



CDSS

WILL LIGHTBOURNE
DIRECTOR

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



EDMUND G. BROWN JR.
GOVERNOR

December 11, 2013

ALL COUNTY LETTER 13-96

TO: ALL COUNTY WELFARE DIRECTORS
ALL CALFRESH PROGRAM SPECIALISTS
ALL CalWORKs PROGRAM SPECIALISTS
ALL CONSORTIA REPRESENTATIVES
ALL QUALITY CONTROL COORDINATORS
ALL COUNTY SPECIAL INVESTIGATIVE UNIT CHIEFS
ALL COUNTY REFUGEE PROGRAM COORDINATORS

SUBJECT: CALIFORNIA WORK OPPORTUNITY AND RESPONSIBILITY TO KIDS
(CalWORKs) AND CALFRESH: REVISED SAWS APPLICATION
FORMS

REFERENCE: AFFORDABLE CARE ACT (ACA) OF 2010 (PUBLIC LAW 111-148);
WELFARE AND INSTITUTIONS CODE SECTION 15926(d) (as enacted
by AB X1 1 (Statutes of 2013, Chapter 3)); ALL COUNTY INFORMATION
NOTICES (ACIN) I-37-13 AND I-53-13; ALL COUNTY LETTER (ACL)
NO. 13-61

The purpose of this letter is to transmit revised public assistance application forms and provide county welfare departments (CWDs) with instructions regarding the use of the forms in preparation for the implementation of the Affordable Care Act (ACA) in California effective January 1, 2014.

BACKGROUND

Interoperability between programs is an essential goal that has been emphasized with the implementation of the ACA of 2010. The California Department of Social Services (CDSS) has committed to take part in the Horizontal Integration efforts to ensure that our common clients (often referred to by the Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) and Covered California as customers or consumers in other programs under ACA) experience a seamless process as they apply for various programs at any of our state-wide county offices. For further guidance on Horizontal Integration, please refer to ACINs I-37-13 and I-53-13. The CDSS will continue to disseminate communications regarding ACA and Horizontal Integration policies as soon as they are released.

REASON FOR THIS TRANSMITTAL

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

Implementation of the ACA and California state law requires California to have a streamlined, multi-program, single application for individuals and families to apply for CalWORKs, CalFresh and health care coverage, including Medi-Cal and other programs associated with ACA.

The existing SAWS application documents were modified to include elements required under the federal ACA provisions. In order to modify the forms in time for the SAWS consortia to program the needed ACA changes, the CDSS worked closely with staff already working on the implementation of the ACA, representing the DHCS, the County Welfare Directors Association, the SAWS consortia and the California Healthcare Eligibility, Enrollment and Retention System (CalHEERS). This expedited effort was needed to establish the SAWS 2 Plus, which incorporates all federally required ACA elements in one application and ensures easy access to multiple programs through one form, adopting a "no wrong door" philosophy for the convenience of the general public and low income families who are applying for health insurance, including Medi-Cal, CalWORKs and CalFresh benefits.

Effective January 1, 2014, individuals and families who wish to apply for CalFresh only should use the recently revised CF 285, and those indicating they want to apply for health care programs only, should use the DHCS Single Streamlined application (SSApp.) Attachment One explains what application forms to use and when to use them. NOTE: CWDs are not to give the obsolete versions of the SAWS 1 (12/06) or SAWS 2 (4/13) to potential applicants. However, it is important that CWDs ensure that if an applicant comes into the CWD having already filled out the obsolete older version of the SAWS 1 (12/06) or the SAWS 2 (4/13) form, CWDs take the application and initiate processing it for program eligibility. Also, any individuals or families who come into the CWD with a filled out SAWS 2 Plus and indicate that they wish to apply for health care or CalFresh only, must not be asked to fill out a separate application. CWDs are to accept the application that was already completed by the applicant and begin processing it for eligibility. CWDs may only ask for any additional information that has not already been provided by the applicant.

