



COUNTY OF SONOMA HUMAN SERVICES DEPARTMENT

P. O. BOX 1539, SANTA ROSA, CA 95402-1539
(707) 527-2715 FAX (707) 528-5890

DIANNE M. EDWARDS
DIRECTOR

January 6, 1998

Glen Brooks, CalWORKs Liaison
California Department of Social Services
744 P Street, M.S. 8-100
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Mr. Brooks,

Thank you for taking the time to review our local CalWORKs plan. In response to your January 6, 1998 letter we are providing the following clarification as requested.

Section (b) Partnerships with Private Sector to Identify Jobs

Sonoma County has worked with the faith community to identify potential jobs and other needed services for welfare recipients.

On May 29, 1997, thirty-two people attended a community forum on welfare reform. The Human Services Department participated in this forum which was organized by several local non-profit and faith-based organizations including EARTH (Ecumenical Association Regarding The Homeless).

The Human Services Department established a Safety Net Focus Group which met monthly from June to October 1997. Participants in this focus group included Maureen Shaw, Executive Director of Catholic Charities, Lieutenant Brian Hoover of the Salvation Army, and Reverend Tim Kellgren of Elim Lutheran Church.

Our Department has also had several meetings with Charles Dooley, Business Administrator for the Santa Rosa Corps of the Salvation Army regarding the development of jobs and training positions for CalWORKs recipients through a grant-funded proposal. Reverend Dooley has expressed interest in working with us whether or not the Salvation Army proposal is funded.

Section (g) Child Care and Transportation Services

There are three organizations in Sonoma County that are recipients of Stage 3 child care funding from the California Department of Education. They are as follows:

Community Child Care Council of Sonoma County / 4 C's
396 Tesconi Court
Santa Rosa, CA 95401
(707) 544-3077

River Child Care Services
P.O. Box 1060
Guerneville, CA 95446
(707) 869-3613

Sonoma County Human Services Department
P.O. Box 1539
Santa Rosa, CA
(707) 527-2245

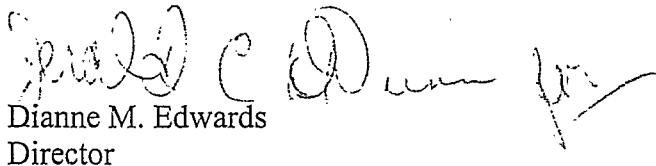
Section (i) Working with Victims of Domestic Violence

The Human Services Department has hired a consultant to develop local criteria and protocols for working with SonomaWORKS cases that involve domestic violence. This criteria will be developed prior to implementing the CalWORKs program in Sonoma County. Until domestic violence protocols are developed for SonomaWORKS, we will continue to employ the protocols used in the GAIN Program.

In the GAIN Program, clients who are identified as past or present victims of domestic violence are encouraged to participate in employment activities to the fullest extent possible while not placing them in greater jeopardy. Appropriate referrals are provided to clients regarding community services such as support groups, legal counsel, and the women's shelter. On a case-by-case basis, the amount of weekly participation can be reduced, or other modifications can be made to their activity requirements. If needed, a client's participation can be postponed. Case management services are provided to follow-up on the client's ability to access needed services and the client's progress to making changes in their living situation. If domestic violence issues result in an individual not meeting their participation requirements, then good cause is granted.

If you have any further questions regarding the SonomaWORKS plan which we are implementing on February 1, 1998, please contact Jerry Dunn, Division Director, at (707) 547-5599.

Sincerely,


Dianne M. Edwards
Director

XII. COUNTY GAIN PROGRAM GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE/PARTICIPANT SANCTIONS

CAUSE DETERMINATION AND CONCILIATION

GAIN regulations impose penalties on participants for failure or refusal to participate in a GAIN program component. Sonoma County SSD plans to provide avenues for due process to every GAIN participant in the event disagreements occur between the participant and the department. Ensuring that every participant has a clear and complete knowledge of program components and options as well as a good understanding of grievance procedures is of vital concern to the County SSD.

During the first interview with an AFDC applicant, the GAIN program components and options will be explained. A GAIN rights and responsibilities pamphlet will be given to each potential participant. Potential GAIN participants will attend an Orientation session. This session will be given so that participants can learn about GAIN program components and options as well as receive information about child care, transportation and grievance procedures. During the Appraisal Interview, the participant will be fully advised about program options including the right to all parts of the grievance process.

The GAIN grievance process allows the participant as well as the Case Manager a variety of options in ensuring that there is a clear understanding of program responsibilities and flexibility. It is the intent of the SSD that the GAIN process be a very positive plan for the participant and that the Case Manager help the participant to understand and comply with program policies.

Cause Determination

The first grievance level for the client is that of a cause determination. There can be a need for determination of good cause at any point that the participant either does not comply or refuses to comply with agreed upon actions. For example, the participant agrees to attend a GED class and then does not. When this occurs in the GAIN process, a clear and understandable message will be presented to the participant by the Case Manager in order to resolve the issue at the lowest level and without any sanctions. Any notice of action sent to the participant must include a clear and understandable explanation of the issue, the participant's responsibility, the consequences of failure to cooperate and a proposed conciliation plan. The Case Manager may also contact client by phone if that is feasible.

Basically the procedure for the Cause Determination process will be as follows:

If a participant fails/refuses to follow a program regulation, the Case Manager will first send a letter to the client explaining the problem and scheduling an appointment with the participant. This original contact can be made by phone if client has one and Case Manager prefers to do so. The purpose of this initial interview is to try to clear up any misunderstandings or identify barriers which kept the participant from complying with the agreed upon plan.

If letter is the method of notification used and if client does not come in for appointment, Case Manager will attempt to reach client by phone.

If no participant contact, Case Manager will send a non-cooperation letter. This letter will also clearly state the reason for the letter and the importance of client contact.

Informal Conciliation

If no good cause is determined by the Case Manager, either because the participant has failed to respond to the good cause letters or after facts of the situation have been evaluated, the client will have the option of discussing the situation with the Case Manager's supervisor. The participant will also be given the name and address of California Rural Legal Association (C.R.L.A.). If good cause is determined at this point, the participant will either continue with the agreed upon plan or the plan will be modified through mutual agreement.

Formal Conciliation

If no good cause was determined during the informal conciliation process, the case enters the Formal Conciliation Stage. During this stage, the Case Manager will review a list of deferrals and/or exemptions with the participant. The intent of this period is to ensure that the client clearly understands program responsibilities and that there are no barriers to keep the client from complying with GAIN regulations. Special emphasis will be placed on a review of potential personal problems which might keep the client in non-compliance such as mental health problems, child care problems, family situations, etc. Since the Money Management process goes into effect following this step, it is vital that every care be taken to help the client meet the program requirements so that the Money Management process won't be started unnecessarily.

Money Management

In situations where no good cause for non-compliance is found and client still fails to participate, the AFDC case will be placed in a Money Management phase for up to 3 months. GAIN regulations require that the county arrange for a substitute payee during this time. The Case Manager will work with the client to ensure that AFDC monies are properly paid to the vendors indicated by the client. If at any time during money management the client complies with the program requirements, Money Management will be terminated immediately.

Financial Sanctions

In a situation where no good cause for non-compliance is found for the second subsequent time or the participant does not comply during Money Management, the AFDC case will be placed in the Financial Sanction Stage. During the sanction period (first time 3 months, second time 6 months), aid will be discontinued for an individual or an assistance unit.

Individual - If a caretaker relative who is not the principal earner or an eligible child fail/refuse to participate, aid will be discontinued for the individual only.

Assistance Unit - If the principal earner or the only eligible child fail/refuse to participate, aid will be discontinued for the entire family.

GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

MPP Section 42-787.3 and the legislation implementing the GAIN Program require a Formal Grievance Procedure to be established by the County Board of Supervisors. The Procedures must be part of the County Plan (Section 42-720.34).

GAIN Program regulations and legislation provide for informal and formal conciliation, two different Formal Grievance Procedures and the right to State Appeal through the State Hearing system. The right to a State Hearing will exist for recipients if they are dissatisfied with the results of a Formal Grievance. A recipient may also request a State Hearing directly without going through either Formal Grievance Procedure. A recipient may select only one of the two types of Formal Grievance Procedures.

The State Hearing procedures have been in existence for many years and requests for Hearings involving the GAIN Program will be handled within these existing procedures. The Department's efforts will be coordinated through the already existing Appeals Unit.

One Formal Grievance Procedure will be the same as that established by Section 5302 of the Unemployment Insurance Code.

The other Formal Grievance Procedure will be that designated by the Board of Supervisors and described below. It can be used when a participant believes that any program requirement or assignment is in violation of the contract or is inconsistent with the program.

- An individual is subject to sanctions pending the outcome of the formal grievance procedure if he/she fails to participate during the period the grievance procedure is being processed.

GAIN Program Grievance Hearing Officer

The Board of Supervisors authorizes the Director of the SSD to contract for the services of a GAIN Program Grievance Hearing Officer (GHO). This person will be paid on an hourly basis.

The GAIN Program GHO must be someone who is familiar with the aims, objectives and regulations of the GAIN Program. Additionally, this person must be able to be impartial and be temperamentally suited to conduct the Grievance Hearing.

Formal Grievance Procedures

Generally, all the steps in the Formal Grievance Procedure will be coordinated and monitored by the GHO in the Social Services Department.

The grievance procedure approved by the Board of Supervisors is as follows:

The client will request the hearing in writing via a letter or format supplied by the SSD.

The client will receive a written statement from the county in advance of the hearing setting forth the facts and basis of the county's position. This statement will be completed by a GAIN Supervisor.

The client has a right to be represented by an attorney or other representative and to have access to all relevant documents and information in advance of the hearing.

The client has a right to present evidence and question witnesses.

The client will receive a written decision making findings of facts and conclusions of law and informing the client of the right to appeal the decision through the state hearing procedure.

When a request for a Formal Grievance is received by SSD, it will be forwarded to the GH0. The GH0 will schedule a Formal Grievance Hearing no sooner than 10 or no more than 20 working days from the date of receipt of the request by SSD.

The notification scheduling the Formal Grievance Hearing will advise the grievant of the time, date, and place of the hearing. It will also include notification that there is a right to present evidence, to bring witnesses, to question any witnesses, the right to be represented by an attorney or anyone else of the recipient's choosing, the right to have access to their case record and any relevant documents in advance of the Grievance Hearing and the right to a written statement (Position Statement) four working days prior to the Grievance Hearing.

The GAIN Supervisor will represent the Department in the Formal Grievance Hearing. In consultation with the appropriate GAIN Supervisor and/or GAIN Program Manager, the issue may be resolved prior to the Formal Grievance Hearing. In any unresolved issues, the assigned GAIN Supervisor will prepare a County Position Statement. Such Position Statement will set forth the facts and the regulatory basis for the Department's position. This Position paper will be made available to the grievant four working days prior to Formal Grievance Hearing.

The Grievance Hearing will be postponed upon notification to the SSD prior to the scheduled hearing. In general, hearings will be postponed only for good cause. The GAIN Supervisor responsible for case must make sure that necessary County staff and witnesses are present at the hearing.

The Hearing and Responsibilities of the GAIN Program Grievance Hearing Officer

The GAIN Program GH0 is responsible for conducting the hearing. The formal rules of evidence as used in a Court of Law are not required. The Hearing should be conducted informally so as to elicit a complete airing of the facts. The County and the recipient shall have the opportunity to question any witnesses. The GH0 may limit questioning if the information produced becomes unduly repetitious, irrelevant or is needlessly demeaning to any party. The GH0 may raise questions to clarify any points.

The hearing will be tape recorded and the tapes maintained for 18 months.

The testimony of all parties will be given under oath.

The GH0 may postpone or continue the hearing in order to obtain testimony or evidence not available, but required, in order to reach a fair decision.

Within 10 working days from the conclusion of the hearing, the GHO shall make a written decision. This decision is required to contain a finding of fact. The GAIN Program Officer may not consider the validity or constitutionality of any applicable law or regulation.

Hearing Results and Recourse

Upon receipt of a written decision from the GAIN GHO, the SSD will mail a copy of the Decision to the client and the client's representative (if any). As an enclosure with the Decision, the Department will also notify the client and the representative that the client has the right to further appeal the Formal Grievance Decision through the State Hearing process.

The Decision of the Grievance Officer will be binding on the Department.



HUMAN SERVICES DEPARTMENT

P. O. BOX 1539, SANTA ROSA, CA 95402-1539
(707) 528-5800 FAX (707) 528-5890

DIANNE M. EDWARDS
DIRECTOR

December 19, 1997

Eloise Anderson, Director
California Department of Social Services
744 P Street
Sacramento, CA 95814

SUBJ: Sonoma County's CalWORKs Implementation Plan

Dear Ms. Anderson:

I am pleased to submit Sonoma County's CalWORKs plan, SonomaWORKs, as required by AB1542. This plan is the result of an extensive community-based planning process which occurred over a one-year period and included two series of community forums.

SonomaWORKs was adopted without dissent by our Board of Supervisors at their meeting on December 16, 1997. The degree of community support for the plan is evidenced by the enclosed newspaper articles.

We urge your expeditious review and certification of our plan and look forward to implementing SonomaWORKs effective February 1, 1998.

Please contact me at (707) 528-5800 or Jerry Dunn at (707) 546-5599, if additional information is needed.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Dianne M. Edwards".

Dianne M. Edwards
Director

Enclosure

c: Curtis Howard, Welfare to Work Division, MS 9-701
James Harberson, Chair, Sonoma County Board of Supervisors

12/17/97

Sonoma County OKs welfare plan

By CHRIS COURSEY
Staff Writer

Sonoma County supervisors on Tuesday approved a plan for a welfare overhaul that combines the resources of government, business and nonprofit agencies to help people toward self-sufficiency.

"The challenge is enormous," Tula Jaffe, an advocate for the homeless, told the Board of Supervisors. "But we welcome you accepting it."

The plan was praised by a dozen speakers representing the poor, the homeless, families, child care advocates and the business community, all of whom lauded the months-long process in which county officials sought input from the community.

"This is a plan built on a number of voices from the community," said Suzie Shupe of Sonoma County Family Action. "It is a detailed, thoughtful plan that truly makes an effort to get people to become self-sufficient."

The state Legislature adopted California's welfare overhaul law in August, a year after President Clinton signed a federal overhaul

See Welfare, Page B3

Welfare

Continued from Page B1

bill and promised to "end welfare as we know it." The county plan must be submitted to the state for approval by Jan. 10.

County officials expect to take 10 months to phase in the new welfare rules for some 3,761 eligible adults already receiving aid. But for an estimated 377 new clients who will apply for welfare each month, the new rules take effect on Feb. 1.

Most new welfare clients as of that date in Sonoma County will be required to work or participate in "work-related activities" — job hunting, education or job training — for at least 32 hours a week.

But they won't be on their own. As soon as they ask for assistance, applicants will be enrolled in a system designed to turn their lives around. They immediately will be offered job-referral services and directed to child care resources. They'll get counseling about domestic violence issues and begin paperwork to enforce child support responsibilities. If necessary, they may receive job training or medical treatment for mental health or substance abuse problems.

"It's all about jobs," said Joni Topper, chairman of the county's Private Industry Council.

