

WHAT ARE MY RIGHTS?

- The law says that children who get free or reduced-price meals cannot be treated differently than those who get full-price meals. No separate lines, different meals or meal tickets, required work, or other types of discrimination are allowed.
- Ask the school, child-care sponsor, or summer recreation program sponsor for a "fair hearing" if you apply and are unfairly denied. Also request the hearing if you receive notice that your benefits will be cut. By doing so within 10 days, your child's benefits will continue until the hearing takes place.

- Programs must meet certain standards for sanitation and for the amount, type, and appearance of the food served. You can complain if these standards are not met, and you and your child can also influence improvements in the menu.

- If you are interested in getting schools to offer more fresh fruits and vegetables and less "junk" food you can call the Healthy School Food Coalition at (323) 341-5097 or the California Food Policy Advocates at (213) 482-8200
Encourage your local schools, day

care homes and centers, and summer programs to offer these programs so that all our young people can learn and grow properly.

Food for Seniors and the Homebound

CONGREGATE MEALS

Anyone age 60 and over can participate in congregate meal programs, regardless of income. Spouses of participants can also get meals, no matter what their age.

There are about 200 sites for congregate meals throughout L.A. County. Most are located in churches, synagogues, and community centers, but you do not have to be a member of the sponsoring organization to participate. Some programs are able to provide transportation to the meal site or can send meals home for people who are temporarily ill or homebound.

Because participants can assist in menu planning, suggest contribution levels, and set hours for meals, these arrangements will differ from site to site. Your clergyperson or a social service worker may know of a center suited to your needs and preferences.

You can get help to locate a program by calling ((213) 738-4004 if you live anywhere in the City or County of Los Angeles. Participants cannot be required to pay for meals. However, a

contribution to help support the program is often suggested. Each participant decides what he or she can contribute, if anything, and collection of this money must be completely anonymous. Some group meal programs are authorized to accept food stamps.

Ask your congregate meal site if they have coupons for seniors over age 60 good for \$20 at participating Farmers' Markets.

BROWN BAG PROGRAM

If you are 60 years or older and low income you can participate in the Brown Bag program. Each month, you can get two bags of food (about 18 pounds of food) including canned and dry goods, frozen products, bread, and dairy products. You have to fill out an application. Some Brown Bag programs encourage a small membership fee, but this is not required for participation. You can also volunteer to help in the distribution. To find a Brown Bag program near you call the LA Regional Food Bank at (323) 234-3030. There are 23 sites spread through LA County.

MEALS ON WHEELS

There are groups who deliver meals regularly to those who are homebound. Each group sets its own rules about how many meals will be served and about the days and times that meals are available. Most programs require some evidence that participants need this service such as inability to cook or shop due to illness, frailty, or disability. Some programs can provide for special diets. You cannot be required to pay for meals if the program is federally funded, but sponsoring groups will ask for a small contribution. Some meals-on-wheels programs are authorized to accept food stamps. To find out about meals-on-wheels anywhere in Los Angeles County, call (213) 738-4004.

PROJECT ANGEL FOOD

Project Angel Food is a private agency that delivers free hot meals to homebound people with AIDS. They have same day service in these areas: Venice, East Los Angeles, Pasadena, North Hollywood, Silver Lake, and South Central. Call (323) 845-1800 for meals or (323) 845-1816 to volunteer.