITTEE ON  
NATIVE AMERICAN AFFAIRS TELE-TOWN  
HALL:**

On April 28, 2020, Assemblymember James Ramos (D-Highland) held a tele-town hall meeting with tribal representatives and state officials to discuss how Indian Country can build a better infrastructure for times of crisis. Agenda topics included: current infrastructure and needs, building relationships for effective infrastructure and coordinating with CalOES and other state resources.

To listen to the tele-town hall visit:

<https://a40.asmdc.org/covid-19-teleconference-town-hall-series>

If you have any questions, contact the [Office of Assemblymember Ramos](#).

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**CALIFORNIA CONSORTIUM ON URBAN INDIAN HEALTH (CCUIH):**

CCUIH is providing resources to Native Americans in response to COVID-19 emergency. To learn more please visit their website at <https://ccuih.org/covid19/>.

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**MEETING UPDATES AND CANCELLATION NOTICES:**

Tribal Advisory Committee

The CDSS Office of Tribal Affairs (OTA) is cancelling the Tribal Advisory Committee (TAC) meeting scheduled for May 22 due to the rapidly changing environment surrounding COVID-19. If you would like more information regarding COVID-19, please visit [California Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) Response](#) website.

The OTA is working to determine when the TAC meeting will be rescheduled and hopes to provide an announcement as soon as possible.

Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System (AFCARS) Steering Committee

The next ICWA AFCARS Steering Committee meeting will take place via WebEx on May 13,

2020. The CDSS will be sending out subsequent meeting links in this digest at a later time to ensure that this important work continues.

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To subscribe to our mailing list, please contact the Office of Tribal Affairs at [TribalAffairs@dss.ca.gov](mailto:TribalAffairs@dss.ca.gov).

To view previous volumes of the CDSS COVID-19 Tribal Engagement Digest, see the following links.

[OTA COVID-19 Digest Volume 1](#)

[OTA COVID-19 Digest Volume 2](#)

[OTA COVID-19 Digest Volume 3](#)

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