New welfare recipients can receive benefits for only 18 months at a time, with a five-year lifetime limit on payments. Because of that, supervisors stressed the importance of building "sustainabili-

ty" into the plan.

"Once we get these folks off the rolls and into a job, we can't afford to lose them" back to welfare, said Supervisor Tim Smith. "They are an investment."

To "protect" that investment, the county welfare plan actually expands the government's welfare bureaucracy and adds new layers with the participation of businesses and community agencies that will provide employment and child care services. While most in attendance Tuesday praised the cooperative nature of the plan, Supervisor Paul Kelley objected to adding 16 new county jobs to handle the additional workload.

"I understand the need, yet something inside me says, 'Gee, we're trying to save money here,'" he said.

Kelley also cautioned against plans to continue to subsidize child care costs for clients even after they no longer receive welfare payments.

"There is a point at which taxpayers can be over-expected to carry the burden," he said.

Still, other than the staffing additions, Kelley voted with the rest of the board to approve a list of resolutions that make an additional \$3.274 million available to set a welfare overhaul in motion in Sonoma County.

"This is just a beginning," said Dianne Edwards, head of the Human Services Department. "But I am very optimistic about our opportunity for success."

She said with about 5,200 families receiving aid, Sonoma County's welfare rolls are "relatively small in comparison to our total population."

P.D. 12/14/97
SUPERVISORS

Welfare overhaul plan goes to board

By CHRIS COURSEY
Staff Writer

A welfare plan designed to transform the way local government helps the poor comes before Sonoma County supervisors for approval Tuesday.

The key elements of the welfare overhaul — including a five-year lifetime limit, work requirements and child-care subsidies — were set by Congress in 1996 and the state Legislature this year. But each county still must come up with its own plan and submit it for state approval by Jan. 10.

The Sonoma County plan describes a new mindset about welfare, under which those who enter the system will be put on a track immediately designed to get them out of it.

The welfare offices at the county Administration Center will become a "one-stop shop," where those who apply for aid will be set up with leads at the same time for finding child care, an appointment to see a job counselor and possibly even an appointment for a job interview.

Beginning Feb. 1, most new welfare recipients in Sonoma County will be required to work or "participate in work-related activities" such as training or job hunting for at least 32 hours a week. Counties have the option to make that requirement as low as 20 hours a week during the first months of the plan, but Human Services Department officials are asking county supervisors to increase the requirement at the outset.

The state law also allows counties flexibility in requiring new mothers to work while receiving welfare payments. Women whose first child is 6 months old or younger can be exempted from work for as little as 12 weeks and as long as one year. For subsequent children, the exemption is 12 weeks but can be lengthened to six months on a case-by-case basis. Officials are recommending "the longest exemption possible" in those cases.

See Welfare, Page B2

Welfare

Continued from Page B1

Supervisors also will be asked to provide subsidized child-care services for children as old as 12 years old. The law allows such care to be cut off at age 10.

"We've spent a lot of time meeting with advocates and community-based organizations and service providers, and we feel that this is the community sentiment," said Dianne Edwards, head of the Human Services Department.

Not even the most optimistic welfare overhaul advocates believe all welfare recipients will be able to work their way off the dole. Some will meet their work obligation by doing community service. And even when benefits are cut off to adults who reach their time limits, aid will be available to their children.

President Clinton's plan to "end welfare as we know it" will be costly in its initial stages; supervisors will be asked on Tuesday to approve almost \$3.3 million in additional funding for welfare-related programs.

Edwards is asking for 16 new employees in her department, and 3.35 new positions are being sought in the Health Services Department, which will provide additional mental health and substance abuse recovery services to welfare clients.

The county also will contract with four community-based organizations to help welfare recipients find jobs: Goodwill Industries, Circuit Rider Productions, West County Community Services and Petaluma People Services Center. The Community Child Care Council and River Child Care Services will help clients hook up with child care providers, and another local agency will be chosen to develop

community service opportunities for those who cannot find employment.

Eventually, the idea is to form the welfare bureau from what for decades has set up primarily to make grants into an agency designed to guide clients toward self-sufficiency.

"This is just a plan," Edwards said of the thick stack of documents the supervisors will review on Tuesday. "It's just beginning."

"The real test begins on Feb.

SR teen rescued from Bodega c

A 17-year-old Santa Rosa teen who got stuck on the side ocean cliff near Bodega Beach was rescued uninjured Saturday by the Sonoma County Sheriff's Department.

The teenager, whose name was not released, had climbed a trail, but was unable to retrace route later after the tide came in. He told sheriff's deputies he tried to climb up the cliff at a different place, but kept sliding because the rock was unstable.

When the sheriff's helicopter arrived, the youth was perched on a cliff face on the west side of Bodega Head, about 50 feet from the top of the cliff and 25 feet from the ocean, according to Sheriff Eric Thomson.

The helicopter pilot, Lt. Thomson, on a 100-foot-long rescue device placed the youth's "horse-collar" rescue device. The two men were carried down to the beach.

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Ready to go

Sonoma County's ambitious, realistic attempt to get welfare recipients to work

Sonoma County has approved its welfare overhaul and soon will begin learning the answer to the fundamental question: Will it work? Or, more to the point, will former welfare recipients be able to find and keep work?

For many, the answer will be yes, in part because the economy is so healthy. But they will be helped, too, because the people who worked on this plan have been ambitious, comprehensive and — perhaps above all — realistic about what will be required for people to make the transition from dependency to independence.

Since Congress passed and President Clinton signed the federal welfare reform act in 1996, states and counties across the country have been working to implement the stated goal of "ending welfare as we know it."

Sonoma County spent months hearing from all segments of the community — from the poor, from child care advocates, from social service providers, from the business community and from government. As stated by Suzie Shupe of Sonoma County Family Action, "This is a plan built on a number of voices from the community. It is a detailed,

thoughtful plan that truly makes an effort to get people to become self-sufficient."

Assuming the state approves the plan next month, Sonoma County will begin phasing it in in February for people already on welfare. New applicants will be covered by the rules as of Feb. 1.

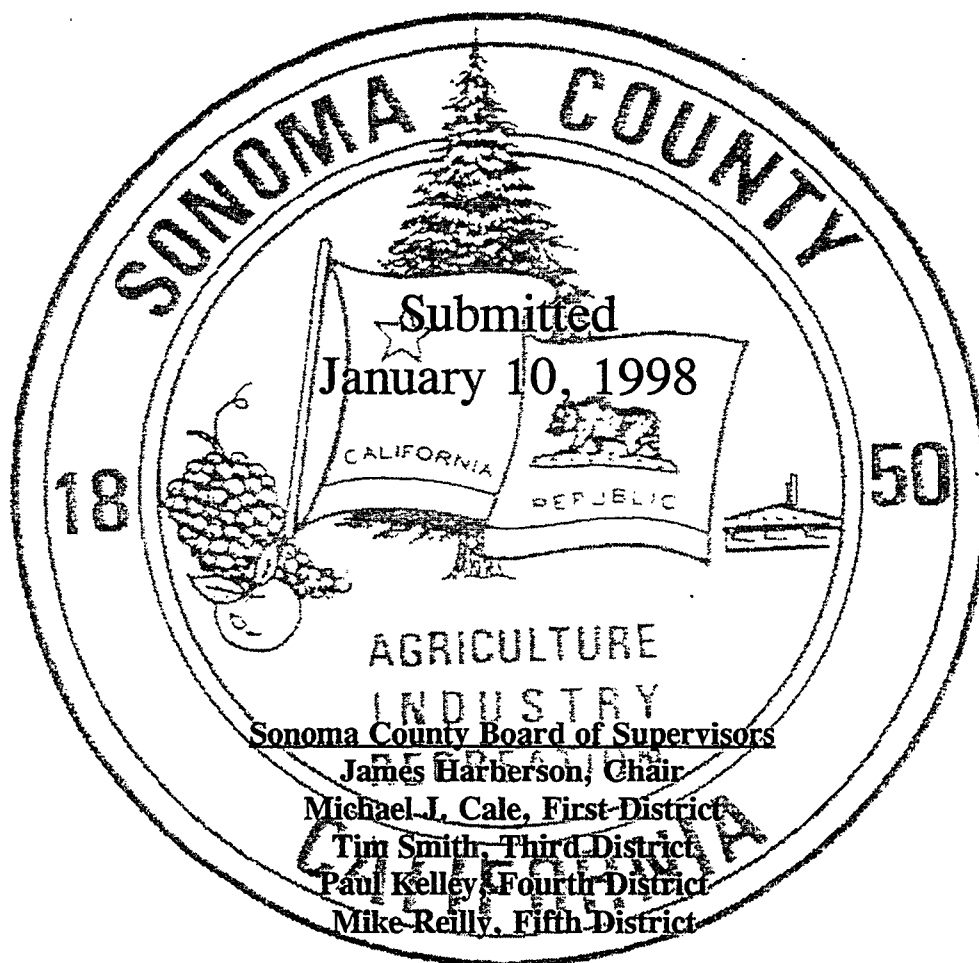
Although the plan is multifaceted, it boils down to providing welfare recipients with work or "work-related activities" — whether it be job training, job hunting or education. They will be given referrals to child-care providers and will receive counseling for problems ranging from domestic violence to substance abuse.

