

County of Los Angeles  
**DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SOCIAL SERVICES**

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January 5, 2006

TO: Each Supervisor

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Bryce', written over the 'TO:' line.

FROM: Bryce Yokomizo, Director

**SUBJECT: REPORT ON IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RESTAURANT MEALS PROGRAM FOR THE HOMELESS, ELDERLY, AND DISABLED USING ELECTRONIC BENEFIT (EBT) CARDS TO PURCHASE PREPARED MEALS (BOARD ORDER #38 - FEBRUARY 4, 2003)**

This is to provide you with an update on the Restaurant Meals Program for Homeless, Elderly, and Disabled Food Stamp Participants using Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) Cards to purchase prepared meals. As you may recall, the Restaurant Meals Program allows homeless, elderly, and disabled Food Stamp participants to purchase prepared meals using their EBT cards at restaurants that have a signed Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the County and have been certified by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Food and Nutrition Services (FNS) to accept Food Stamp benefits.

On July 25, 2005, the Restaurant Meals Program for the Homeless, Elderly and Disabled was implemented in Los Angeles County with 39 participating Subway Restaurants. By March 2006, we expect to have over 180 restaurants participating.

My staff has been actively working to recruit restaurants into the program. Using the food services listings maintained by the Department of Health Services, an informational mailer was sent to 10,000 restaurants in Los Angeles County. Over 300 interest responses were received. Restaurant owners who responded to the mailing were invited to attend informational meetings and presentations that were held at various sites within the County during the months of September, October and November 2005. MOUs were signed with 93 restaurants as a result of the presentations.

McDonalds' Corporate Office has expressed interest in participating in our program after EBT-related issues with their business systems are resolved. We expect to meet with their representatives in January 2006. We are also planning to sign MOUs with several other Popeyes Chicken franchisees in the near future and DPSS staff are developing new strategies to recruit additional restaurants.

*"To Enrich Lives Through Effective And Caring Service"*

Each Supervisor  
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On December 7, 2005, an enhancement to the Statewide Restaurant Meals Program was implemented. The enhancement required a Restaurant Meals Indicator to be added to the Electronic Benefit Transfer System so that eligible participants could be identified in the EBT system. Subsequent changes were made to LEADER in order to support the enhancement, and now food stamp participants that are eligible to the Restaurant Meals Program are electronically identified when the Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) Card is used at a participating restaurant. This eliminates the issuance of a separate Restaurant Meals Program Identification Card and the requirement for the restaurant staff to view the card each time a meal is purchased.

Updated restaurant listings will be provided to district offices and community partners in March 2006 for distribution to eligible participants.

The Web Page for the Restaurant Meal Program is being designed and will be accessed from a link on the Food Stamp and Nutrition webpage on the DPSS Website. Visitors to the website will find information on the Restaurant Meals Program, that includes the names and addresses of participating restaurants, who is eligible, and information for restaurants owners who are interested in joining the program.

I will provide you with our next semi-annual report in June 2006.

BY:cl

c: Chief Administrative Officer  
County Counsel  
Executive Officer, Board of Supervisors