

March 26, 2021


Free Food for Students: How to Access CalFresh Benefits for California Community College Students



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FOUNDATION *for* CALIFORNIA
COMMUNITY COLLEGES



SSCCC General Assembly

March 26 -28, 2021

Growth through Resiliency



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Today's Agenda

- History of the work and current efforts
- Reports and data on student food insecurity
- CalFresh background and what you need to know
- CalFresh student eligibility requirements for community college students
- CalFresh Outreach Student Ambassadors Overview
- Student Perspective
- Jamboard Activity

Today's Presenter's

Thalia Marroquin

Program Analyst, California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office

Colleen Ganley

Specialist, California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office

Carly Smith

Senior Specialist, Foundation for California Community Colleges

Today's Presenter's

Andrea Dargo

CalFresh Student Ambassador, Cerritos College

Der Yang

CalFresh Student Ambassador, Merced Community College

Megan Fountain

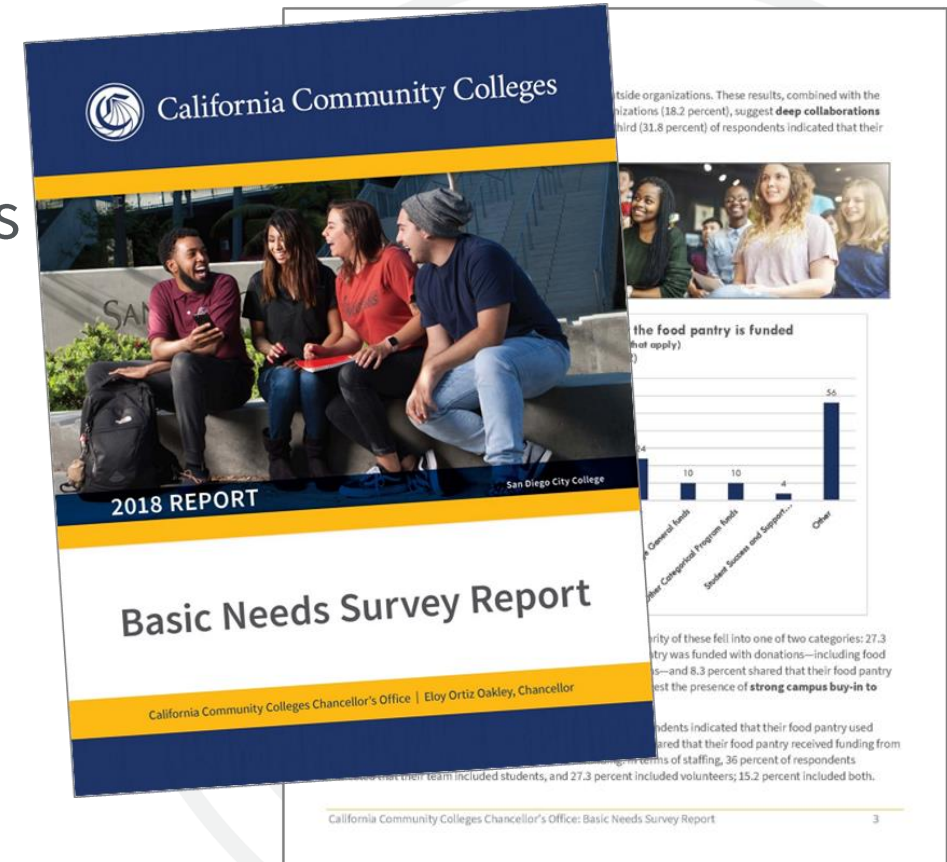
CalFresh Student Ambassador, Cosumnes River College

History of the Work: California Community Colleges Food, Housing, and Basic Needs Resources 2017 Survey

- In fall 2017, the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office (Chancellor's Office) conducted the Food, Housing, and Basic Needs Resources Survey
- Survey requested information about resources currently available to support California community college students with basic needs insecurity
- 214 responses, representing 104 of the 114 (91%) CCCs, at the time