To provide these services, the Board of Supervisors approved hiring 16 new county employees. Although Supervisor Paul Kelley voted for the hires, saying he understood the need, he also expressed frustration that "we're trying to save money here."

But that's what has undermined earlier efforts to "reform" welfare — a refusal to acknowledge that, in the short run, true reform requires more up-front expenditures to get people prepared to make the transition.

Sonoma County

SonomaWORKS PLAN



Prepared by
Dianne M. Edwards, Director
Human Services Department

This plan is submitted pursuant to Section 10531 of the Welfare and Institutions Code required by the Welfare to Work Act of 1997, AB1542.

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Executive Summary

Briefly describe the CalWORKs program of Sonoma County. Include:

- (1) A listing of the major program goals and objectives; and*
- (2) A brief description of the major program elements which contribute to those goals and objectives.*

On August 22, 1996, President Clinton signed into law the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act. This new law introduced Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) as a program to replace Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) and Job Opportunities and Basic Skills (JOBS), known as Greater Avenues to Independence (GAIN) in California.

California's TANF program, the California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids (CalWORKs) enacted in August of 1997, provides that each county must develop a plan that describes how the county intends to deliver the full range of activities and services necessary to move CalWORKs recipients from welfare to work. Sonoma County's program, SonomaWORKS, will focus on employment towards the goal of economic self-sufficiency while providing a collaborative, comprehensive and effective service delivery system.

On May 6, 1997, the Sonoma County Board of Supervisors adopted the Human Services Department's recommendation that a successful Welfare Reform program should:

- Reflect the needs of Sonoma County residents by ensuring participation of all "stakeholders" in its development.
- Provide employment and child care services coordinated with economic assistance.
- Ensure that parental support obligations are met.
- Provide a safety net for individuals and families who despite their best efforts are unable to enter the mainstream of society, while not shifting costs to local government.
- Provide the assistance needed to lift families and individuals out of poverty and into self-sufficiency.
- Reinvest federal and state block grant money saved back into preventative and employment retention services to support the principle of lifting families out of poverty.

In response to the Board, the Sonoma County Human Services Department (hereafter referred to as the Department) continued the substantial education and planning process begun shortly after the enactment of federal welfare reform. Department staff have been involved in tracking, analyzing and providing input on legislation as it was being developed. Welfare Reform presentations have been made to any interested organization including, but not limited to, community-based organizations, churches, other county departments, city managers, and school superintendents. Department staff have also been involved in a variety of regional groups including the Bay Area Social Services Consortium (BASSC), the Bay Area

Partnership Project and other County Welfare Directors Association of California (CWDA) regional meetings to share planning needs, program strategies and retraining approaches under Welfare Reform. Focus Groups, involving over 100 community stakeholders, were convened to discuss eight topics related to welfare reform: business linkages, child care, clients, safety net provisions, immigrant issues, training for clients, transportation, and service delivery.

The outcome of one of the focus groups was a service delivery model for SonomaWORKS recipients. Client application services will be provided in a "one-stop" concept. Partners from the Employment Development Department (EDD), the District Attorney Family Support Division, and the local child care resource and referral agencies will be co-located along with Department staff to ensure a comprehensive and efficient handling of applications for and delivery of services. Lump sum diversion services will be offered to applicants if needed to assist an individual to obtain or maintain employment. Ineligible applicants will be referred to a Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) staff member on-site for possible services. The Department will also have a full-time Drug & Alcohol Counselor and Mental Health Specialist, from the Department of Health Services, outstationed at the Employment & Training office to provide specialized and unduplicated services. The Department will have a strong post-employment services component to provide the assistance needed to lift families out of poverty and into self-sufficiency. The Department will ensure, through the development of long-term goals and post-employment services, that families are provided opportunities to continue in their goal toward economic independence.

Sonoma County is dedicated to ensuring that parental support obligations are met. The Department has applied to participate in a number of demonstration projects to meet the specific needs of SonomaWORKS recipients. One of the pilots described later in this plan is a three-year pilot project to provide employment and training services to noncustodial parents (NCP) who are unable to pay child support due to their unemployment or underemployment. In conjunction with the Sonoma County District Attorney's Family Support Division (FSD), the Department intends to reduce the need for public assistance through an increase in the consistency of child support payments and an increase in the parents' involvement in their children's lives.

Sonoma County's excellent economic health provides the Department and its many community partners with the opportunity to change the "culture" of welfare from one that focuses on paying benefits to one that promotes employment and self-sufficiency for Sonoma County residents in need of public assistance.

Section (a)

Collaboration with Public and Private Agencies to Provide Training and Supportive Services

Briefly describe how the county will work with other public and private agencies to provide necessary training and support services. This section should include, at a minimum, a list of the necessary training and support services and the public and/or private agencies which will provide those services.

The Sonoma County Human Services Department will continue its collaboration with a variety of public and private agencies to provide necessary training, education, and support services to SonomaWORKS recipients.

A list of the public and private agencies that provide training in Sonoma County is attached (Attachment I). This listing is a product of the 1996 California Cooperative Occupational Information System (CCOIS) and a partnership between the Sonoma County Private Industry Council and the Labor Market Information Division of the California Employment Development Department. Agencies that currently provide training and support services for the Department are represented on this listing along with other agencies that the Department may work with in the future. The list also describes in detail the services associated with each agency.

To respond to the particular issues of training and education services required by SonomaWORKS, the Department established a Training Focus Group. Training and education providers from throughout the County were invited to participate and provide input on these issues. Legislative options and local resources were reviewed by the focus group members over a five-month time period and recommendations regarding training and education services were given to the Department's Director.

Department staff participated on a special Welfare Reform Task Force that was initiated by Santa Rosa Junior College (SRJC) in response to their own funding applications for TANF and Prop 98 funds. These funds are being given to SRJC to meet the needs of CalWORKS students that are in attendance at SRJC. Curriculum redesign to meet the needs of SonomaWORKS students has been a special focus. In partnership, the Department and SRJC have identified a variety of activities that can benefit SonomaWORKS students:

- Additional academic counseling for SonomaWORKS students
- A pilot project to prepare students for short-term, intensive course work

- Additional resources for supervised study/tutorial programs
- Job development on campus
- Expansion of work study opportunities
- Additional child care resources for students
- Curriculum redesign to meet the needs of the SonomaWORKS students.

