

PRESS RELEASE

COVID-19 INFORMATION



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 14, 2020

The following press release was submitted by Riverside County to the City.

Fake letter claims coronavirus test needed for CalFresh, Medi-Cal

RIVERSIDE COUNTY, CA– Residents are being warned about a fraudulent letter that bears a California Department of Social Services seal. State and county public social services officials are warning about a fake letter circulating on social media that falsely claims customers must be tested for coronavirus if they want to continue receiving benefits such as cash aid, CalFresh and Medi-Cal.

The letter bearing the seal of the California Department of Social Services also falsely claims that children will be removed from parents who test positive for COVID-19 and placed into foster care, according to a news release from the Riverside County Department of Public Social Services.

"Riverside County, state and county health services departments will never ask about health status in connection to an application for benefits. Children will not be removed from parents who happen to test positive for the coronavirus or COVID-19," the county news release reads.

"At a time when thousands of Riverside County residents are reaching out for help from our public benefits system, for someone to prey on their fears and uncertainties is outrageous," said Allison Gonzalez, assistant director of DPSS' Self Sufficiency Division. "We hope this fake letter doesn't frighten those in need of support away from the critical programs and services DPSS offers."

Menifee residents are urged to disregard the scam letter and not to share it on social media. Riverside County residents who need to apply for benefits such as cash, food and medical assistance can do so online at C4Yourself.com or by calling the Department of Public Social Services customer service center at 877-410-8827.

Authorities have been notified about the hoax letter. Anyone with information about the source of the letter is asked to contact the California Department of Social Services at 916-651-8848 or piar@dss.ca.gov.

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ABOUT MENIFEE: *Situated in the heart of southern Riverside County along Interstate 215, Menifee is a vibrant, new city of more than 95,000 residents who enjoy a pleasant year-round climate, abundant recreational offerings, reasonably priced housing and convenient proximity to some of Southern California's premiere attractions and employment centers. Within its 50 square miles, Menifee's business, retail and entertainment outlets are starting to shape the community's character and this growing economic base is also contributing favorably to the city's strong financial position. Menifee's growing family-oriented population values the city's ongoing commitment to public safety, community events and smart growth for the future. All of these elements are working together to support the city's strategic vision to make Menifee one of the state's most promising new cities.*