

**FSTF Meeting Minutes**  
**October 29, 2025**  
**2:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.**  
**Virtual Meeting via Zoom**

Click [here](#) to view the meeting recording

**Task Force Members Present:** Priti Rane (DPH/Nutrition Services); Tiffany Kearney (DAS); Michelle Kim (DCYF); Marion Sanders (HSH); Mei Ling Hui (SF Park & Rec); Jennifer LeBarre (SFUSD); Cissie Bonini (UCSF/Vouchers 4 Veggies – EatSF); Chester Williams (Community Living Campaign); Katie Jackson (Project Open Hand); Guillermo Reece (SFAAFBC); Noriko Lim-Tepper (SFMFB); Hannah Grant (Meals on Wheels SF); Lura Jones (Leah's Pantry)

**Task Force Members Not Present:** Jeimil Belamide (HSA/CalFresh); Anne Quaintance (Conard House); Jade Quizon (FAACTS); Raegan Sales (Children's Council of SF); Geoffrey Grier (SF Recovery Theatre)

**Also Present:** Aarya Chidambaram (SFMFB); Abed Qamhia (Lehigh University); Alan Wong (Children's Council of SF); Alesandra Lozano (OEWD); Alex Raffanti (SFMFB); Alex Tanquilut (DAS); Alex Goldman (SF Health Plan); Alexandra Way; Alexandra Lapin; Alexis Diaz; Alic Guittard (San Diego Hunger Coalition); Alicia Soltero (MOWSF); Alisa Koay; Alyssa Hew; Amanda Maroudas; Ana Ayala (Project Open Hand); Andie Sobrepena (Farming Hope); Andrea Evans; Angela (Bayview YMCA); Angelina Lo; Anika Yu (API Council); Anita Campo; Anna Duning (SF Mayor's Office); Anthony Khalil (BVHP Community Advocates); Anthony Olubiyi; Ari Goldberg; Arthi Sumanth; Asa King (SFDPH); Asha Chirackal (Vouchers4Veggies/EatSF); Ashley Rodwick; Ashley Guido; Aurelio H.; Ayla Burnett; Beth Bodner (SF Environment); Beverly Bitagon (UCSF); Brett Martinez; Brian Kwok; Cathy Michalec (LBFE); Catherine Van Dyke (SF Market); Cecilia Mak; Christine Farren (FoodWise); Danielle Ngo (SF Planning); Eleana Binder (GLIDE); Elizabeth Peters; Ellen Garcia (EATSF); Emily Rudisill; Emma Mears (SFMFB); Emma Tucher; Eria Limos; Eric Maybaum; Erin Franey; Esha Reddy; Etta J; Eugene Iim; Fanny Lam; Fiona McBride (SF HSA Food Access); Francisco Sierra; Giselle Monge(MNC); Hope Ivory; Imani Austin; Ivan; Janna Cordeiro (Food as Medicine Collaborative); Jennifer Steele (Meals on Wheels SF); Jessamine (Homebridge); J Garcia, J Koehler; J McDonald; Joana Mattero (MNC); Jocelin Robles; Jose Velasquez; Joshua Reinstein; Juana Zapardiel; Justice Dumlao; Kaela Plank (SFDPH – Center for Data Science); Kalil Macklin (Anthem Blue Cross); Karen Lam (Self-Help); Katherine Moser (SF DAS); Kathleen Reed (SFDPH CalAIM Community); Kristi Friesen (Project Open Hand); Kristi Hirsch; Koey (Chinatown YMCA); Lance Ma; Lauren Clapperton (YMCA of Greater SF); Lauren Jarrell; Leah Walton (DAS); Leslie Mah; Leo Guimaraes (Bernal Heights Neighborhood); Leon Thomas III; Linda Huerta (Homeless Prenatal Program); Linda Murley; Linda Coleman; Liz Hillen (Felton Institute); Liz Rodriguez (Catholic Charities of SF); Liz Tarzon; L Kintanar; L Schmidt; L T; Lucia Campbell; Lucia; Luisa Balatbat; Lupita Juarez; Marianne Szeto (SFDPH – Community Health Equity and Promotion/ShapeUp SF); Marne Regan; Matt Rosen (TNDC); Mariana Kan (SFHSA); Matthew Morishige; Mandy Situ; Manuel Raneda; Marie Regen (HESPA); Marlene Rivas; Malou Valdez; Maria R; Melissa Nihei; Melanie Rager (On Lok PACE at IOA); Melissa Parker (Sequoia Living); Melissa Hensel; Merrill Buice; Michael Pon; Monica Lai; Nelson Herrera (Catholic Charities of SF); Nazneen Abdullah; Nick Padilla; Noelia Vega;

