STATE OF CALIFORNIA—HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES AGENCY
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES
744 P Street • Sacramento, CA 95814 • *www.cdss.ca.gov*

CDSS
WILL LIGHTBOURNE
DIRECTOR

EDMUND G. BROWN JR.
GOVERNOR

REASON FOR THIS TRANSMITTAL

[X] State Law Change
[ ] Federal Law or Regulation Change
[ ] Court Order
[ ] Clarification Requested by One or More Counties
[ ] Initiated by CDSS

February 4, 2014

ALL COUNTY LETTER NO. 14-12

TO: ALL COUNTY WELFARE DIRECTORS
ALL CALWORKS PROGRAM SPECIALISTS
ALL WELFARE-TO-WORK COORDINATORS
ALL CONSORTIA REPRESENTATIVES

SUBJECT: CALIFORNIA WORK OPPORTUNITY AND RESPONSIBILITY TO KIDS (CalWORKs) FAMILY STABILIZATION PROGRAM

REFERENCES: Assembly Bill (AB) 74 (Chapter 21, Statutes of 2013); Welfare & Institutions (W&I) Code Section 11325.24; Senate Bill 1041(Chapter 47, Statutes of 2012) ; All County Information Notice (ACIN) I-02-14; County Fiscal Letter (CFL) No. 13/14-32, dated November 27, 2013

The purpose of this All County Letter (ACL) is to provide counties instructions and materials for implementing the CalWORKs Family Stabilization (FS) Program established by AB 74. Effective January 1, 2014, FS is a new component of the CalWORKs program that provides intensive case management and services to clients that meet the criteria set forth in AB 74. FS is designed to ensure a basic level of stability within a family prior to, or concurrently with, participation in Welfare-to-Work (WTW) activities. The goal of FS is to increase client success in light of the flexible WTW 24-Month Time Clock through more intensive case management and the assignment of clients to the additional activities or barrier removal services necessary to ultimately achieve self-sufficiency. CalWORKs recipients are eligible to participate in FS if a county determines that a family is experiencing an identified situation and/or crisis that is destabilizing the family and would interfere with adult clients' ability to participate in WTW activities and services.

The passage of Senate Bill 1041(Chapter 47, Statutes of 2012), established a prospective 24-month time limit, known as the WTW 24-Month Time Clock, for CalWORKs clients to participate in WTW activities without the hourly participation requirement for core activities. This change allows clients to receive a wide array of

services and supports in order to enter and remain in the workforce for a cumulative period of 24 months. If the WTW 24-Month Time Clock is exhausted, clients must meet core hourly requirements in activities aligned to federal standards. In order to maximize the benefit of this new flexibility, AB 74 enacted additional changes, including improvements to the process for initial engagement of CalWORKs clients in the WTW program. These reforms include FS and a new robust appraisal process, which will be addressed in a separate ACL.

Family Stabilization Services

The FS program provides intensive case management and services that may be in addition to those provided by the county's WTW program to clients who are experiencing an identified situation or crisis. The County Welfare Department's (CWD) FS program will assist its clients transition to WTW 24-Month Time Clock activities that are best aligned with their continued success in the CalWORKs program, including education/training, work study, subsidized employment, or less intensive barrier removal activities. The FS services may be provided at any point in the WTW continuum, so long as the assistance unit (AU) contains an eligible adult with time remaining on his or her WTW 24-Month Time Clock. The new robust appraisal process will improve the early identification of clients in need of FS services. WTW clients, however, may be eligible for FS at the referral to/participation in Job Search and at any time during participation in WTW 24-Month Time Clock activities.

Although not an exclusive list, W&I Code Section 11325.24 (a) (2) defines the type of situation or crisis that may qualify a client for FS. These situations or crises include, but are not limited to:

- Homelessness or imminent risk of homelessness;
- A lack of safety due to domestic violence; and/or
- Untreated or undertreated behavioral needs, including mental health or substance abuse-related needs.

Examples of additional services that counties may provide under FS include:

- Treatment for family members, if the situation interferes with client's ability to participate in WTW activities;
- Intensive day treatment, non-medical outpatient drug free treatment, and residential treatment;
- Emergency shelter;
- Movement to transitional housing;
- Rehabilitative services; and/or
- Substance abuse counseling/treatment.

However, FS is funded through the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families block grant and therefore, can only be used for non-medical services. FS does not alter the extent of services that can be offered through the mental health and substance allocation.

