



NEWS RELEASE

COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

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FOOD STAMP BENEFITS INCREASE **Los Angeles First in State to Implement** **13.6 Percent Increase**

Los Angeles County residents who receive food stamps have seen their monthly benefit increase by 13.6 percent since April, due to the federal economic stimulus package.

With the increase, the benefits for a family of four have gone from \$588 to \$668 per month. In Los Angeles County, it's estimated there are 755,000 individuals receiving food stamps every month.

"More and more people in our community need help accessing food," said Philip L. Browning, director of the Department of Public Social Services. "This increase is going to help those in need get through a difficult economic time."

The food stamp benefit increase took effect on April 1 as part of the 2009 American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. Los Angeles County was the first county in California to implement the program.

Browning said County food stamp recipients received an additional \$15 million in April and \$15 million in May.

"Increasing food stamp payments by \$1 has a ripple effect of \$1.84 on the economy, so the real effect is more than \$27 million per month to the local economy," he said.

The food stamp benefit increase will be in effect through Sept. 30, 2010.

Though the increase is temporary, it will be phased out in conjunction with regular annual increases, so food stamp recipients won't feel the decrease.

The federal government pays for the food stamp program, which last year was renamed the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program.

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