Discussions with other training providers, such as Lewis Adult Education Center and Regional Occupational Program (ROP), are underway for more short-term intensive programs to better meet the needs of SonomaWORKS clients. The Department will be working in collaboration with training providers to develop an Instructional and Job Training Plan to ensure a comprehensive and efficient delivery of education and job training services. In addition, training providers are required to develop joint funding plans to provide additional resources to deliver these services.

The Department has worked with the Employment Group to incorporate additional training on job search activities as part of their curriculum. The Employment Group is a consortium of community based organizations that has contracted with the Department to provide job search services under GAIN and will expand services to meet the needs of SonomaWORKS.

Increased collaboration between the Department and the local American Red Cross office resulted in a proposed training program to train SonomaWORKS participants to become In-Home Support Services (IHSS) workers and ultimately, Certified Nursing Assistants (CNAs) and Home Health Aides (HHA's). This collaboration benefits all parties involved as well as the SonomaWORKS participant.

The Department has worked in partnership with the Community Child Care Council of Sonoma County (4C's), a local resource and referral agency, to develop a program in response to a demonstration project to train SonomaWORKS participants to become child care providers (see Section "o"). At the end of this training, participants will either provide care as a license-exempt provider or as a licensed family child care provider.

The Department is already participating in a two-year demonstration project to train SonomaWORKS recipients to become licensed child care teachers (see Section "o"). With SRJC at the lead of this partnership, the Department began the Training for Early Childhood Careers (TRECC) program in the Fall '97 semester. 4C's is participating in this project as well by providing job development within the community.

Goodwill Industries of the Redwood Empire (GIRE) and the Department have teamed up to develop a proposal for a demonstration project that will assist SonomaWORKS participants

with multiple barriers to obtain and maintain entry-level jobs in order to achieve self-sufficiency (see Section "o"). Intensive support will provide individuals in this program with the training necessary to enter unsubsidized employment.

Sonoma County is truly fortunate to have both the Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) Program and SonomaWORKS all within the Department's Employment and Training Division. JTPA will be able to provide coordinated services to eligible SonomaWORKS participants, such as providing training as a strategy for getting a higher-paid job. Referrals will also be made for JTPA services for individuals who apply but are not eligible to CalWORKs benefits.

Sonoma County will collaborate with a variety of public and private agencies to provide additional support services. The Volunteer Center of Sonoma County is working with Department staff to develop an automated Information and Referral (I&R) system to provide support services to all clients of the Department. The two resource and referral agencies in Sonoma County, 4Cs and River Child Care Services, will be working closely with the Department to provide child care resource and referral services to SonomaWORKS recipients (see Section "g").

Does your county have a Refugee Employment Services Plan?

☐ YES ☒ No

Section (b)

Partnerships with Private Sector to Identify Jobs

Describe the county's partnerships with the private sector, including employers, employer associations, the faith community, and central labor councils, and how those partnerships will identify jobs for CalWORKs program recipients.

The Sonoma County Private Industry Council (PIC), a 19-member council representing private business, local labor, education and public interest groups, will serve in an advisory role for SonomaWORKS. The PIC is committed to successful business linkages between the employer community and a service delivery system that meets the goals of welfare reform.

The Employment and Training Division of Sonoma County is a core partner in Sonoma County Job Link, a one-stop career center which is a resource created for the business sector and all job seekers.

Sonoma County Job Link integrates the services of business, government, and education. The Business Linkages Focus Group and the PIC identified core services to be offered through the Job Link Center (Attachment II). Some of those services include offering employers pre-screened applicants from an available pool; on-line access through the Job Link's web site to post job listings and review applicant resumes; information and referral assistance to support employers and their employees including child care, domestic violence issues and other basic needs available both on site and on-line through Job Link. Through the Job Link Center, employers will have access to an Employer Representative who will work on-site to develop customized strategies for addressing their workforce issues. The Employer Representative will offer employer quality workforce information, linkages to the market's resources and any brokering of services that may be needed. The majority of Sonoma County's employers have a workforce of 50 employees or less, and often do not have the time to participate in centrally operated employer seminars or business focus groups. As such, employer representatives will be making on-site contacts with these employers to inform them of Job Link services.

The Job Link Center offers the employer community a unique product that is not available anywhere in its geographic market. Our "product" is a holistic system of workforce development services and information that evolves and changes as customers' workforce needs change. The Job Link Center will be the primary place in its target market where customers can address all their work related needs. This is achieved through information about providers, Job Link Center services or linkages. Under this type of approach, SonomaWORKS clients will not carry a "label" of "welfare recipient", but instead will simply be part of the supply of trained, motivated individuals the Job Link Center will be able to provide to employers.

The market strategy will position the Job Link Center in the marketplace as a leader and expert in employment and training to help customers achieve their needs of lifelong employability and assist employers to access a stable, committed, appropriately skilled workforce. Marketing activities will include: presentations to employer associations and service clubs, feature stories in newspapers, monthly employer orientations, public service announcements on radio and television, and selected mail campaigns.

Section (c)
Local Labor Market Needs

Briefly describe other means the county will use to identify local labor market needs.

The County will utilize several different sources to identify local labor market needs including the California Cooperative Occupational Information System (CCOIS) and a database of jobs obtained by GAIN/SonomaWORKS participants.

The *Occupational Outlook & Training Directory* is published annually by the Sonoma County Private Industry Council in conjunction with the Labor Market Information Division of the California Employment Development Department and consultants from CCOIS. To produce this 150-page directory, hundreds of local businesses are contacted for information related to 25 selected occupations. This resource material can be used by local SonomaWORKS program planners to determine the areas of occupational demand in Sonoma County. The Sonoma County Human Services Department has a leadership role in determining which occupations will be studied each year.

Last year more than one thousand clients in the GAIN program found jobs. Records on the jobs they obtained are entered into a database. Reports generated from the database sort the information into useful categories and can answer the following questions:

- What kinds of jobs are Sonoma County welfare recipients obtaining?
- Which employers are doing the most hiring?
- What is the wage range for a particular occupation?
- Which kinds of jobs tend to have openings on a part-time basis?

Reports of job placements by welfare recipients are distributed monthly, providing up-to-date data on the kinds of jobs obtained by SonomaWORKS participants.

In addition to the above methods to obtain labor market information, SonomaWORKS staff will obtain information from local training providers and employment agencies about employment trends. Many training providers, including those at the Santa Rosa Junior College and Regional Occupational Programs, have advisory committees composed of industry representatives which coordinate with instructors on current and projected needs of employers. This information, along with input from a variety of training providers, will be used in developing and updating the annual list of training programs which the Department and local education agencies agree lead to employment. This list will be used for an initial determination of whether a particular training program self-initiated by an individual will be supported by the SonomaWORKS program.

Section (d)

Welfare-to-Work Activities

Each county is expected to offer a range of services adequate to ensure that each participant has access to needed activities and services to assist him or her in seeking unsubsidized employment. Pursuant to WIC Section 11322.7(b), "No plan shall require job search and work experience of participants to the exclusion of a range of activities to be offered to recipients." Activities allowed by state law include, but are not limited to, those listed below. Please indicate which of the following activities will be provided and identify any allowable activities that will not be provided.