History of the Work: California Community Colleges Basic Needs Survey 2018 Report

- With information from the 2017 Survey, the Chancellor's Office developed the Basic Needs Survey Report
- Provided base line data regarding available resources
- Provided best practices and featured best practice models
- Allowed for the creation of a comprehensive directory including CCC points of contact/liaisons



History of the Work: 2018 #RealCollege Survey

- The Chancellor's Office provided support to The Hope Center to administer the 2018 #RealCollege survey across California Community Colleges system
 - 57 CCCs participated in the survey
 - 40,000 students responded

History of the Work: 2019 #RealCollege Report

- Of the 40,000 students responses:
- 50% of respondents were food insecure in the prior 30 days
- 60% of respondents were housing insecure in the prior 12 months
- 19% of respondents were homeless in the previous 12 months

MARCH 2019

California Community Colleges #RealCollege Survey

AUTHORS:

Sara Goldrick-Rab
Christine Baker-Smith
Vanessa Coca
Elizabeth Looker



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History of the Work: 2019 #RealCollege Report

- **57% Pell grant recipients report food insecurity**; 69% report housing insecurity
- **61% of students with physical or mental disabilities report food insecurity**; 72% report housing insecurity
- **66% of students from foster care report food insecurity**, 82% report housing insecurity and 43% report having experienced homelessness

MARCH 2019

California Community Colleges #RealCollege Survey

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History of the Work: California Community Colleges Hunger Free Campus Funding

- State budget included funds to support CCC Hunger Free Campus activities including:
- CalFresh Enrollment Support Services
- Establish or Expand Campus Food Pantry services

2017-18 \$2.5 million

2018-19 \$10 million

2019-20 \$3.9 million



History of the Work: CCC Hunger Free Campus Activities

- Creating Basic Needs Resource Centers
- Mobile Food Vans
- Hot Meal Voucher
- Meal Donation Give Back Programs
- Financial Literacy Programs
- Farmers' Market Donation Programs
- Community Garden Programs



History of the Work: CCC Hunger Free Campus Baseline 2019-2020 Data (Pre-COVID19 Data)

- 114 CCCs report hosting food pantry or regular food distribution
- 1,525 CCC faculty & staff providing support to students enrolling in CalFresh
- 15,000 students supported with CalFresh enrollment services
- 50 CCCs report having Basic Needs Centers

Other Food Security Activities

- Working with California Higher Education Basic Needs Alliance (CHEBNA): an Intersegmental Basic Needs partnership with the UC and CSU systems
- CalFresh Outreach toolkits available from the Chancellor's Office
- [CalFresh Outreach Video](#)

Poll Question Number 1

“How much do you know about CalFresh?”



What is *Food Insecurity*?



Not just hunger!



Stress, anxiety, worrying about where or how you will eat or feed your family



Skipping meals or reducing the size of your meals



Limited or uncertain availability of adequate food



USDA's federal definition, used broadly nationwide



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What is CalFresh?

- Federally funded, sustainable intervention for student hunger
- California's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)
- Many students are eligible for CalFresh benefits, which feeds students and their families
- <https://snapstories.codeforamerica.org/>





