**Unauthorized Migrants and CalFresh (Food Stamp) Participation Rate**

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**California Department of Social Services**

***Rescheduled Note New Time***

**Wednesday, June 18, 3-5pm**

Room 2102 SSH (ARE Main Conference Room)

*California has a great deal of administrative data on residents and all employees. DSS and EDD staff have asked to meet with interested faculty and grad students to get feed back on a proposed methodology to determine why relatively few poor Californians participate in Cal Fresh (Food Stamps). The purpose of the meeting is to provide feedback to DSS and learn about administrative data.*

California has the lowest participation rate among eligible residents for federally funded food assistance. According to the US Department of Agriculture’s Food and Nutrition Service (FNS), only 49 percent of low-income Californians, and 57 percent of eligible Californians, received CalFresh (Food Stamp) benefits in Federal Fiscal Year 2011.

A substantial share of otherwise-eligible California residents cannot participate in CalFresh because they are unauthorized migrants. The Department of Social Services Research Services Branch (RSB) is seeking feedback on a methodology to adjust the FNS program access index (PAI) to account for ineligible undocumented immigrants (http://www.cdss.ca.gov/research). The revised PAI (termed the adjusted program reach index or APRI) will be used to develop state-, county- and below-county-level estimates of residents eligible for CalFresh, helping to target outreach campaigns.

The methodology is based on the number of CalFresh households in which only children, not adults, receive benefits. Adults in child-only CalFresh households may be ineligible because they receive Supplemental Security Income/State Supplement Program assistance, have been convicted of certain felonies, or because of their immigration status. The child-only methodology estimates the share of child-only cases in which immigration status is likely the reason for adult non-receipt, based on analysis of child-only cases in the counties with the highest CalFresh participation.

The child-only methodology uses a number of data sources, such as the American Community Survey and the Pew Research Center, to estimate the average number of adults who are CalFresh-ineligible due to their immigration status – including adults in households without children – for each child in a child-only household. These adults (and certain other individuals) are subtracted from the estimated number of individuals who meet the CalFresh gross income threshold to form the denominator in the APRI. The APRI numerator is the number of CalFresh participants.

There will also be a presentation on using administrative data on California employers and employees from the Employment Development Department. DSS and EDD have a great deal of administrative data on poor California residents and workers, and this meeting provides an opportunity to learn about the data and how to work with them.