Nola Chin; Noemi Aguiniga; Pauline Chan; Paulo Salta; Phil (Meals on Wheels SF); Priscilla Rodriguez (SFDPH – Office of Anti Racism and Equity); Priscilla Chu (SFDPH – CHEP); Priscilla Covarrubias; Rachel Beck; Rachel Howard; Ram Olivares (Farming Hope); Robert Gonzalez; Rodolfo Gutierrez (RRC/MNHC); Samantha Wong (ExtraFood); Sarah Arnold; Sarah Al-Tayab; Sarah Nelson (18 Reasons); Shana Hurowitz (Mercy Housing); Shickola (Social Worker); Shirelle Lawrence; Stephanie Rivera; Skyliya Mumana; Sofia Gonzalez-Rodriguez; Sophie Schouboe; Sophia Larsen; Stuart Fong; Susie Wong; Teniola Adegbite (Stepping Stone); Tim Gras; Veronica Shepard (SF African American Faith-Based Coalition/SF NAACP); Zhiqing Li

Agenda Item	Discussion	Next Steps
1. Call order to order 2:00 p.m.	Call to order at 2:05 p.m.	None.
2. Land acknowledgment 2:00 p.m.	Priscilla Rodriguez recited the Land Acknowledgement.	None.
3. Welcome, member roll call, introductions, Cissie Bonini (Chair, Eat SF/Vouchers 4 Veggies) 2:05 p.m.	Cissie Bonini did roll call and introduced the agenda.  Public Comment: None.	None.
4. General public comment 2:08 p.m.	None.	None.
5. CalFresh delays due to federal government shutdown and CalFresh changes – Human Services Agency (HSA) mitigation response, (Susie Smith, HSA) 2:10 p.m.	Please refer to the recording for this presentation, linked <a href="#">here</a> . This agenda item starts at the 0:00:01 minute mark and ends at the 36:08 minute mark.  Susie Smith with HSA presented updates on HSA’s mitigation plan in response to CalFresh delays due to the federal government shutdown. Susie shared additional information about the CalFresh Emergency Grocery Card Program.  A discussion/Q&A followed with additional notes below.  Susie Smith: Due to the federal shutdown, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits will not be issues for November. Mayor Lurie and the Board of Supervisors (BOS) in partnership with Crankstart will be able to activate an emergency response to be able to help San Franciscans who rely on CalFresh every month to put food on the table. We are launching	None.

