



Fresh Success Frequently Asked Questions for Community Colleges

Q: What type of services are usually offered in a college-based Fresh Success program?

College-based Fresh Success programs typically include:

- Assessment of student's educational and career goals, as well as any barriers to achieving those goals
- Enrollment in at least one Fresh Success eligible course per term, including Career Education courses and programs of study, basic skills, high school equivalency preparation, and English as a second language
- Ongoing case management that includes academic and career counseling or coaching a minimum of three times per term
- Workshops on academic success, career planning, soft skills development, and financial management

The most common supportive services include:

- Textbooks and course supplies
- Transportation in the form of gas cards, bus passes, and parking permits
- Additional supports when budget allows, such as one-time housing or utility support and minor automobile repair

Services are typically aligned with existing student service program models, such as those used by EOPS. In some cases, students who are co-enrolled in Fresh Success and another student services program receive additional supports, such as extra textbook support, transportation support, or other supportive services.

Q: Where should Fresh Success be based within the college?

Fresh Success is typically housed within the student services department on campus and offered in coordination with other departments, such as Career Education, student life/student affairs, and adult education transitions programs. Student services departments are experienced in providing academic and career counseling, workshops, case management, and supportive services to students in special populations; however, the college has the flexibility to host the program in any area of campus that is the best fit.

The host program should have the experience and capacity to provide and document services, as well as access to qualifying, non-federal funding that can draw down reimbursement under Fresh Success. Some colleges choose to initiate their Fresh Success programs by co-enrolling students in their existing student services programs, such as EOPS and foster youth programs. This allows expenditures from the existing programs to qualify for reimbursement through Fresh Success. If a separate Fresh Success program is established, the college needs to identify a source of non-federal funds, such as Student Equity and Achievement, the college's general fund, or philanthropic funds.

As a federally funded program, Fresh Success requires some program and fiscal administration above and beyond your current tasks. Staff will be responsible for adding new participants into an online participant database, confirming participant eligibility each month, ensuring participation status is updated in the database a minimum of quarterly, and maintaining participant files with required forms and case notes. In addition, program and financial staff will document program costs and prepare invoices. Depending on the college structure, the invoicing responsibility may sit primarily with the program staff or the business office.

Wherever you host the Fresh Success program at the college, you may wish to engage other programs and staff to promote Fresh Success to students who would benefit. These include the campus food pantry, CalFresh outreach, financial aid, Career Education faculty, adult education, athletics department, and student organizations.

Q: How can we estimate the number of eligible students?

Students are eligible for Fresh Success if they:

- receive CalFresh food benefits in a partnering county,
- do not receive CalWORKs, and
- are enrolled in a Career Education, ESL, high school equivalency, or basic skills course.

Estimating the number of potential Fresh Success participants can be challenging. The Fresh Success Funding Estimation Tool (available by request) helps calculate your estimated number of participants using the information below. If you plan to co-enroll students that are in an existing student services program, try to obtain the information below for the students enrolled in your current program.

- **Percentage of students enrolled in qualifying courses:** Your institutional research office can assist with determining the number of students enrolled in a qualifying course.
- **Percentage of those students not receiving CalWORKs:** Your institutional research office can assist with determining the number of students participating in CalWORKs.
- **Percentage of students who may be income eligible for CalFresh:** Most colleges do not have specific information about which students qualify for CalFresh. This number may be estimated using College Promise Grant eligibility as a proxy. Alternatively, the #RealCollege California survey estimates that fifty percent of California Community College students may qualify for CalFresh. If your college participated in this survey, you may use your college-specific data.
- **Percentage of income-eligible students who actually receive CalFresh benefits:** Unfortunately, many students who are income-eligible for CalFresh do not currently receive those benefits. The #RealCollege California survey estimates that only 22 percent of food insecure students actually receive CalFresh benefits. If your college participated in this survey, you may use your college-specific data.

Your college may be working to increase CalFresh participation through CalFresh outreach efforts. These activities help increase the pool of eligible Fresh Success participants by encouraging students to apply for CalFresh. In addition, students who have been determined to be a good fit for your Fresh Success program can be

exempted from the CalFresh student rule that requires college students to work 20 hours per week to be eligible for food benefits.

Q: How do we estimate our Fresh Success budget?

Your Fresh Success budget will depend on your available non-federal funding sources, the cost of providing services under your program design, the costs of supportive services, and the number of participants you enroll. As your program grows, the reimbursement amount will grow as well. Remember to include your E&T reimbursements as a future source of non-federal funds. Those reinvested funds can draw down additional federal reimbursement when spent on allowable costs.

On average, our Fresh Success colleges spend about \$3,050 per student in total costs, resulting in \$1,355 in federal reimbursement. Approximately 80 percent of the expenditures are classified as Administrative costs, with the remaining costs classified as Supportive Services costs. Under Supportive Services, Transportation and Ancillary Services typically account for 8 to 12 percent of the budget each.

Q: What are the next steps if our college is interested in starting a Fresh Success program?

The first step to becoming a Fresh Success partner is to submit a letter of commitment to the Foundation. This letter is non-binding but signifies that the college wishes to move forward with the onboarding steps. The letter should be signed by the person authorized to approve bringing the Fresh Success program to your campus. A template is available from the Fresh Success staff.

After the letter is received, the Fresh Success staff will work with your team to develop a Fresh Success Employment & Training (E&T) Plan, which is used to obtain state and federal approvals for funding. We'll also work with you to execute a contract between your college/district and the Foundation for California Community Colleges and to complete additional onboarding and training activities.

We bring new colleges on board up to three times per year. The deadlines are as follows:

- Letter of Commitment by February 28 for program launch on August 1
- Letter of Commitment by April 30 for program launch on October 1
- Letter of Commitment by July 31 for program launch on January 1

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The Foundation for California Community Colleges is under contract with the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) to lead the planning, training, administration, oversight, reimbursement, and evaluation for organizations providing employment and training services through Fresh Success. The Foundation retains a small percentage of the federal reimbursement to support this role.