Your Rights

Under California Welfare Programs

. . . for people applying for or receiving public aid in California

Tell us if you need help because of a disability

Ask for a free interpreter

Your Rights

All people and organizations providing public assistance must respect your rights. They can help you understand and apply for benefits and services.

- You have the right to an interpreter free of charge.
- Ud. tiene derecho a un intérprete gratis
- Вы имеете право на услуги Переводчика
- 你有权利自由译员
- May karapatan kang magkaroon ng tag ugnay na walang bayad.
- Quý vị có quyền được một thông dịch viên miễn phí.
- .Koj muaj txoj cais yuav ib tus neegtxhais lus Hmoob rau koj.
- لديك الحق في الحصول على مترجم دون أية تكلفة.

- Դուք անվճար թարգմանչի իրավունք ունեք:
- អ្នកមានសិទ្ធិទទួលបានអ្នកបកប្រែភាសាជូន ដោយមិនបាច់បង់ថ្លៃជួលទ្បើយ
- 여러분은 무료 통역 서비스를 받을 권리가 있습니다
- شما حق داريد از خدمات ترجمه شفاهی رايگان بهره مند گرديد.
- ທ່ານມີສິດຂໍນາຍພາສາແປໃຫ້ໂດຍບໍ່ຕ້ອງເສັຽຄ່າ
- ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਬਿਨਾਂ ਲਾਗਤ ਦੇ ਅਨੁਵਾਦਕ ਦਾ ਅਧਿਕਾਰ ਹੈ।
- Ви маєте право на безкоштовного перекладача.
- Você tem o direito a um/a interprete gratuito/a!
- あなたは無料の通訳の権利を有してもいい。
- Meih maaih leiz haih duqv dauh faan waac mienh tengx meih maiv zuqc bun nyaanh.

You Have a Right to…

1. Understand what is happening with your application and aid.
2. Get written and oral explanations about your application and aid.
3. Get a receipt for any documents you turn in.
4. See your case record.
5. See state and county laws and regulations.
6. Ask a judge to review any county decision about your eligibility, benefits, or services.
7. Not face discrimination in receiving program benefits or services.
8. File a complaint about discrimination.
9. Get extra help from county staff to make sure you get your benefits if you have a disability or impairment that makes it hard to understand the program rules.
10. Have your information kept confidential.
11. Be treated with courtesy and respect.

If You are Having Problems with Your Aid or Services:

1. Keep records of all your information, documents, and contacts with the county.
2. Get a receipt when you turn anything in.
3. You can bring someone with you to a meeting with your worker.
4. Complain. There are 4 ways to do this:

- *Informal:* You can ask to speak to a supervisor to talk about problems with a worker or to go over the rules and the proposed action on your aid or services.
- *State Hearing:* Ask for a state hearing if there is a problem with your aid or services. **You must ask for a hearing within 90 days of the county's action.** You may be able to file after 90 days if you have a good reason, like illness or a disability.
- *Discrimination complaint:* If you feel that the county has discriminated against you, you can make a discrimination complaint to the County's Civil Rights Coordinator or to the

State Civil Rights Bureau, and to the Federal Government. You must do this within 180 days of the discrimination. For more on this, see the section beginning "Prohibited Discrimination." If the discrimination also affects your benefits or services, **you must also ask for a state hearing** if you wish to challenge the county's decision on your benefits or services.

- *Grievance:* You can file a complaint with the county if they have a grievance procedure. **This does not protect your benefits** in the way that asking for a state hearing does.

State Hearings

- You can ask for a state hearing any time you disagree with a county's action on your benefits or services.
- You can also ask for a state hearing if the county is not giving you benefits or services which you think you should get.
- A state hearing is heard by a state Administrative Law Judge. The county will have someone at the hearing to explain why they took their action.

- A state hearing is not a court hearing. You do have the right to have a representative with you. There are free legal services in every county. They are listed on the back of your county notices. You can bring witnesses. You have the right to a free interpreter. Ask the county how to get one.
  - If your problem is with General Assistance or general relief, you must ask for a county hearing.
  - If your problem is with Social Security benefits, you must contact the Social Security Administration.

Continuing Your Aid or Services Pending a State Hearing

The county must give you a notice at least 10 days before any action to change your aid or services takes place. If you ask for a hearing before the action takes place, you can get "aid paid pending" your hearing. This means your aid stays the same until you get a hearing decision.

You MUST ask for a hearing on any new notice you get, if you disagree.