	<p>an emergency gift card distribution for every CalFresh household in San Francisco. This is in partnership with the San Francisco Marine Food Bank (SFMFB), and the vendor is called GiveCard. We will be mailing every CalFresh recipient a letter that will explain that this is not a replacement dollar for dollar for your CalFresh. There will be varying amounts of benefit levels depending on family size. They will receive a gift card that they will activate through a special code that they will get in the mail. It'll work like a virtual card. There will also be an option for people who want a physical card to be able to call a number and say, you know what, I need a physical card. This will be a one-time distribution. We also have information that we're updating on our website. We have many vulnerable San Franciscans who use general delivery. Many of them are experiencing homelessness. We are concerned that they will not check their mail. We are also developing an in-person pickup strategy for the cards at 1235 Mission for a subset of clients who use general delivery as their mailing address.</p> <p>The money that was approved unanimously by the BOS was \$9.1 million and this money was set aside specifically in this year's budget for emergencies that arise from the federal government. We wanted to do something that would mimic most people's receipt of CalFresh that can only be used in grocery stores with similar restrictions in terms of alcohol and tobacco. This was also really the only strategy that we could activate in a matter of days.</p> <p>Cissie Bonini: Let's open it up for the Food Security Task Force (FSTF) first.</p> <p>Hannah Grant: We serve homebound seniors and many of them struggle with reading the materials that they receive in the mail, if they even get them. I'm envisioning a lot of challenges, technical challenges, activating the cards. Does HSA have a plan for offering technical assistance to those types of communities?</p> <p>Susie Smith: We're partnering with Aging and Disability Resource Centers (ADRCs) to be able to help seniors and people with disabilities who need additional assistance activating the card.</p> <p>Jennifer LeBarre: Are there plans in the works for this to go through December, January, etc. if needed?</p>	
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	<p>Susie Smith: Right now, we're planning for just this month. We have heard that there will be action at the federal level. Of course, we can't predict, but we have heard that it will not go beyond November.</p> <p>Priti Rane: My question is more technical around what happens with CalFresh benefits themselves. We want to make sure that this is over soon, but we don't want people to fall through the cracks where they're not coming back to reapply or apply for benefits. Are you going to continue enrolling new participants?</p> <p>Susie Smith: We will continue to enroll people. If they enroll in November, their benefits will be paused, and they won't get benefits. People will receive retroactive benefits once the federal government reopens, but absolutely people can still apply. If people still have money on their EBT cards, they can still use them for the month of November and onward. It's just that there's no additional money being added from the federal government.</p> <p>Katie Jackson: You had mentioned some things that were going to go out in the mail to recipients. Do you have some signage that we can post within agencies where our clients are utilizing these benefits to give directions on what will happen, and can you share that with this group?</p> <p>Susie Smith: We don't have signage yet. We're working on getting messages out to our staff honestly, our community-based organization (CBO) partners, and the BOS. If there are specific requests that you have, please put them in the chat or email me.</p> <p>Cissie Bonini: Do we know the time frame that we expect folks to receive those cards? I know that they normally get their benefits from the 1st through the 10th.</p> <p>Susie Smith: We are working diligently to figure out exactly what day that we could do the mailing. I will get back to you. It will be next week. We are reserving 1235 Mission for pickup for a physical card for people who use a general delivery box office as their mailing address. That is the population we're particularly concerned about. If anyone else wants a physical card, there's a number that they will be able to call on the letter where they can request a physical card.</p>	
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	<p>Marion Sanders: Anything that you can say related to people who are street based homeless and any coordination with the neighborhood street teams around getting the message out about this?</p> <p>Susie Smith: I spoke to Emily earlier today. Absolutely. We want to partner with the street teams with the shelter system to let them know that this is coming and to check their mail. I'm still confirming whether it's going to be one or the other for the people with general delivery, whether it's either a letter or in person. We're working with the vendor, and we will make sure that we minimize the risk of fraud. I will let you know if it's one or the other, but we will be partnering with Homelessness and Supportive Housing (HSH) to get the word out to community and to the street teams that this is available.</p> <p>Marion Sanders: The second question is related to accessibility. People with disabilities that you know maybe have mobility issues. How do you all consider that and if there are any kind of plans in place to make sure that we're considering that and those folks have access to this benefit.</p> <p>Susie Smith: In partnering with the ADRC's to help that population specifically, if someone has an authorized representative, then the authorized rep would get the letter. That's one strategy. We're mimicking CalFresh the way SNAP benefits work now.</p> <p>Cissie Bonini: Might you cover just some of the customer service plans if people have questions?</p> <p>Susie Smith: On the letter they will be getting the customer service line for GiveCard who our vendor partner is. All questions regarding activation, a physical card, or anything about the card itself the vendor will have a call center available, I think they said 24/7 but I can confirm.</p> <p>Public Comment:</p>	