The recently revised CalFresh Application form, CF 285 (9/13), was used as the starting point for the SAWS 2 Plus, as a significant effort was undertaken by a stakeholder group to ensure the questions were simplified and organized in specific categories where possible for an easier flow of information. The program rules, penalties, and instructions were moved to the beginning of the form, and the form is perforated so that that portion of the SAWS 2 Plus can be torn away easily for the applicant to take with them for their records. The form has been designed to be user-friendly with easy-to-understand language, and it includes symbols that identify the program for which the information is required. For questions that are required to establish eligibility for cash aid, there is a dollar sign next to the question; for CalFresh, a grocery cart symbol is used; and for health care programs, there is an ambulance symbol.

Because of the truncated timeframes associated with ACA implementation, CDSS was not able to follow the regular stakeholder review process for the SAWS 2 Plus. However, the Department recognizes that through this expedited development process, the form may require additional modifications. The Department will seek comments in the spring of 2014 and look forward to collaborating with necessary stakeholders to modify the form as needed.

IMPLEMENTATION

CWDs must use the new SAWS 1 (8/13) and SAWS 2 Plus (9/13) forms (when applicants are applying for both CalWORKs and CalFresh or for one of these programs along with Medi-Cal or other health coverage) no later than January 1, 2014. Both forms are “Required Forms-No Substitutes Permitted” and as such, CWDs must discontinue the use of all current SAWS 1 (12/06) and SAWS 2 (4/13) forms for applicants as of January 1, 2014. As stated earlier in this letter, if an applicant comes into the CWD with a copy of the current SAWS 1 (12/06) or SAWS 2 (4/13) filled out and indicates a desire to apply for CalWORKs and CalFresh, CWDs must take the application and ask any supplemental questions during the interactive interview from the SAWS 2 Plus that were not included on the application (SAWS 1 or SAWS 2) taken from the applicant.

The SAWS 1 initial application form has been revised to include elements required under the ACA and many of the rights and responsibilities and instructions to the applicant on how to apply for the programs. The SAWS 1 has also been incorporated into the SAWS 2 Plus. The SAWS 2 Statement of Facts application form has been replaced by the SAWS 2 Plus Application for CalFresh, Cash Aid and/or Medi-Cal/Health Care Programs and is now considered a complete application. The use of the separate SAWS 1 for CalWORKs is addressed later in this letter.

The SAWS 1 has been revised to include the applicant’s preferred method of contact, email address, the ability to request messages via email, and updated ACA-required race/ethnicity categories. Ideally for CalWORKs or for CalFresh households (HHs) applying only for CalFresh where the applicant cannot complete the CF 285 that day, the SAWS 1 would be used primarily to begin the application process and set the beginning date of aid when taking a telephone application with a recorded signature in CWDs that have the ability to do so or when an individual or family applies in person and an interview cannot be conducted in the same day (see ACIN I-60-13 for Telephonic Signature requirements).

The SAWS 2 Plus replaces the SAWS 2 and combines the program rules, many of the rights and responsibilities, the SAWS 1, the Statement of Facts, and appendices to collect additional ACA-required information where applicable. Questions which are not necessary for determining eligibility for the requested program are not needed. As stated earlier in this letter, the necessary questions that correspond to each of the programs are identified by easily recognizable symbols.

With advancements in technology and interactive interviewing, the SAWS 2 Plus does not have a “county-use only” section with the exception of the Expedited Service (ES) and Immediate Need (IN) section for CalFresh and CalWORKs. This section was kept on the application for CWDs to document that the application requires immediate action to determine eligibility for ES CalFresh benefits and IN criteria for CalWORKs. CWDs are not required to use this county-use section, but must still document that the application was screened for ES entitlement for Quality Control and Management Evaluation purposes and document whether the applicant did or did not meet the IN criteria when IN was requested. CWDs may use existing business processes

that are currently used to document the need for ES or IN and that the application has been screened appropriately such as making annotations in case notes or case comment sections of their electronic case files. Removing the remaining "county-use only" sections allows for larger print and more writing space for the client.

