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Contact: Joe Shumate, Communications Officer
619.501.7917 ext. 106 | joseph@sdhunger.org

San Diego Hunger Coalition Hosts 2019 CalFresh Challenge

Asks San Diegans to eat on the average CalFresh budget of \$4.07/day per person

San Diego, May 13, 2019 – San Diego Hunger Coalition challenges San Diegans to eat on the average San Diego CalFresh Budget of \$4.07/day per person. Those who choose to participate in the **2019 CalFresh Challenge** may do so for 1, 3, or 5 days. The Hunger Coalition invites participants to document their experiences and share them on social media to increase awareness of food insecurity and the importance of the CalFresh program in San Diego County.

While **CalFresh is a vital tool in the fight against hunger**, living on just \$4.07/day per person highlights how CalFresh benefits may be insufficient in helping people meet their basic needs. **The CalFresh Challenge dispels the myth of people choosing public assistance as a way of life** by demonstrating how hard it is to meet nutritional needs on a meager food budget and giving a small glimpse into what it's like to be food insecure.

Can you eat on just \$4.07/day per person?

What: 2019 CalFresh Challenge

When: May 13 – 17, 2019

Information, registration, and guidelines: sdhunger.org/cfc

Food Insecurity: Based on San Diego Hunger Coalition research:

- **450,000 San Diegans**, or **1 in 7**, don't always have enough to eat.
- **1 in 5 children** are food insecure.
- **1 in 11 older adults** don't always have enough food.

Food insecurity can have detrimental effects on health, longevity, and productivity. In children it can have permanent effects on physical and cognitive development. **San Diego Hunger Coalition works with over 100 local partners in hunger relief and facilitates the CalFresh Task Force, a collaborative of nonprofit and government agencies working together to reduce barriers and increase enrollment in CalFresh through community-based application assistance.**

CalFresh: Known nationally as SNAP and formerly as food stamps, CalFresh is the cornerstone of our nation's hunger relief system. Since its nationwide implementation in 1974, it has been a successful model of hunger and poverty prevention on a massive scale. CalFresh is designed to provide supplemental income in the form of food benefits to promote nutrition in low-income households and lift our most vulnerable residents out of poverty. According to data provided by the County of San Diego Health and Human Services Agency, nearly 400,000 San Diegans relied on CalFresh to meet their basic needs last year, **and the average amount of time a household stays on CalFresh is 2 years.**

CalFresh (SNAP) currently accounts for 60% of all food assistance in San Diego County. Even a 20% cut to SNAP at the federal level, which was proposed for the 2020 federal budget, would require San Diego food banks and pantries to more than double the pounds of food they distribute.

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San Diego Hunger Coalition is standing by to provide information and interviews. If you would like to take the CalFresh Challenge or have a Hunger Coalition representative walk you through a shopping trip on a CalFresh budget, please contact Joe Shumate, Communications Officer, at joseph@sdhunger.org.