HUNGER SHOULDN'T GET IN
THE WAY OF LEARNING

Stretch your food budget with CalFresh



CalFresh Eligibility

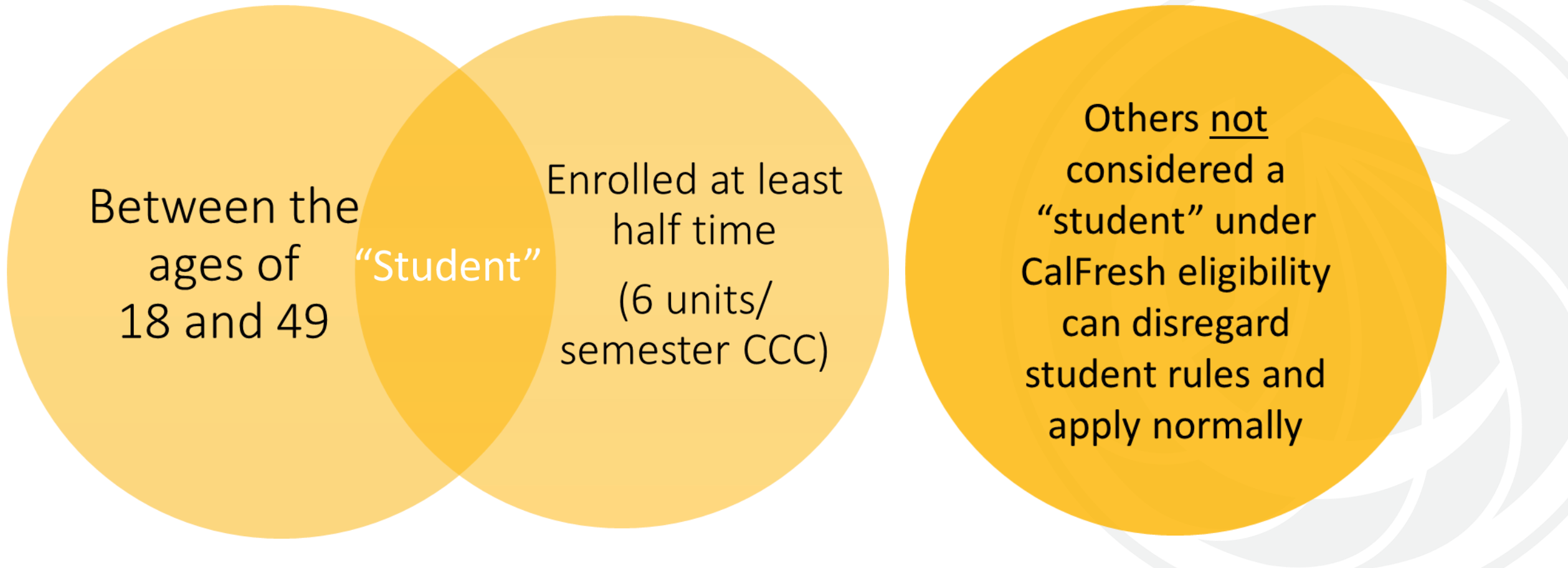
- CalFresh determines eligibility based off household size and income
 - To apply for CalFresh, you must reside in CA as a citizen or Legal Permanent Resident
- How does CalFresh define a “household”?
 - An individual or unit of individuals that purchase and prepare food together.



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CalFresh Student Eligibility



History of Student CalFresh Eligibility

Historically students, between the ages of 18-49, taking 6 or more units would have to meet one of a few “exemptions” in order to apply for CalFresh benefits-exemptions included:

- Work at least 20 hours per week, on average;
- Are approved for state or federal work-study money and have not refused any job assignments;
- Are a full-time student who is a single parent to a child under 12;
- A part-time student with a child age 6-11 without adequate child care;
- Are receiving CalWORKs benefits;
- Are enrolled in CalFresh employment and training or another job training program accepted by CalFresh;

Student Eligibility in California Community Colleges

HOW TO APPLY

CalFresh provides free money for groceries. If you applied for financial aid, why not apply for food aid? Applying online takes just a few minutes. If approved, you'll get a free debit card for monthly groceries.

ELIGIBILITY

To be potentially eligible for CalFresh, students must meet **ONE** of the following exemptions. The list below is not intended to be exhaustive; additional programs might be referred to locally by another name.