As of January 1, 2014, the applicant will be required to complete the SAWS 2 Plus either in person through an interactive interview, online through the appropriate consortia website, or in hardcopy if the applicant chooses. Applications completed interactively or online do not have to be filled out in hardcopy by the applicant. CWDs are to use existing business practices for automated applications and interactive eligibility interviews. The SAWS 2 Plus includes all necessary questions to elicit information needed to determine eligibility for the programs for which the applicant is applying, including information contained on the SAWS 1. However, when the applicant cannot complete the full SAWS 2 Plus on the same day they initially indicate a desire to apply for one or more programs, CWDs may use the revised separate SAWS 1 (08/13) to initiate the application and establish the beginning date of aid, as is done now. This can be done either online through the appropriate consortia website, a telephonic phone interview or in hardcopy if the applicant chooses. For CalWORKs, this cannot be done by completing the "SAWS 1" portion of the SAWS 2 Plus. The separate SAWS 1 (8/13) must be used. This letter contains more information on this topic for CalWORKs. For CalFresh, any application in which the applicant has submitted their name, address and signature shall be accepted and used to initiate the application process.

During the eligibility determination interview for CalWORKs applicants, the CWD must review the SAWS 2A SAR with the applicant(s), and then it must be signed by the applicant(s) and CWD eligibility staff to ensure that the applicant(s) has been advised of and understands their rights and responsibilities and all rules and penalties as CalWORKs clients. This is a very important part of the application process. Although the SAWS 2 Plus contains a Rights and Responsibilities section, many of the CalWORKs-specific responsibilities were not yet included in this initial version. The SAWS 2A QR Rights and Responsibilities form was made obsolete with the implementation of Semi-Annual Reporting in October 2013.

For CalWORKs, the CDSS is modifying the SAWS 2A SAR (Rights and Responsibilities) to focus on clients' rights and reporting responsibilities as well as other information not covered by the SAWS 2 Plus to help reduce the number of separate forms and signatures that the CWDs and applicants must handle during the application process. The CalFresh-only application (CF 285) replaces the current DFA 285A1, DFA 285A2, DFA 285A3, TEMP 2215 and FS 22 QR forms and was released in ACL 13-75, dated September 19, 2013.

Policies regarding other forms and notices that are required to be given to and/or signed by applicants have not changed with the exception of the TEMP 2215 (Electronic Benefit Transfer Important Information) form. The language from the TEMP 2215 has been incorporated into the program rules section of the SAWS 2 Plus. Therefore, the TEMP 2215 will no longer be required as long as the SAWS 2 Plus (9/13 version or later) is used.

It is important to note that because California has Semi-Annual and Annual Reporting for CalWORKs and CalFresh recipients, and CalFresh also has Change Reporting HHs, each

reporting system must be explained carefully, and CWDs must also explain that the applicant will always be informed in writing anytime the AU's/HH's reporting responsibilities change.

USE OF THE SEPARATE SAWS 1 FOR CalWORKs

If an applicant uses the SAWS 1 to begin the application process for CalWORKs to set the application date and establish the beginning date of aid, the entire SAWS 2 Plus must be filled out (all questions answered for the programs the applicant is applying for) either during an interactive interview, online or in hardcopy if the applicant chooses, and signed and required verifications obtained to complete the application process (before aid can be granted). The "SAWS 1" portion in the SAWS 2 Plus cannot be completed and signed at one time and then the rest of the SAWS 2 Plus completed later. The SAWS 2 Plus cannot be signed until it has been completed in full as the applicant and cash aided adults are attesting to the accuracy of the answers provided to the questions that were asked and answered. However, when using the separate SAWS 1 to initiate the application for CalWORKs, only the applicant need sign the initial SAWS 1. When conducting the SAWS 2 Plus interactive interview with the applicant after the applicant has already used the separate SAWS 1 on a previous date to initiate the application, the CWD need not re-ask the SAWS 1 portion of the questions as long as the CWD can enter or has entered the answers into the SAWS system so that the SAWS 2 Plus will be complete when printed for the applicant's signature(s).