The Department will offer all Welfare-to-Work Activities identified in state law to the extent that they meet federal work participation requirements. While all activities will be offered, some will be phased in as they are needed and developed. Based on federal work participation requirements, welfare-to-work activities will be offered as follows:

SUMMARY OF WELFARE-TO-WORK ACTIVITIES

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unsubsidized employment | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Work study |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Subsidized private sector employment | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Self-employment |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Subsidized public sector employment | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Community Service |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Work experience | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Job search and job readiness assistance |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> On-the-job training | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Job skills training directly related to employment* |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Grant-based on-the-job training | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Supported work |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Vocational education and training | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Transitional employment |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Education directly related to employment* | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other (list): |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Adult basic education (includes basic education, GED and ESL)* | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cal-Learn participation• Substance Abuse Services**• Mental Health Services**• Domestic Violence Services** |

- * Education directly related to employment, adult basic education, and job skills training directly related to employment will only be offered in conjunction with other welfare-to-work activities based on the requirements of federal work participation requirements.
- ** An individual participating in a residential treatment program or an intensive day treatment program and otherwise unable to participate in welfare-to-work activities would fulfill their work activity requirement for no longer than six months by meeting the requirements of that program. Mental Health and Domestic Violence Services will be offered in conjunction with other welfare-to-work activities.

Section (e)

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Treatment Services

Plan for Substance Abuse Services

Briefly describe how the welfare department and the county alcohol and drug program will collaborate and utilize new funds available to ensure the effective delivery of substance abuse services. These funds should be used to maximize federal financial participation through Title XIX of the federal Social Security Act. If the county has determined who will provide substance abuse treatment services, please indicate the providers in the plan. If that decision has not been made, please provide CDSS an addendum to the county CalWORKs plan indicating the provider when determined.

Sonoma County is committed to helping all SonomaWORKS participants to engage in work activities to the fullest extent possible. Some participants will need special accommodations because their ability to prepare for or retain employment is impaired by drug or alcohol abuse. The Human Services Department is developing a Memorandum of Understanding with the Sonoma County Department of Health Services to provide services through their Drug, Alcohol, and Tobacco Division. The Human Services Department will have a full-time Drug & Alcohol Counselor outstationed at the SonomaWORKS Employment & Training office. Funds will also be used to purchase services in the community that will increase the capacity for SonomaWORKS participants to receive treatment services including residential treatment services for substance abuse. Services may be purchased from any of the following state-licensed or certified nonprofit agencies:

- Athena House
- Circuit Rider Productions
- Drug Abuse Alternatives Center
- Latino Community Alcohol and Drug Treatment
- Petaluma People Services Center
- Social Advocates for Youth
- Sonoma County Associates for Youth Development
- Women's Recovery Services

The outstationed Drug & Alcohol Counselor will provide the following services to SonomaWORKS participants:

- Assess SonomaWORKS participants' substance abuse problems that impair their ability to obtain employment and determine the need for any treatment or rehabilitation services.

- Assist in the development of individual welfare-to-work plans for recipients with barriers to employment due to drug or alcohol dependency.
- Provide consultation on case management and employment counseling services to referred SonomaWORKS participants.
- Provide consultation to SonomaWORKS staff to determine if a participant in a treatment program as specified in his or her welfare-to-work plan has good cause for refusal or failure to comply with a SonomaWORKS program requirement.

[x] The Human Services Department certifies that the county's substance abuse treatment services will include at least the following: evaluation, case management, substance abuse treatment, and employment counseling, and the provision of community service jobs.

Plan for Mental Health Services

Briefly describe how the welfare department and the county department of mental health will collaborate and utilize new funds available to provide effective mental health services. Counties should maximize federal financial participation to the extent possible in provision of mental health services.

Sonoma County is committed to helping all SonomaWORKS participants engage in work activities to the fullest extent possible. Some participants will need special accommodations because their ability to prepare for or retain employment is impaired by mental or emotional disabilities. The Human Services Department is developing a Memorandum of Understanding with the Sonoma County Department of Health Services to provide services through their Mental Health Division. The Human Services Department will have Mental Health Division staff outstationed at the SonomaWORKS Employment & Training office on a full-time basis. To the greatest extent possible, services will be used that maximize federal participation. In addition, the new funds will also be used to purchase services from community agencies that will increase the capacity for SonomaWORKS participants to receive mental health counseling and treatment services. These services will be purchased through an RFP process.

An outstationed Mental Health Specialist will provide the following services to SonomaWORKS participants:

- Assess SonomaWORKS participants' mental health disabilities that impair their ability to obtain employment and determine need for any treatment or rehabilitation services.

- Assist in the development of individual welfare-to-work plans for recipients with mental or emotional disorders.
 - Make referrals to substance abuse treatment services in cases where a secondary diagnosis of substance abuse is made in a person referred for mental or emotional disorders.
 - Provide consultation on case management and employment counseling services to referred SonomaWORKS participants.
 - Provide consultation to SonomaWORKS staff to determine if an individual with a mental disability should be granted good cause for the refusal or failure to comply with SonomaWORKS program requirements.
 - Assist those with severe mental disabilities to apply for aid under federal and state programs for the aged, blind and disabled (including SSI/SSP).
- [x] The Human Services Department certifies that the county will provide at least the following: assessment, case management, treatment and rehabilitation services, identification of substance abuse problems, and a process for identifying individuals with severe mental disabilities.

Section (f)

Mental Health Services Available After Time Limits

Briefly describe the extent to which and the manner in which the county will make mental health services available to recipients who have exceeded the 18 or 24 month time limit.

The Human Services Department will provide mental health services to SonomaWORKS participants who are assigned to Community Service after their welfare-to-work time limit has expired. This will be accomplished through a referral process being developed by the Human Services Department and the Mental Health Department to provide assessment and treatment services to SonomaWORKS participants. We will ensure that the services provided will meet Federal Financial Participation requirements, to the greatest extent possible.

Section (g)

Child Care and Transportation Services

Child Care

Please briefly describe how child care services will be provided to CalWORKs participants. This should include a description of how the county will provide child care for families transitioning from county funded providers to non-county funded providers of child care services. It should also indicate what criteria the county will use to determine, on a case-by-case basis, when parents who have primary responsibility for providing care to a child six months of age or younger, may be exempt from welfare-to-work participation. The exemption period must be at least twelve weeks and, at county discretion, can be increased to one year for the first child. The exemption period for subsequent children is twelve weeks, but may be increased to six months. Briefly describe the criteria the county will use to determine the period of time a parent or other relative will be exempt considering the availability of infant child care, local labor market conditions, and any other factors used by the county. Additionally, briefly describe how the county will ensure parents needing child care services can access the Resource and Referral Agency.

Child care services for SonomaWORKS participants will be administered by the Department in coordination with two local resource and referral (R&R) agencies within Sonoma County. The Department will ensure that parents in need of child care services will have access to R&R services and accurate child care payments in order to successfully attend work activities and transition to unsubsidized employment.

Through contracts with the Community Child Care Council of Sonoma County (4Cs) and River Child Care Services, an R&R worker will be co-located at the intake site where SonomaWORKS services are delivered. When participants need R&R services, SonomaWORKS staff will coordinate with the R&R Worker to assure that all R&R services are available, including assistance in finding child care and in applying for Stage 2 and 3 child care. Appropriate services will be established based on the geographical area covered by each resource and referral agency.

In addition to those services, R&R staff will provide training for SonomaWORKS clients and staff on child care and development issues. They will also initiate and monitor the Health and Safety and Trustline processes when the participant chooses a license-exempt provider.

4Cs will also co-locate Alternate Payment Voucher Program staff at the SonomaWORKS Employment and Training office. This staff will provide on-site support for families who are

transitioning to or who are already in Stages 2 and 3 of child care.

Stage 1 child care will be administered by staff from the Human Services Department. The Department will authorize payment for child care needed to participate in required work or work activities. The Department will authorize child care for children ages 11 and 12 when care is needed for the parent to meet the work participation requirements, subject to availability of funds. Also, the Department will authorize child care for children who are not in the Assistance Unit when it is determined that child care is required for participation and that funds are available.

The Department proposes to utilize the Sick Child Program of Visiting Home Care for families in Stage 1. This program provides in-home care for children who are unable to attend school or regular child care due to illness. The Department will work with Visiting Home Care to develop an agreement for services and to enroll families in this service.