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	<p>Melanie Rager: Just wondering for those of us who are not on the Task Force. I know there's a sample letter, the messaging, the promo materials. Is there a central place that we could either access or get onto a mailing list to receive those?</p> <p>Susie Smith: We will share with the Department of Disability and Aging Services (DAS) network any materials. We're going to have a letter that's going to go out to all our CBO partners about what is happening. In terms of sample letter, I'll see if we can put that up on our website.</p> <p>Eleana Binder: Will the card work anywhere an EBT card would work including corner stores that accept EBT or farmers markets?</p> <p>Susie Smith: The card can be used in any grocery store. I assume corner stores as well, any EBT type store. I can double check to make sure but that's my understanding. The farmer's market is a good question. Let me get back to you.</p> <p>Imani Austin: I have a question in relation to ADRC. Since there will be an influx of additional support, when will we communicate or have we already communicated this information to ADRC teams so that they can also prepare for the additional support that they'll need to provide?</p> <p>Susie Smith: We're doing that through the Office of Community Partnership (OCP). I don't yet know if it has been communicated but before the letters go out, we absolutely will make sure that we've communicated and have all the information that you guys need.</p> <p>Nick Padilla: Are advocates or case managers able to pick up these cards from 1235 Mission on a client's behalf?</p> <p>Susie Smith: If they're an authorized rep, Yes. But otherwise, we can't have other people picking up the cards because we need our verification, date of birth, and social. It would run the risk of fraud if we let other people pick up the cards.</p> <p>Marne Regan: I just want to put a plug out there for the folks living in RVs who are just sort of vehicularly unhoused. A lot of these folks are going to be sort of upended on November 1st</p>	
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	<p>when the ordinance goes into effect. I just want to make sure that SF Homeless Outreach Team (HOT) outreach teams are ensuring that this is communicated.</p> <p>Susie Smith: I have already spoken to Emily Cohen earlier today. As head of comms at HSH, we'll absolutely be making sure that HSH gets the message out to all the providers.</p> <p>Christine Farren: This is about farmers markets and the regular use of EBT and market match and whether the cards will be able to synchronize with that system. We're discussing creating an emergency temporary script just because the large volume of shoppers who come to our markets will take the minimum amount out of their CalFresh account to get the maximum market match. And I'm not seeing how that's going to be possible with these cards. I realize the cards can't fix every problem and they're the great next step, but I'm just curious if there's any discussion right now.</p> <p>Susie Smith: Unfortunately, I don't think we would be able to use them in market match.</p> <p>Veronica Shepard: What were the challenges to add the funds to your HSA budget and then just upload them to these people's EBT cards that were already in your system? Two, you mentioned that you're communicating with partners. Will there be a list of those partners by neighborhoods you're working with?</p> <p>Susie Smith: On the first question, "why can't we just upload the money to the EBT card?" That is because the money goes directly from the US Treasurer to the EBT vendor. Even if the State of California said, "We're going to cover the \$5.1 billion cost to help everybody be whole and upload the money." They couldn't. It's literally a contract directly between the US Treasurer and the EBT. So, we can't do that. That would have been my first choice, trust me. Then on your second question, we have a newsletter that's not just for our grantees, but we have much broader reach. I will put it in the chat on how to join our newsletter.</p> <p>[Chat]: In the event of a loss of the card or fund in the cards, is it safe to say that there is no replacement?</p>	
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	<p>Susie Smith: No, unfortunately. It's a one-time distribution.</p> <p>Eleana Binder: There are California Food Assistance Program (CFAP) recipients who, because of documentation or citizenship issues technically, aren't CalFresh recipients. It's a different source of funding from the state but they're also being impacted because of the cards and not getting their money as usual either. I wasn't sure within the HSA system who's getting letters and who's included in this and whether they would be included.</p> <p>Fiona McBride: I think it comes through the state, but I could double check. I'm pretty sure the data we're pulling will include those people like we count them as CalFresh in our system.</p>	
<p>6. CalFresh delays and changes – Discussion of situational status, potential impacts planning, and response, Cissie Bonini (Chair, Eat SF/Vouchers 4 Veggies) 2:30 p.m.</p>	<p>Please refer to the recording for this presentation, linked <a href="#">here</a>. This agenda item starts at the 36:08 minute mark and ends at the 49:48 minute mark.</p> <p>Cissie Bonini led the discussion on CalFresh delays and changes. FSTF members provided updates and answered questions and concerns regarding situational status changes, potential impacts, planning, and response.</p> <p>A discussion/Q&amp;A followed with additional notes below.</p> <p>Cissie Bonini: Jennifer, did you want to start with some plans you wanted to share with what's happening San Francisco Unified School District (SFUSD)?</p> <p>Jennifer LeBarre: We are very fortunate that the funding for our universal meal program for breakfast and lunch for all our schools continues. We heard yesterday that the California Department of Education (CDE) has received the amount of money for November reimbursements as well. I'm assuming that our friends at California Department of Social Services (CDSS) who help us with the child adult care food program most likely received their November allocation, too. We're very pleased to share that with you. One thing that you all could do is remind your families that all children, regardless of income, receive free breakfast and lunch at our schools. Most of our schools also have afterschool supper programs where we are going to have a change in an attempt to provide additional support. We're going to let our families know that starting on Monday all children 18 years and younger regardless of their</p>	<p>None.</p>