PROGRAMS THAT INCREASE EMPLOYABILITY

- EOPS/CARE
- Disabled Student Programs & Services
- ~~Puente Project~~
- MESA Program

PROGRAMS FOR CURRENT AND FORMER FOSTER YOUTH

- Guardian Scholars
- Foster Youth Success Initiative
- NextUp
- Chafee ETV
- Extended Foster Care (AB 12/AB 212)

OTHER EXEMPTIONS

- Approved for work study
- Having dependent children under the age of 12
- Recipient of CalWORKs
- Working 20 hours/week; or average of 80 hours/month

COVID Related Temporary Exemptions

- If the student is eligible to receive work study they get an exemption from the student eligibility rule for the CalFresh application process:
 - Regardless of whether the student receives work study funds as a part of their financial aid award.
 - If the student has unmet financial aid need, they are eligible for the work study related exemption.
 - There is no penalty for students who are eligible for work study, but are unable to be placed due to a lack of positions or work study funding.
- The exemption applies to any work study position whether on campus, remote, or off campus.

\$0 EFC CalFresh Temporary Exemption

- 0 EFC CalFresh temporary exemption:
 - Students who can verify that they have a \$0 EFC meet the criteria for an exemption from the CalFresh student eligibility rule.
 - Temporary exemption effective during the current state of emergency due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Students can provide verification three ways:
 - A letter sent from the California Student Aid Commission (CSAC) to the student explaining their exemption status based on \$0 EFC
 - A Student Aid Report (SAR) that shows a \$0 EFC
 - A financial aid award letter if it shows a \$0 EFC



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#COVID19



COVID-19 Response

- Don't need to report change or loss of employment
- Interview Waiver – New CalFresh applicants do not need to complete an interview if they provide identify verification and other required proof with their application
- Telephonic Signature
- Use CalFresh to purchase groceries online through Amazon and Walmart
- Pandemic-EBT
- Not a CalFresh benefit, available to children in K-12 eligible for free or reduced-price meals



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this one goes out to

**ANYONE WHO CAN'T FIND
FREE PIZZA AT A CLUB
MEETING TONIGHT.**

CalFresh is a financial aid program that awards you
an average of \$150 a month to buy groceries.



Students can apply at:
students.getcalfresh.org/s/ccc



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Encourage YOU to apply!



Many students don't even know they are eligible



Eligibility is based off income, household size, student status, and several other factors



“Congrats! You applied for (or qualified for) financial aid, now don't forget to apply for 'food aid'”



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Poll Question Number 2

“Where can students apply for CalFresh benefits online?”



CalFresh Outreach Student Ambassadors

- Our Mission
 - To benefit, support, and enhance the missions of the California Community Colleges
- Our Vision
 - The Foundation is the trusted partner of the California Community Colleges – facilitating collaboration, accelerating innovation, and increasing systemwide resources.

Student Ambassador Program Model

Foundation for California Community Colleges Student Ambassador Programs train students how to conduct peer-to-peer outreach on their campus to promote a variety of holistic resources that help students succeed.

The program model leverages current programs and partnerships and has already attracted new opportunities.



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STUDENT AMBASSADOR



Student Ambassador Program Model

- Reduces stigma by promoting student benefits and resources in a welcoming and relatable manner
- Promotes services and resources through innovative and creative outreach strategies
- Furthers student reach and collaboration across campus and surrounding communities
- Focuses on reaching historically underserved students
- Supports professional development of students through leadership empowerment, networking, career exploration, and deeper connections to campuses and communities
- Improves student outcomes by providing resources and support for student success

History of Peer-to-Peer Outreach at the Foundation

- 2016 – 2017 | Civic Impact Project/Civic Impact Scholars
- 2017-2018 | AmeriCorps Student Ambassador Program
- 2018 – Present | Environmental Equity Ambassadors
- 2018 – Present | Student Wellness Ambassador Program
- 2019-Present | Cal Fresh Outreach Ambassadors (Sacramento Valley and LA County)
- 2020 | Census Outreach Ambassadors