Intensive Case Management

A significant difference between the FS program and services clients might otherwise receive under the WTW 24-Month Time Clock is the increased level and intensity of case management. Specifically, FS case managers must have a lower caseload and more frequent contact with clients, especially upon initial acceptance into the program. Some examples of what additional support intensive case management may provide to clients participating in FS include the following:

- Ensure that each family understands the program and services available.
- Provide prompt referrals to appropriate, available community services needed to assist the family in order to be involved concurrently, or transition into, WTW 24-Month Time Clock activities.
- Develop a FS Plan in order to assist the family to regain stability and ultimately enter into a WTW plan.
- Frequent and on-going contact with each family, ranging from daily to weekly, depending on level of need and progress in FS, via phone and/or in-person, along with service providers to determine the effectiveness of service provision.
- Assess weekly progress toward FS plan goals and make the necessary changes to improve the family's success in meeting these goals.
- Provide WTW program exemption, program deferral, good cause, and/or any other recommendations.
- Make every effort to engage families who are not making adequate progress which may include home visits.

Eligibility for Family Stabilization Services

If in the course of appraisal, pursuant to W&I Code Section 11325.2, or at any point during a client's participation in WTW activities, it is determined that a case meets the eligibility criteria for FS, then eligible members of that case may enroll in those services and receive additional support and services.

AUs that contain individuals who are required to participate in the WTW program are eligible for FS services. This includes AUs in which the only adult is:

- Non-compliant;
- Sanctioned; or
- A recent non-citizen entrant.

FS services are not limited to the aided or work eligible adult and should address FS issues of the children in the AU and ineligible unaided AU members.

The following are ineligible for FS services:

- AUs that only include WTW clients who have exhausted the WTW 24-Month Time Clock prior to the basis for qualifying for FS;
- AUs that do not include an work eligible adult who is required to participate in WTW;

- Cases where all adults have exceeded the 48-month CalWORKs time limit;
- Drug and fleeing felons;
- Ineligible non-citizens;
- Non-needy caretaker relatives; and
- Adults receiving Social Security Supplemental Security Income.

As stated above, FS is designed to provide support to families in crisis during the process of engagement in the WTW program. However, a WTW client may request a review to determine eligibility for FS services at any time during the WTW 24-Month Time Clock. Since it is important to rapidly provide FS services to stabilize the family, the full WTW assessment or other testing should be integrated into the FS plan and should not delay the provision of FS services. If the CWD determines that the individual is ineligible for FS services, the CWD must issue an adequate notice of action (NOA) that includes an explanation of his or her hearing rights. Under a separate cover, the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) will issue a specific statewide NOA to CWDs for use. In the interim, CWDs may develop their own NOA that must include hearing rights for notifying clients of their eligibility and ineligibility for FS services. The CWDs should reference All County Information Notice (ACIN) I-02-14 regarding specific requirements for adequate notices.

Individual Client Family Stabilization Plans

Upon a CWD's determination that a family qualifies for FS services, the CWD must develop an individual family stabilization plan for the family. The CWDs may wish to designate a special unit or staff to provide FS services and develop FS plans. In any event, CWDs shall ensure that any staff developing FS plans or providing intensive case management should have training, skills and experience in providing case management to families and individuals in crisis. The CWD case managers should develop a comprehensive plan that assists the family in resolving the identified situation or crisis that:

- Assesses the stability of the family's living situation, physical and emotional health, and safety;
- Provides intensive case management and referrals to appropriate services needed to assist the family;
- Provides supportive services for FS plan activities as needed;
- Reduces the chance of reoccurring crises;
- Enhances the family's ability to resolve issues; and
- Monitors each family's progress toward making the necessary changes to improve the situation or crisis.

After an FS assessment, CWDs shall review the existing WTW plan, if any, to determine whether it should continue or require modification based on the client's assessment. Counties may also develop an alternative FS Plan form.

In addition, CWD case managers should assess the use of current programs that could be used in conjunction with FS services (such as the existing Homeless Assistance Program) when developing a client's FS Plan.

FS Compliance and the WTW 24—Month Time Clock

Clients participating in FS are not subject to WTW minimum hourly participation requirements. However, FS clients must comply with the requirements of the FS plan developed by the CWD, with the assistance of FS intensive case management.

Participation in FS services will stop a client's WTW 24-Month Time Clock for up to six cumulative months (W&I Code Section 11322.85 (6)) if the CWD makes a finding that if the client was required to participate in WTW, he or she would meet the criteria for good cause for failing to participate in WTW activities found at W&I Code Section 11320.3(f). However, FS services may be provided to clients, who at initial engagement or thereafter may need additional assistance to transition into a WTW plan, but who would not have ultimately qualified for good cause for failure to participate in WTW activities. Also, the length of time clients remain in FS is dependent upon the individual circumstance of each family.