E-N OTICING

A new element has been added to the SAWS 2 Plus application, allowing CalWORKs and CalFresh applicants to choose to receive messages about their case by email. This new feature is now possible due to a waiver approved by United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Food and Nutrition Service (FNS). This waiver allows HHs to receive an electronic notification, or e-notification, alert via email of official correspondence via their secure personal online account in the CWD's automated system. Because states have the flexibility regarding the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families rules, CDSS has opted to align with the CalFresh e-noticing process. Therefore, both CalFresh and CalWORKs clients may opt in or opt out of receiving e-notifications and receive traditional paper correspondence at any time. For more information on enrolling an applicant in e-notification see All County Letter (ACL) 13-61.

EXPEDITED SERVICE (CalFresh only)

With the enactment of state legislation, Assembly Bill 1359 (Chapter 468, Statutes of 2012), which was implemented on January 1, 2013, CWDs are required to screen all CalFresh applications to determine if applicants meet the criteria for expedited service (ES) as defined in 7 CFR 273.2(i) (2) and Manual of Policies and Procedures (MPP) Section 63-301.51.

The screening for ES may be documented using a county-developed procedure for documentation at the time the application is screened. The CWD must process the application under the ES timeframe (three calendar days following the day the application was filed with the CWD) if:

- 1) The applicant checked the "Yes" box for any of the ES criteria questions under Question 1 of the SAWS 1 or SAWS 2 Plus; or
- 2) The applicant provided sufficient information either on the application submitted or during the interview when answering the questions relevant to making a determination of ES entitlement in the SAWS 1 or SAWS 2 Plus.

If the above criteria are not met, then the application is to be processed under the normal processing timeframe (30 days from the date the application was filed).

IMMEDIATE NEED (CalWORKs only)

Manual of Policy and Procedures (MPP) Section 40-129.41 requires that when an applicant indicates that they have an emergency situation and indicates an immediate need, the CWD must conduct an eligibility determination interview no later than one business day (the next working day) after the request is received. The request may come either verbally or in writing (usually on the SAWS 1).

The eligibility criteria and process for IN in CalWORKs has not changed under the ACA. It is important to note that when the CWD has determined a case to be an IN case, and the CWD knows what type of reporting system the case will be assigned, the appropriate reporting information must be explained to the applicant so that the applicant is not confused about their reporting responsibilities.

REDETERMINATION/RECERTIFICATION (RD/RC)

Effective January 1, 2014, the SAWS 2 will no longer be used for CalWORKs redetermination/ CalFresh recertification (RD/RC) purposes. The newly created SAWS 2 Plus application will now be required. The SAWS 2 Plus shall be completed by any assistance unit (AU) and/or HH in which at least one member receives a CalWORKs grant or is considered aided for the purposes of CalWORKs, such as a child subject to the Maximum Family Grant rules or a HH that is eligible for CalWORKs but does not receive a grant because the grant amount is \$10 or less. For CalFresh-only HHs in which no members receive a CalWORKs grant the CWD shall use the CF 285. Attachment One explains the appropriate forms to use for RD/RC purposes.

CalWORKs recipients do not need to answer the ACA related questions for the CalWORKs redetermination or for cases in which the CalFresh case is a pure public assistance HH. These cash-linked Medi-Cal cases are not subject to a separate Medi-Cal renewal unless the AU or any member of the AU is found to be ineligible for CalWORKs. If the AU or any member of the AU is discontinued from CalWORKs during the CalWORKs redetermination process, CWDs must follow the current Medi-Cal rules for discontinued cash-linked Medi-Cal. The DHCS will issue new policy if and when this changes due to the ACA.