How to Request a State Hearing

1. Phone: Ask for a State Hearing by contacting the CA Department of Social Services at (800) 743-8525 or (800) 952-5253
2. Fill out the back of your Notice of Action (NOA) or send a written request to:
   CDSS, State Hearing Division
   744 P Street M.S. 09-17-37
   Sacramento, CA 95814

Prohibited Discrimination

Under State law, welfare agencies may not provide you aid, benefits or services that is different from aid provided to others on the basis of

> *Race, Color, National Origin (including language), Ethnic Group Identification, Age, Disability, Religion, Sex, Sexual Orientation, Political Affiliation, Marital Status, or Domestic Partnership*

Federal laws also prohibit discrimination on several, although not all, of the bases listed above.

Federal Law also prohibits :

1. Delaying or denying the placement of a child for adoption or into foster care on the basis of race, color or national origin of the adoptive or foster parents, or the child;
2. Denying to any individual the opportunity to become a foster or adoptive parent on the basis of race, color or national origin of the individual or child involved.

Examples of Discrimination

- The County does not give you a free interpreter.
- A worker tells a certain ethnic group about more programs and services than people of other ethnicities.
- The County won't help you get audio tapes of a program orientation to help you with a disability that makes it hard for you to read.
- A worker learns of your religion or politics and then treats you differently.
- You can't get to appointments because the county building does not have an elevator.
- You cannot get your wheelchair into

examination, interview rooms or restrooms.

- Men get referred to job training for better paying jobs than women.
- The county does not want you to have training because they say you are "too old."
- You are not allowed to adopt a baby because you are of a different race.

Discrimination Complaints

If you think you have been discriminated against, you may submit a complaint application separately to the County or the State, and the Federal Government. The Federal agency that you must complain to depends on which program your complaint is about.

You can file a discrimination complaint with:

1. FOR ALL PROGRAMS ADMINISTERED BY YOUR COUNTY WELFARE DEPARTMENT: The County's Civil Rights Coordinator. Ask your county office for the name, address and phone number of their Civil Rights Coordinator. He/she will independently investigate your complaint.

2. Civil Rights Bureau
   California Department of Social Services
   744 P Street, MS 8-16-70
   Sacramento, CA 95814
   (916) 654-2107
   (866) 741-6241 (Toll-Free)

3. FOR THE CALFRESH PROGRAM:
   United States Department of Agriculture
   Director, Office of Civil Rights,
   Room 326-W, Whitten Bldg.
   1400 Independence Avenue, S.W.,
   Washington, D.C. 20250-9410
   (202) 720-6382 (voice and TTY)

4. FOR ALL OTHER PROGRAMS:
   Health and Human Services
   Office of Civil Rights
   90 7th Street, Suite 4-100
   San Francisco, CA 94103
   (415) 437-8310 (voice)
   (415) 437-8311 (TDD)

Time Limits to Take Action

If you suffer discrimination, you must submit your

complaint within 180 days of the actual discrimination. If the discrimination also affected the level of your benefits and services, you must also ask for a state hearing within 90 days. A discrimination investigation cannot change your benefit levels or services…only a state hearing can do that.

Limits on Certain Rights

Although you have the right to privacy and confidentiality, there are certain laws that allow limited exceptions. You can ask the county for the laws.

Questions

If you have any questions about the rights listed here, call the Public Inquiry Unit: toll free (800) 952-5253. The TDD toll-free telephone number is (800) 952-8349.

Programs Covered by This Pamphlet

- Adoption Assistance Program (AAP)
- Adult Protective Services
- Alcohol and Drug Program
- California Food Assistance Program (CFAP)

- Medi-Cal
- CalWORKs
- CalWORKs Child Care
- CalWORKs Welfare-to-Work Program/Services
- Cash Assistance Program for Immigrants (CAPI)
- Child Welfare Services
- Denti-Cal
- Early & Periodic Screening, Diagnosis, and Treatment (EPSDT)
- CalFresh (Food Stamps)
- Foster Care
- In-Home Support Services
- Kinship Guardian Assistance (Kin-GAP)
- Mental Health
- Multipurpose Senior Services Program (MSSP)
- Personal Care Services Program (PCSP)
- Refugee Cash Assistance
- Social Services

STATE OF CALIFORNIA

HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES AGENCY

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

This pamphlet is available from your Local County Welfare Office and at www.cdss.ca.gov in the following languages:

- Arabic
- Armenian
- Cambodian
- Chinese
- Farsi
- Hmong
- Japanese
- Korean
- Lao
- Mien
- Portuguese
- Punjabi
- Russian
- Spanish
- Spanish Large Print
- Tagalog
- Ukrainian
- Vietnamese

Also Available in large print, Braille, and Audio CD

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