If a client is not complying with their FS plan, the CWD case worker should explore if the client may need a WTW exemption. If a client is not complying with their FS plan or making progress towards FS plan goals, and is not found to be exempt from WTW, then after exhausting additional attempts to assist clients via intensive case management the CWD must initiate the non-compliance process. Part of this process should consider whether FS services remain appropriate for the client or if the client is able to participate in WTW.

CWD Family Stabilization Plans Submittals

The CWDs are required to use the Assembly Bill (AB 74) County Welfare Department Family Stabilization (FS) Plan (WTW 40) to submit a written plan to the CDSS by March 31, 2014, that describes their FS program. Please contact the CDSS Employment Bureau at (916) 654-2137 for a Microsoft Word version of the template. The CWDs should include any policy documents or county forms to document progress of FS clients, including, but not limited to the FS plans for clients described above. Additionally, FS plans should include services specifically targeted for non-compliant and sanctioned households.

The CWDs shall submit completed plans electronically to FSProgram@dss.ca.gov. The CDSS Employment Bureau will review county submittals and contact the county with any questions. All county FS plans will be posted on the CDSS website after being reviewed by the CDSS. The CWDs must submit updated plans to the CDSS if the county makes significant changes to its FS Program.

Family Stabilization Reporting Requirements

Beginning April 20, 2014, and quarterly thereafter, counties must submit to the CDSS the following information regarding their FS programs:

- The total monthly number of CalWORKs cases served under FS;
- The total monthly number of individuals who received FS services;
- The total monthly number of FS cases who discontinued receiving FS services;
- The total monthly number of FS cases who began participating in WTW;
- The total monthly number of FS cases who participated concurrently in WTW;
- The total monthly number of FS cases who were provided good cause;
- The total monthly number and type of services received by FS cases; and
- A narrative description of any lack of availability of FS services.

Under a separate cover, the CDSS Data Systems and Survey Design Bureau will provide a separate reporting form for CWDs to submit the information above.

Funding for Family Stabilization

For the Fiscal Year 2013-14, CWDs were provided an additional allocation for FS in the amount of $10.8 million. Funding for FS is in addition to, and independent of, the CWDs CalWORKs Single Allocation. The FS funds may be used to cover all expenditures related to the services and operational costs of a county's FS program, including the cost of overseeing the program and providing training to county staff. The CWDs will have flexibility to utilize these funds as described above. For more information regarding funding for the FS Program, please refer to County Fiscal Letter (CFL) No.13/14-32.

The CFL No. 13/14-35 transmits the time study information and claiming instructions for FS Program expenditures. These codes are available for FS expenditures for immediate use prospectively upon release of the claiming CFL.

Camera Ready Copies and Translations

For camera-ready copies in English, contact the Forms Management Unit at fmudss@dss.ca.gov. If your office has internet access you may obtain this form from the CDSS webpage at http://www.dss.cahwnet.gov/cdssweb/FormsandPu_271.htm.

When all translations are completed per Manual of Policies and Procedures (MPP) Section 21-115.2, including Spanish form, they are posted on an on-going basis on our web site. Copies of the translated forms can be obtained at http://www.dss.cahwnet.gov/cdssweb/FormsandPu_274.htm. For questions on translated materials, please contact Language Services at (916) 651-8876. Until translations are available, clients who have elected to receive Spanish, Russian, Vietnamese, and written Chinese materials should be sent the GEN 1365 interpretation informing notice with a local contact number.

Partnerships and Promising Practices

The CDSS encourages counties to establish and/or expand FS by working with local services providers and other partners in order to maximize the success of the FS Program. Counties are encouraged to submit best and promising family stabilization practices to the WTW Best Practices webpage in order to provide expertise for other

counties. The WTW Best Practices webpage is located on the CDSS internet website at http://www.cdss.ca.gov/calworks/PG1933.htm.

If you have questions about the FS Program, please contact your Employment Bureau county consultant at (916) 654-2137.

Sincerely,

Original Document Signed By:

TODD R. BLAND
Deputy Director
Welfare to Work Division

Attachment

ASSEMBLY BILL (AB) 74
COUNTY WELFARE DEPARTMENT FAMILY STABILIZATION (FS) PLAN

COUNTY WELFARE DEPARTMENT (CWD):	DATE:
El Dorado County	MArch 31, 2014

CWD CONTACT INFORMATION

NAME/POSITION:
Debbie Stack/Program Manager

ADDRESS:
3057 Briw Road, Placerville, CA 95667

PHONE NUMBER:	EMAIL ADDRESS:
530 642 7325	debbie.stack@edcgov.us

Please describe how your CWD plans to utilize funds allocated for the FS Program and include responses to the following nine categories. There is an additional text box to enter other information about your FS program if needed. The text boxes will accept up to 1,000 characters of text. If more space is needed you may also submit attachments to accommodate the additional information. You may also attach any materials that address each of the areas below if the materials can be converted to a pdf format for posting to the CDSS website (i.e. not scanned copies).