	<p>enrollment at a particular school are going to be welcome into our afterschool supper programs. We're going to share those locations as well as the serving times. That's going to be made available. That's what we're able to do right now within the confines of all the rules and regulations both by United States Department Agriculture (USDA) rather and CDE. We are trying to see if we can do more. We will let our families know that they must eat at the school site. We cannot send food home except for one piece of fruit or one shelf stable item from each meal. We'll continue to let folks know about that. We don't have all the waivers that we did during COVID and so food must be consumed at the physical location. As we continue to go through this process, we're trying to see what else we can do, but that's what we can do right now.</p> <p>Noriko Lim-Tepper: The Food Bank just came up with their plans of response with everything going on. So right now, we are inquiring with our partner network to see if there's increased capacity within our pantries to serve more people. We're also offering an agency drive-thru for any partner organization and non-partner organization to pick up bags to deliver to impacted community members. We're also thinking through how to expand our home delivery grocery program because we know there's increased Immigration and Custom Enforcement (ICE) activity. We want to make sure that people who are in need and are fearful of going to pantries have a point of access to receive groceries. So more to come on the logistics, but I'll be sure to communicate that once we have that done.</p> <p>Hannah Grant: We've been receiving calls from clients expressing concerns about the loss of SNAP benefits. So, we've been looking into ways to provide additional meals for those individuals who are most affected, such as working with DAS on that. We're also seeing if there are ways that we can support our staff and their families as our funding allows us to make sure that any impact on the community, we can mitigate it as much as possible.</p> <p>Katie Jackson: Similar conversations at Project Open Hand of how we can support supplements when needed and it sounds like really our focus; we serve both counties. We serve Alameda and San Francisco. Thinking about Alameda County as well, knowing that the response from the</p>	
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	<p>city is so robust and our focus will probably shift to if there is a long-term need for this and how do we support long-term through December and beyond.</p> <p>Cissie Bonini: I can speak for Vouchers4Veggies/EatSF. We are prepared to issue emergency grocery vouchers should the need be. We are in the middle of a distribution that we do normally for November, December and January and so we are continuing our distribution. There are some gaps but again not a lot of extra funding for groceries. Our program is oversubscribed as you can imagine. We still have so many folks' needing food, but we are doing our best to get as many vouchers out there as we can.</p> <p>Priti Rane: For the Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC), we got an update from the state of California a couple weeks ago that we have funds to support families through November. It could possibly go a little bit beyond that, but so far, we are good through November. We're just hoping for this shutdown to end soon.</p> <p>Michelle Kim: Our program isn't impacted through November. We talked to our CDSS specialists, and they said they're not impacted as of right now.</p> <p>Tiffany Kearney: We are working very, very closely with HSA as the leading agency in the process of getting out those cards. I want to take a second to give a shout out to all our CBOs who have been so forthcoming with their support and offering to help. We will certainly reach out as needs develop but we are working very closely with HSA, and we'll keep everyone informed.</p> <p>Marion Sanders: Not much more to add to what Tiffany just said. HSA is the lead on this, but we're working closely and want to make sure folks that are street based homeless and folks that are in shelters get the information. Just making sure the information gets out across the board, and we continue the collaboration.</p> <p>Public Comment:</p>	
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	<p>Nick Padilla: This is for Jennifer. Was there something else that was mentioned that could be taken off site other than the one fruit?</p> <p>Jennifer LeBarre: Yeah, it must be a shelf stable item. They can take home one item per meal.</p>	
<p>7. FSTF next steps and announcements, Cissie Bonini (Chair, Eat SF/Vouchers 4 Veggies) 2:55 p.m.</p>	<p>Please refer to the recording for this presentation, linked <a href="#">here</a>. This agenda item starts at the 49:48 minute mark and ends at the 53:18 minute mark.</p> <p>Cissie Bonini discussed FSTF next steps and opened the meeting to public announcements. The next FSTF meeting will be held virtually on Wednesday, November 5<sup>th</sup> from 1:30 – 3:30 p.m. Cissie reminded participants to sign up for the HSA newsletter if they want to stay up to date with the agency's news.</p> <p>Public Comment:</p> <p>Veronica Shepard: Just to announce to everyone on the call that the Faith-Based Coalition is already preparing for feeding 5000. This is the annual Christmas giveaway that we partner with many of you on the call and we're getting a lot of new organizations. We give out healthy produce boxes and turkeys. This year we're trying to ascertain funds to give gift cards to offset whatever other people want to buy along with the box. We also are asking for volunteers. It's on December 13th. If your organization is interested in being a part of our weekly meetings to know all about the feeding 5000, how your organization can be involved, we only work with organizations. We do not work with individual people. Those organizations then inform us on how many households they want to pick up for and they distribute to that population. We also work very closely with U-Haul. They provide us with a discount for any organization that wants to participate. I will put my email in the chat for those of you that are interested. Again, it's on December 13th. We're working very closely with the Mayor and our food bank partners. There's a lot of partnerships involved, and we know that the impact of this current political climate is not good, and we want to make sure that people are still covered and represented. More to come.</p>	<p>None.</p>

8. Adjournment 3:00 p.m.	Meeting adjourned at 3:05 p.m.	None.
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