The Department will coordinate the transition to Stage 2 child care when the family's need for child care meets the definition of stable. Stage 2 child care will be administered by 4Cs and River Child Care Services. Families will be transitioned to each agency based on where they live in the county in relation to the areas covered by each agency.

Initially, we have jointly determined that there is sufficient funding in Stages 1 and 2 for all families whose child care needs can be considered stable. In order to transition families into Stage 2 we have mutually identified the following priorities:

1. Transitional Child Care (TCC) families or families who become ineligible for SonomaWORKS.
2. Families who have been receiving the Income Disregard and/or Supplemental Child Care.
3. SonomaWORKS families whose primary work activity is work.
4. Families who are in long-term training components, such as Self Initiated Programs (SIPs).

The identified priorities will serve to define stable child care. We will pursue the transition of these cases in a manner that will allow for movement of families through all Stages of the child care program. While we are assessing the ability of Stage 2 funding to meet these needs, we will use Stage 1 to meet the needs of any families who are unable to be immediately transitioned. As funding changes between stages, the definition of stable child care need will be refined to reflect SonomaWORKS participants who have work activity schedules predictable enough to allow reasonable projection of child care needs and stable child care arrangements.

The Sonoma County Human Services Department will exempt from work participation all parents who have the primary responsibility for providing care to a child six months or younger. This exemption period may be extended, on a case-by-case basis, to one year for the first child based on the following criteria:

- the availability of licensed infant child care in a geographic area where the parent lives or works as defined by the R&R agencies;
- the availability of exempt infant child care as determined by the participant;
- documented special needs of the family.

For second or subsequent children, the same criteria will be used to determine the extension of an exemption from twelve weeks to a maximum of six months.

Transportation

Briefly describe how transportation services will be provided.

Sonoma County Human Services Department will advance payment or reimburse SonomaWORKS participants, as necessary, for the cost of travel to a SonomaWORKS activity or to accept employment. The Department will assist clients to access transit services currently available, and will track instances where transit systems are unavailable and needed in order to communicate this information to appropriate transit agencies.

The County will encourage the use of various transportation resources which may provide an alternative to commuting by private car. This will be done through presentations to SonomaWORKS staff and participants which discuss the benefits and availability of transportation services including public transit, car pools and van pools, and bicycles. The presentations will be delivered by representatives donating their time from transportation organizations, such as local transit operators, RIDES for Bay Area Commuters, and the San Francisco Bicycle Coalition. The County will widely distribute information about "TravInfo," where information about all of the local transit operators can be obtained through a "one-stop" telephone call.

The Department will coordinate with local transit operators to help ensure that planning for transportation services will consider the needs of SonomaWORKS participants. This will be done by asking the transit agencies to share their plans as they are being developed, and by having the Department represented at meetings with transportation providers. As with the former GAIN Program, Sonoma County Transit will offer student passes to SonomaWORKS participants engaged in education or work-related training activities.

The Department will pay for necessary travel expenses for SonomaWORKS participants to attend required welfare-to-work activities and to accept employment. The Department will also pay for transportation to and from the child care provider, and transportation for children to and from child care.

The Department will pay the least expensive form of transportation if it is reasonable for a SonomaWORKS participant to use either public or private transportation as defined in state law.

Private transportation will be reimbursed at the same rate that county employees receive for using privately owned vehicles. If private transportation is the only reasonable form of transportation available to a SonomaWORKS participant, the Department will also pay the necessary parking costs.

Bus tickets/passes will be available as needed by SonomaWORKS participants. For emergency situations, gas vouchers will also be available.

Section (h)

Community Service Plan

Briefly describe the county's plan for providing community service activities. This should include a description of the process the county will follow to determine where community services assignments will be located, and the agencies/entities that will be responsible for project development, fiscal administration, and case management services. If it is not known at this time, the county may provide the specific details of the Community Services Plan as an addendum.

Sonoma County will establish a community service employment program for individuals who have not found unsubsidized employment after they have completed the allowable period of welfare-to-work services and activities, or who are without available transportation services for travel under two hours round trip or two miles walking distance to work activities.

A welfare-to-work plan will be developed for all individuals referred to community service due to remoteness. The program will comply with antidisplacement provisions and will provide the participant with job skills which can lead to unsubsidized employment.

The services to participants will include child care and, to the greatest extent possible, other supportive services. Job search and education and training will be included as components of an individual's plan, whenever feasible and beneficial to a SonomaWORKS participant's transition to self-sufficiency.

The Human Services Department, in collaboration with local private non-profit employers, local education agencies, other county departments, cities, and community-based organizations, will: develop community service jobs in remote areas; utilize and expand existing General Assistance work sites to the extent possible; identify unmet community needs that could be met through community services activities; and identify entities responsible for project development, fiscal administration and case management services. The Department anticipates that the Community Service component will be outsourced through an RFP process at a later date.

An addendum will be provided to outline specific details of the Community Service Plan when the plan has been developed.

Section (i)

Working with Victims of Domestic Violence

Briefly describe how the county will provide training for those county workers who will be responsible for working with CalWORKs recipients who are victims of domestic violence.

Until regulations are adopted by California Department of Social Services in consultation with the Taskforce on Domestic Violence established by the Welfare-to-Work Act of 1997, the county may utilize other standards, procedures, and protocols for determining good cause to waive program requirements for victims of domestic violence, for example, those now used in the GAIN Program. Please describe the criteria that will be used by your county for this purpose and what approach the county would take to deal with recipients who are identified in this way.

The Human Services Department will provide a minimum of seven hours of training on domestic violence issues to all SonomaWORKS staff who will have direct contact with SonomaWORKS participants including case managers, job developers, employment counselors, receptionists and eligibility workers.

The Department plans to arrange for UC Davis to provide half-day workshops on domestic violence which would provide general information on the topic including:

- the cycle of violence
- power and control wheel
- effects of domestic violence on children
- statistics related to domestic violence
- identifying indicators of domestic violence or threat of violence
- working with clients in denial
- issues of client trust and safety

A second, follow-up, half-day workshop would provide specific information on making referrals to local agencies. The training will be coordinated by a local expert from the Sonoma County Legal Services Foundation and will include local experts, including the Sonoma County Legal Services Foundation, the YWCA, and the Sonoma County Sheriff's Department.

The Department plans to hire an expert in the field to coordinate the panel workshop, as well as to help the Department develop written protocols, and to evaluate the effectiveness of the staff training.

The use of UC Davis staff development resources will provide an opportunity for staff to receive an "academic" understanding of the subject, and will defray County costs. The use of representatives from local agencies will provide an opportunity for staff to learn and discuss the specifics of community resources and the referral process.

The use of a paid consultant will provide a "point person" on domestic violence training. A consultant familiar with the local intervention resources and contact people will make sure that a written protocol is developed to take into account all of the available services, and also evaluate the use of that protocol to ensure that it is being used effectively.

The county will put the safety of the SonomaWORKS participants and their families first when making determinations regarding an individual's welfare-to-work plan or if good cause exists for not complying with program requirements.

In consideration of the above, the Human Services Department intends that victims of domestic violence participate in welfare-to-work activities to the full extent of their abilities. Participants who are in immediate, imminent danger or otherwise unable to participate in work activities may be considered to have good cause for not participating in a welfare-to-work activity. Whenever feasible, the Department will provide on-site services to individuals living in a protective shelter.

Section (j)

Performance Outcomes to Meet Locally Established Objectives

Please indicate whether there were any local program outcome objectives identified during the CalWORKs plan development process and how the county proposes to track those outcomes. If the county develops alternative outcomes for the CalWORKs program during future collaborative efforts, please submit information on those measures as an addendum to the CalWORKs plan.