Please indicate the date your CWD will begin offering an FS program:

May 2014

What types of services will be provided under the FS program?

- ☑ Homelessness
- ☑ Mental Health
- ☑ Substance Abuse
- ☑ Domestic Violence
- ☑ Other, please list refer to the end of this document

How will clients be informed of the FS program?

The CalWORKs Welfare to Work (WTW) and Eligibility staff will be trained to refer to the FS program in discussions that they have with their clients. The FS case managers will make direct contact with the clients during the appraisal process; discuss the FS program during Job Club; discussion at all face to face and telephone interviews.

Information regarding the FS program will be shared with the Linkages Team and Child Protective Services (CPS) so that those case managers may share it with their clients. Brochures will be developed and shared with case managers and with partner programs and agencies.

How will clients be able to request participation in the FS program?

Clients will be able to request participation in the FS program by making a request of their case manager. Other referrals will come from CPS case managers, Eligibility Workers, Social Workers and/or community and agency partners. Brochures will be developed to communicate the program information to our partners and clients.

How will the county determine which clients will be selected for the FS program?

WTW has identified a review team consisting of management, supervisors and workers to review client cases being referred to the FS program. Participation in the CPS/WTW linkages program will be a factor in the decision as to which families are in the most need of FS services.

El Dorado County is also considering the development of a FS tool for use in helping to identify clients in need of Family Stabilization services or to identify clients in crisis or at risk of falling into a crisis situation. The tool will reference the Welfare and Intuitions code mentioned below.

How will the county notify the clients that are participating in the FS program?

Clients will be notified in writing of their acceptance in FS directly by the case managers. Once a family is accepted into the FS program, a formal FS Plan will be developed and signed by both the client(s) and the case manager.

How often will county staff contact FS families?

WTW staff will be in contact with FS clients weekly, by phone or in person with frequent home visits as part of FS Plan and the intensive case management.

How will FS Intensive Case Management differ from general Case Management?

Per ACL 14-12, “The FS program provides intensive case management and services that may be in addition to those provided by the county’s WTW program to clients who are experiencing an identified situation or crisis”

Dedicated case managers will be assigned to work FS cases. These case managers may have

What types of partnerships will you develop for your FS Program? (i.e. Community based organizations, non-profits, etc.)

Partnerships are already in place for counseling, domestic violence, substance abuse and mental health services. Additional partnerships are being developed to include, weatherization, transitional and/or subsidized housing.

WTW already has a strong partnership with Child Protective Services through the Linkages program

What strategies will you use to link clients with these providers?

The Public Housing Authority (PHA) has agreed to work closely with WTW as they have noticed that oftentimes clients who are eligible for the Housing Choice Voucher program fail to complete applications or cannot get their credit checks completed. Case managers working with FS clients can assist clients in obtaining subsidized housing and removing housing as a family crisis issue.

What strategies does your CWD have to transition clients to WTW?

El Dorado County case managers will help the client transition to WTW activities by setting short and long term goals with the families; discuss milestones, those achieved as well as those goals at risk of being unmet. The expectation is that the intensive case management will help the client stabilize within six months and be prepared to participate in WTW activities, including but not limited to Job Club, Expanded Subsidized Employment, vocational training, etc.

How does the FS program compliment or enhance your current services?

FS helps El Dorado County add more services, remove additional barriers, allows for more intensive case management, as well as more one on one time with clients. It also enhances the already active Linkages program.

Please include any other components of your FS program not covered above:

In accordance with ACL 13-81, ACL 14-12, CFL 13/14-32, CFL 13/14-35 El Dorado County may provide the following to families involved in the Family Stabilization program:

Homeless Assistance: Emergency homeless assistance, transitional housing, relocation assistance and/or moving related expenses, (i.e., trucks, packaging supplies, labor, etc.), subsidized rent, rental

Please fill out this form electronically and submit to FSProgram@dss.ca.gov

Note: CWDs must submit their plans no later than 30 days after implementation of their FS Programs. CDSS may request subsequent submittals of AB 74 FS Plans from CWDs depending on the needs of the program.