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DIRECTOR

STATE OF CALIFORNIA—HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES AGENCY
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

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EDMUND G. BROWN JR.
GOVERNOR

January 17, 2014

ALL COUNTY INFORMATION NOTICE NO. I-01-14

TO: ALL COUNTY WELFARE DIRECTORS
ALL CALWORKS PROGRAM SPECIALISTS
ALL CALFRESH PROGRAM SPECIALISTS
ALL CONSORTIUM PROJECT MANAGERS

<u>REASON FOR THIS TRANSMITTAL</u>	
<input type="checkbox"/>	State Law Change
<input type="checkbox"/>	Federal Law or Regulation Change
<input type="checkbox"/>	Court Order
<input type="checkbox"/>	Clarification Requested by One or More Counties
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Initiated by CDSS

SUBJECT: CALIFORNIA WORK OPPORTUNITY AND RESPONSIBILITY TO KIDS (CalWORKs) and CALFRESH: NEW “REMINDER LETTER” FOR CLIENTS WHO SUBMIT AN INCOMPLETE SEMI-ANNUAL STATUS REPORT (SAR 7)

REFERENCE: ALL COUNTY INFORMATION NOTICE (ACIN) 1-29-04; ALL COUNTY LETTER (ACL) No. 10-32 and No. 12-25; MANUAL OF POLICIES AND PROCEDURES (MPP) SECTIONS 40-181.22 (SAR), 40-181.221, 40-182.241(SAR), 63-508.4 and 63-508.62

The purpose of this ACIN is to inform County Welfare Departments (CWDs) about a new “reminder letter” for use in the CalWORKs and CalFresh programs. Currently, when clients do not submit their SAR 7 by the 11th of the month, or the SAR 7 is received but is not complete, CWDs send either the NA 960 X or NA 960 Y Notice of Action (NOA), as appropriate. These NOAs inform clients that benefits will be discontinued effective the end of the month unless a completed SAR 7 is received by the first day of the following month. If, after receiving the NA 960 X or NA 960 Y NOA, the client submits a SAR 7 that is incomplete, CWDs are not required to issue another NOA. However, absent another NOA, the client is likely to think they complied with the original NA 960 X or NA 960 Y and that the discontinuance action will be rescinded.

The California Department of Social Services (CDSS) developed the attached “reminder letter,” the SAR 90, to inform clients that the SAR 7 they submitted is still not complete and to provide clients another opportunity to submit a complete SAR 7 to avoid discontinuance of their cash aid and/or CalFresh benefits. This process will aid in further informing clients that they are not fully meeting the CalWORKs/CalFresh requirements and may prevent clients from being discontinued. This may also provide administrative relief by reducing the number of reapplications and restorations that CWDs will need to process.

The SAR 90 is not a NOA and will not reset 10-day notice requirements or the case discontinuance date. The SAR 90 does not confer new hearing rights, although clients retain the right to request a hearing with respect to the original SAR 7 discontinuance notice. The SAR 90 must specify what questions need to be answered or what verifications need to be provided for the SAR 7 to be complete.

The CDSS strongly encourages CWDs to send the attached SAR 90 when they receive an incomplete SAR 7 after sending an NA 960 X or NA 960 Y. CWDs are reminded that if a resubmitted report includes all the information that was previously missing, but does not include all the information that was previously submitted in the first submission, the CWD is required to combine the two reports to get the complete report, and need not send the SAR 90. Instead, the CWD must stop the proposed discontinuance and ensure the issuance of benefits as soon as possible.

CWDs are reminded that the “Balderas” reminder pursuant to MPP Section 40-181.221 (SAR) is still required before the discontinuance takes place. CDSS regulations (as transmitted in ACL 13-99) require CWDs to attempt a personal contact by a county worker with the client and to document the attempt in the case record before discontinuing an individual from cash assistance in order to avoid unnecessary state hearing requests and help resolve eligibility issues through attempts to contact the client. Because the SAR 90 offers another opportunity to inform clients, CDSS strongly encourages CWDs to send the SAR 90.

When sending the SAR 90 reminder letter, CWDs must identify which program applies, either CalWORKs or CalFresh, or check both boxes if both programs are affected. CWDs are reminded that if the form is complete for one program, but not the other, to check only the box for the program still needing additional information, and to ensure that the program for which the existing information is sufficient is not scheduled for discontinuance.

To the extent that CWDs are adopting the recommended reminder letter process described in this ACIN, the SAR 90 is considered a required form with substitutes permitted. CWDs may modify or make substitutions to the SAR 90 with prior CDSS approval. CWDs may modify these forms to add or obtain information that does not (a) conflict with program policy/regulation, or (b) change the legal content of the form.

CWDs that adopt a policy of using the SAR 90 are strongly encouraged to post the written policy on their own department webpage as soon as administratively possible, pursuant to ACIN I-03-12.

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 these forms on the CDSS webpage at http://www.dss.cahwnet.gov/cdssweb/FormsandPu_271.htm.

When all translations are completed per MPP Section 21-115.2, including Spanish forms, 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.

For questions regarding CalFresh Policy, please contact your county consultant or call the CalFresh Policy Bureau at (916) 654-1896. If you have any questions regarding the CalWORKs Program, please contact your county consultant or call the CalWORKs Eligibility Bureau at (916) 654-1322.

Sincerely,

Original Document Signed By:

Kären Dickerson, Chief
Employment and Eligibility Branch

Linda Patterson, Chief
CalFresh Branch

Attachment

REMINDER LETTER

Case Name: _____
 Case Number: _____
 Worker Name: _____
 Worker Number: _____
 Worker Telephone: _____
 Date: _____

On _____, we sent you a notice telling you that your
(DATE)

CalFresh

CalWORKs

would be discontinued effective _____ because we had not received a complete SAR 7 report.

In response to our notice, you turned in your SAR 7 on _____, but it was not complete.

YOU HAVE NOT FIXED THE PROBLEM. In order to avoid discontinuance of your benefits, before the end of the first working day of next month, you need to do the following:

If you need help understanding this notice or filing out the SAR 7, please contact your County office.

If your benefits are discontinued because you fail to turn in a complete SAR 7, you will not receive Transitional CalFresh (TCF) Benefits. If you have any questions about TCF, please contact your County office.

If you disagree, you can still ask for a hearing based on the notice we sent you on _____ .
(DATE)

The phone number for filing a state hearing is 1-800-952-5253 or for hearing or speech impaired who use TDD 1-800-952-8349.

You may mail in your completed SAR 7 with any verification that we listed above or bring it into your county welfare office. If we do not receive the required information by the first working day of the next month, you will not receive any benefits next month.