Camera Ready Copies and Translations

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

Copies of the SAWS 2 Plus are currently available for CWDs to purchase at the CDSS warehouse in both English and Spanish.

When all translations are completed per MPP section 21-115.2, including the Spanish form, they are posted on an on-going basis on our web site. Copies of the translated forms can be obtained at http://www.dss.cahwnet.gov/cdssweb/FormsandPu_274.htm.

For questions on translated materials, please contact Language Services at (916) 651-8876. Until translations are available, recipients who have elected to receive materials in languages other than English should be sent the English version of the form or notice along with the [GEN 1365-Notice of Language Services](#) and a local contact number. CWDs shall ensure that effective bilingual services are provided. This requirement may be met through utilization of paid interpreters, qualified bilingual employees, and qualified employees of other agencies or community resources. These services shall be provided free of charge to the applicant/recipient. In the event that CDSS does not provide translations of a form, it is the county's responsibility to provide the translation if an applicant or recipient requests it. More information regarding translations can be found in MPP Section 21-115.

This ACL and other CDSS Letters and Notices are available on the internet at: <http://www.dss.cahwnet.gov/lettersnotices/default.htm>

If you have any questions regarding this ACL, please contact your CalWORKs County Consultant at (916) 654-1322. For questions related to CalFresh, please contact your CalFresh County Consultant or the CalFresh Policy Bureau at (916) 654-1896.

Sincerely,

Original Document Signed By

TODD R. BLAND
Deputy Director
Welfare to Work Division

c: CWDA
CSAC

Attachment

**CalWORKs (Cash Aid), CalFresh and Health Care Program (including Medi-Cal)
Application**

| Program | Circumstance | Form | Questions |
|---------------------------|---|------------------------------------|---|
| CalWORKs | Customer is applying for cash aid ¹ only. | SAWS 2 Plus | Questions with dollar sign. |
| CalWORKs | Customer is applying for cash aid and CalFresh. | SAWS 2 Plus | Questions with dollar sign and shopping cart. |
| CalWORKs | Customer is applying for cash aid and health insurance ² only. | SAWS 2 Plus | Questions with dollar sign and ambulance. Also answer appendices. |
| CalWORKs | Customer is applying for cash aid, CalFresh and health insurance. | SAWS 2 Plus | All questions including appendices. |
| CalFresh | Customer is applying for CalFresh and health insurance. | SAWS 2 Plus | Questions with shopping cart and ambulance. Also answer appendices. |
| CalFresh | Customer is applying for CalFresh only. | CF 285 | All questions. |
| Medi-Cal/Health Insurance | Customer is applying for health insurance only. | DHCS Single Streamline Application | All questions |

¹ Includes all cash aid programs, RCA, TCVAP etc.

² Includes Medi-Cal.

CalWORKs Redetermination (RD) and CalFresh Recertification (RC)

| Program | Circumstance | Form | Questions |
|-------------------|---|-------------|---|
| CalWORKs | Annual CalWORKs Eligibility Redetermination for AUs receiving cash aid ³ | SAWS 2 Plus | Questions with dollar sign. |
| CalWORKs/CalFresh | Annual CalWORKs Eligibility Redetermination and CalFresh Recertification ⁴ for CalWORKs AUs receiving either the “CalWORKs package” or cash aid and CalFresh only. | SAWS 2 Plus | Questions with dollar sign and shopping cart. |
| CalFresh | CalFresh Recertification for CalFresh HH ⁵ | CF 285 | All questions. |

³ May also be receiving cash-linked Medi-Cal. For Cash-linked MC there is no separate annual renewal process.

⁴ At least one member of the CalFresh household receives a CalWORKs grant.

⁵ No member of the CalFresh household receives a CalWORKs grant.