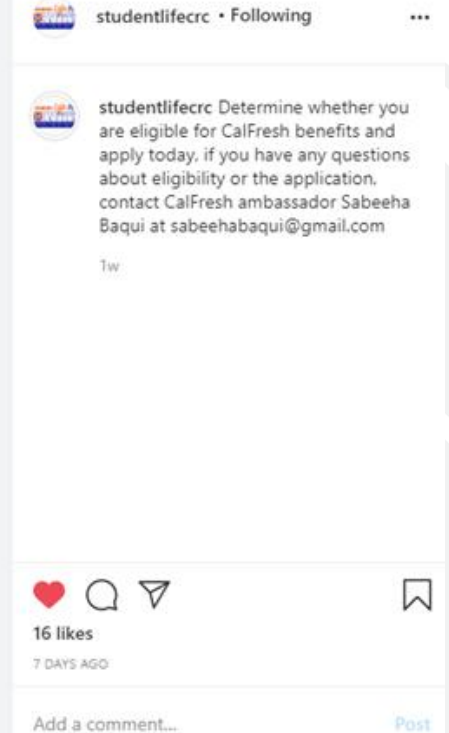
Traditional Ambassador Activities

- Conduct peer-to-peer outreach to raise awareness of mental health and wellness resources and information
- Connect students to on and off campus resources and support systems
- Network and partner with campus resources such as health centers, foster youth liaisons, homeless youth liaisons, wellness centers, food pantries, and mental health counselors
- Organize and deliver campus resource tables and health and wellness fairs on campus
- Coordinate and collaborate with existing on-campus student support programs
- Implement activities on and off campus to increase awareness of student support programs



Pivot to Digital Outreach

- Social Media Posts-Connection to Public Information Officers (PIO)
- Digital Presentations
- Virtual Events
- College-Wide Emails and list-servs
- Canvas Message Boards



Programmatic Elements

- Campus Partnership | Role of On-Campus Advisor
- Training Series and Ongoing Training
- Action Plan
- Monthly Reports/Data Tracking
- Advisor Approval Form
- Additional Challenges/Event Funds



Timeline of an Ambassador Program (Full Academic Year)

- Late Spring/Early Summer | Application Opens, Outreach to Campus Partners
- Mid-Summer | Students Notified of Acceptance and Campus Partners Notified of Selected Students
- Late-Summer | Virtual or In-Person Training
- Fall | Ambassador Program Activities
 - Students meet with on-campus advisors 2-3 times per semester
 - Students receive ongoing training from Foundation staff
- December/January | First Stipend Distributed
- Early January | Additional Training
- Spring | Continued Ambassador Program Outreach Activities
 - Students meet with on-campus advisors 2-3 times per semester
 - Students receive ongoing training from Foundation staff
- May/June | Final Stipend Distributed

Impact

- Student Interest | Since 2018, over 1,000 students have applied for an Ambassador opportunity
 - 130 applications for CalFresh Outreach Ambassadors
- Outreach Impact
 - Spring 2020
 - 17 CFO Ambassadors promoted CalFresh to 7,225 students from January 2020-May 2020
 - Fall 2020
 - 25 CFO Ambassadors have reached 3,366 as of October 2020

What do Ambassadors receive?

- Comprehensive training covering:
 - Program content and available resources
 - Best practices and strategies to effectively conduct outreach
- Personal stipend
 - Varies between programs based on requirements and length of position
 - Currently \$1,200 for CFO Ambassador Outreach Program (Fall and Spring Semester)
- Materials and tool kit of resources to distribute on campus
- Event fund to use for hosting events on campus (when in-person outreach is allowed)
 - Typically \$500 per campus
- Ongoing training and professional development
- An on-campus advisor plus support from Foundation staff



Current Opportunities

- Campus/FCCC Partnership | Combined Sponsorship
 - If you are interested in learning more about the combined sponsorship opportunity, please email Carly Smith at csmith@foundationccc.org
- [CalFresh Outreach Digital Toolkit](#)
 - <https://foundationccc.org/CalFreshOutreach>

Student Perspective

- Andrea Dargo, CalFresh Student Ambassador, Cerritos College
- Der Yang, CalFresh Student Ambassador, Merced Community College
- Megan Fountain, CalFresh Student Ambassador, Cosumnes River College



Jamboard Activity



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Thank you!

Questions?

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