

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

744 P Street, Sacramento, California 95814



November 1, 2005

ALL COUNTY LETTER NO. 05-27

TO: ALL COUNTY WELFARE DIRECTORS
ALL CalWORKs PROGRAM SPECIALISTS
ALL REFUGEE COORDINATORS
ALL FOOD STAMP COORDINATORS
ALL CONSORTIUM PROJECT MANAGERS

REASON FOR THIS TRANSMITTAL

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

SUBJECT: CALIFORNIA WORK OPPORTUNITY AND RESPONSIBILITY TO KIDS (CalWORKs) INCOME REPORTING THRESHOLD (IRT) FOR QUARTERLY REPORTING/PROSPECTIVE BUDGETING (QR/PB)

REFERENCE: WELFARE AND INSTITUTIONS CODE SECTION 11265.3, MANUAL OF POLICIES AND PROCEDURES (MPP) SECTIONS 40-173.8, 44-316.321 (e), 44-316.324, AND ACL NO. 04-39

The purpose of this letter is to transmit the 2005 IRT chart for the CalWORKs Program. The California Department of Social Services (CDSS) developed the attached IRT chart to provide the County Welfare Departments (CWDs) with the IRT amounts to be used to meet the income reporting requirements in MPP Sections 44-316.321 (e) and 44-316.324 for QR/PB.

IRT Reporting Requirements

Under the QR/PB reporting system, CalWORKs recipients are required to report only certain changes in their income or family circumstances mid-quarter. One such mandatory mid-quarter report is when the AU's total income exceeds the IRT. When this occurs, and the county determines the AU is financially ineligible, the county must take a mid-quarter action to discontinue the CalWORKs case.

The IRT is the greater of 130 percent of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL) for the number of persons whose needs are included in the determination of the cash aid amount, or the level at which an Assistance Unit (AU) becomes financially ineligible. Income that must be reported for IRT purposes is the same as income that is required to be reported for determining eligibility and the cash aid amount. This includes income of sanctioned, penalized, excluded, and timed out individuals. The income to the AU

includes the income of persons not in the AU who were included in the determination of income eligibility and grant amounts in the Family MAP. (Note: AUs with either no income, or with unearned income only will be required to report if they receive new earnings that, when combined with other household income, exceed the IRT mid-quarter. AUs with unearned income only are not required to report when that income by itself exceeds the IRT in mid-quarter.)

Informing Recipients of their IRT

The informing notice that provides the IRT limits must be individualized for each CalWORKs case. The CWD shall inform each household of their IRT at the following times: 1) at least once a quarter; 2) at redetermination/recertification; 3) anytime there are changes in the CalWORKs AU or Family MAP size; 4) when there is a change of persons who are required to report income; and 5) upon recipient request. Additionally, the AU must be informed of the new IRT levels any time the IRT chart is updated.

Due to differences in automation and other practices, CWDs may inform recipients of the IRT requirements on (1) the QR 7, (2) the Notice of Action used to add or remove AU members, or (3) on a separate informing notice. The CWD shall follow notification rules regarding individualized IRT levels in accordance with MPP Sections 40-173.8 and 44-316.324 as instructed above. The IRT level the recipient was last notified of will be used for reporting purposes until the CWD has had an opportunity to update the recipient of any applicable IRT change.

IRT Chart

The attached IRT chart is effective October 1, 2005. The figures on the chart are based on the October 2005 food stamp gross income limits (130 percent of FPL), except for the IRT reporting size of two, Region One. In this situation the income at the 130 percent of FPL would not render the family financially ineligible; therefore the CalWORKs MAP level is used to establish the IRT. In this situation, the MAP amount is \$584 and the IRT is \$1394. We arrive at the IRT level for a reporting size of two using the following formula: Non-Exempt MAP, Region One, $\$584 \times 2 = \$1168 + \$225 \text{ disregard} = \1393 . \$1 is added to make the reporting size of two over the limit. For all other reporting sizes, the FPL is used to establish the IRT level.

A new entry has been added to the IRT Chart to reflect the IRT amount for a reporting size of zero. This is to address those relatively rare occurrences where no one's needs are considered in determining the CalWORKs cash aid amount. An example of this would be a case where the only eligible child is a Maximum Family Grant child and his/her caretaker relative (parent) is either being sanctioned or penalized and there are no other persons in the home whose needs are considered in the Family MAP. In this situation, the MAP amount is zero and the IRT is \$227. We arrive at the IRT level for a reporting size of zero using the following formula: Reporting size of zero in Region One and Region Two: $\$0 + \$225 = \$225 + \$1 = \$226$. \$1 is added to make the reporting size of zero over the limit.

Refugee Cash Assistance

The above instructions regarding the IRT also apply to the Refugee Cash Assistance (RCA) Program in accordance with MPP Section 69-201.4 which states that CalWORKs Program regulations relating to financial eligibility and payments apply to RCA unless specifically superceded by RCA regulations.

Please direct any questions regarding the CalWORKs IRT chart to your County Consultant. For any questions regarding the Food Stamp FPL, you may contact LeAnne Torres at (916) 654-2135. For questions regarding Refugee Programs, please contact Mary Wiseman at (916) 654-4356.

Sincerely,

CHARR LEE METSKER
Deputy Director
Welfare to Work Division

Attachment

c: CWDA
CSAC