As was stated in the Executive Summary section, one of the goals adopted by the Sonoma County Board of Supervisors was that welfare reform should provide the assistance needed to lift families and individuals out of poverty and into self-sufficiency. A local performance outcome was identified to measure this process.

A model was developed by the Wider Opportunities for Women (WOW) to define self-sufficiency. This self-sufficiency standard specifies the amount of monthly income needed for a family of a given size and composition in Sonoma County to meet the basic needs of housing, food, child care, transportation, clothing and related work expenses, without any subsidies or public assistance. The WOW standards, specific to Sonoma County, were developed by the Women and Poverty Project under the direction of Dr. Diana Pearce and can be used as a counseling/assessment tool as well as a poverty measure.

Since it is realized that the Department will not have a process to track wages over the lifetime of a former SonomaWORKS participant to see if he/she reaches a wage consistent with self-sufficiency, the Department instead will measure the progress an individual makes towards self-sufficiency within the time lines of SonomaWORKS and then conduct a follow-up survey of wages for up to one year following SonomaWORKS. The progress indicators will include components completed including, but not limited to, the following: job search; a welfare-to-work plan outlining long-term goals that go beyond the limits of SonomaWORKS; unsubsidized employment; and job retention services. The data collection of these progress indicators is easily accomplished through the GAIN Information System (GIS).

The Sonoma County Human Services Department is also a partner in the Bay Area Partnership Project. One of the Partnership's goals is to annually review a list of "Healthy Community Success Indicators" on a county level. The Department will be an active participant in the collection of the necessary data for this annual survey and will be able to obtain the results of the surveys when completed by the Partnership.

SonomaWORKS intends to earn all available incentive funding as a result of the plan implementation. Incentives will be earned as a result of increases in grant savings and grant terminations from SonomaWORKS. The Department intends to exceed federal work participation rate standards and capture incentive funding as a result as well. The Department is currently working to establish an automated mechanism to capture grant savings information.

The County may utilize an outside consultant for assistance in developing the appropriate evaluation methodologies, pending further information from the state on how it intends to evaluate the program.

Section (k)

Public Input to the County Plan

Briefly describe the means the county used to obtain broad public input in the development of the CalWORKs plan.

Sonoma County began its planning efforts in October 1996 by assembling a team of experienced staff to analyze the law and requirements and presenting a summary analysis of the resulting issues to the Board of Supervisors, Department staff and the general public.

The Board of Supervisors approved a goal that welfare reform should reflect the needs of Sonoma County residents by ensuring participation of all "stakeholders" in its development.

In January 1997, the Department presented a series of Community Forums to educate the community regarding welfare reform issues and to solicit input from the public regarding those issues. It was announced at that time that the Department would be developing a series of focus groups in the near future to address specific areas of welfare reform and invited public participation.

The Department was committed to making presentations regarding welfare reform to interested groups in the community including church groups, service organizations, political organizations, community-based organizations, school superintendents, city managers, other County Departments, and other community groups. At each presentation, a summary of federal welfare reform legislation (PRWORA) was given, along with an update of the planning efforts and requests for comments, concerns and other input.

Department staff participated on a special Welfare Reform Task Force that was initiated by Santa Rosa Junior College (SRJC) in response to their own funding applications for TANF and Prop 98 funds. These funds are being given to SRJC to meet the needs of SonomaWORKS students that are in attendance at SRJC. Curriculum redesign to meet the needs of SonomaWORKS students has been a special focus. Both SRJC and the Department were able to provide input to the community college's plan to serve SonomaWORKS clients.

In June, focus groups on eight key topics involving the community were convened. The groups were charged with reviewing the planning efforts around their particular topics and making recommendations for the Director to consider. The focus groups were: Business Linkages; Child Care; Client; Immigrants; Safety Net; Service Delivery Model; Training (for clients); and Transportation. Besides staff from Human Services and other Sonoma County Departments, participants included interested individuals from the January Forums; clients;

representatives from child care provider associations and resource and referral agencies; local transit agencies; local schools, colleges and universities that provide adult education and training; bicycle advocacy groups; local employment agencies; training associations; chambers of commerce; area employers; commissions; and charitable organizations. In all, over 100 individuals were involved in the eight focus groups.

The Department created a Focus Group newsletter to provide communication among the groups. A side benefit to this was the ability to mail it to individuals in the community who were not participating in the focus groups. Each issue included a notice about a "Welfare Reform Hotline" set up for anyone to call in and give input or get questions answered.

Final focus group recommendations were distributed to the community to demonstrate the enormous work that was done by the community and the recommendations that were made as a result of the focus group process.

Another opportunity for public input before submission of the County's plan was provided through a series of regional forums in November and December 1997. Copies of the draft plan were made available for the public at the forums or to individuals by calling the "hotline" number. The fax number was also given as an option for input, along with the mailing address.

The public also had an opportunity to make comments before the Board of Supervisors when the final plan was presented in December 1997.

Uncompleted issues and plans, such as the Community Service Plan, will involve ongoing public input as well as other issues such as the annual review of approvable training programs.

Section (I)

Source and Expenditure of Funds

Provide a budget specifying your county's estimated expenditures and source of funds for the CalWORKs program on the forms provided. Your budget should meet the requirement of WIC Section 15204.4 which specifies that each county shall expend an amount for these programs (administration and services) that, when combined with funds expended for the administration of food stamps, equals or exceeds the amount spent by that county for corresponding activities during the 1996/97 fiscal year.

Sonoma County Plan Budget 1997/98 State Fiscal Year

Section 1

	Total	FCS	State General Fund	County Funds	Other
Food Stamp Administration (For County MOE Purposes)	3,780,382	1,909,861	1,336,655	572,793	0

* When combined with food stamp administration, the total level of estimated county funds for CalWORKs administration and services should meet the requirement of Section 15204.4 of the W&I Code which specifies that counties expend an amount for these programs that, when combined with the amount expended for the administration of the food stamp program, equals or exceeds the amount expended for corresponding activities in 1996/97.

** If other sources of funding are being made available for an activity, please identify on a separate page.

Sonoma County Plan Budget 1997/98 State Fiscal Year

Section 2

Note: The following categories are for information purposes only and are not an indicator of specific claiming categories

	Total	TANF/State General Fund	CCDBG	Title XIX	County Funds *	Other **
Total CalWORKs Admin & Services						
Items (A) thru (D)						
(A) Total CalWORKs Single Allocation	10,654,633	9,115,037	0	0	1,539,596	0
Items (1) thru (7)						
(1) Benefit Administration	3,082,303	2,619,481	0	0	462,822	0
(2) Program Integrity (Fraud)	1,148,896	975,509	0	0	173,387	0
(3) Staff Development/Retraining	76,449	65,014	0	0	11,435	0
(4) Welfare-to-Work Activities	5,401,202	4,648,574	0	0	752,628	0
(5) Cal-Learn	179,202	149,760	0	0	29,442	0
(6) Child Care - 1st half of 1997/98	766,581	656,700	0	0	109,881	0
(7) Other Activities ***	0	0	0	0	0	0
(B) Child Care - 2nd half of 1997/98	1,361,200	1,361,200	0	0	0	0
(C) Mental Health Treatment	91,019	91,019	0	0	0	0
(D) Substance Abuse Treatment	154,733	109,223	0	0	0	45,510

* When combined with food stamp administration, the total level of estimated county funds for CalWORKs administration and services should meet the requirement of Section 15204.4 of the W&I Code which specifies that counties expend an amount for these programs that, when combined with the amount expended for the administration of the food stamp program, equals or exceeds the amount expended for corresponding activities in 1996/97.

** If other sources of funding are being made available for an activity, please identify on a separate page.

*** Please identify "other activities" on a separate page.