

July 31, 2018

ALL COUNTY WELFARE DIRECTORS LETTER (ACWDL)

TO: ALL COUNTY WELFARE DIRECTORS

FROM: TODD R. BLAND, Deputy Director  
Family Engagement and Empowerment Division

SUBJECT: CALIFORNIA WORK OPPORTUNITY AND RESPONSIBILITY TO KIDS  
HOME VISITING INITIATIVE

The California Department of Social Services (CDSS) is seeking proposals from counties interested in implementing a new California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids (CalWORKs) Home Visiting Initiative (HVI).

PURPOSE AND ELIGIBLE POPULATION

The purpose of the HVI is to support positive health, development, and well-being outcomes for pregnant and parenting women, families, and infants born into poverty, expanding their future educational, economic, and financial capability opportunities, and improving the likelihood that they will exit poverty.

Home visiting is an evidence-based, voluntary program model that pairs new parents with a nurse, or other trained professional who makes regular visits in the participant's home to provide guidance, coaching, access to prenatal and postnatal care, and other health and social services. The pairing of home visiting with CalWORKs provides an opportunity to connect parents with necessary resources, improve their parenting skills and household order, and ensure that their children have a safe and nurturing environment that allows them to thrive and grow.

Senate Bill 840 (Chapter 29, Statutes of 2018), or the Budget Act of 2018, appropriated approximately \$26.9 million for January 1, 2019 through June 30, 2019. Assembly Bill 1811 (Chapter 35, Statutes of 2018) codified the requirements for the HVI. Subject to appropriation in the annual Budget Act, the Department shall continue to award funds to participating counties who apply biennially and, at least, meet the minimum requirements established by the CDSS. The funds appropriated may be used in combination with funding from other sources.

Funding for the HVI will be used to provide counties with resources to offer home

visiting services to a member of a CalWORKs assistance unit who is pregnant, with no other children at the time of enrollment, or a first-time parent or caretaker relative of a child less than twenty-four months at the time he or she enrolls in the HVI. A county may serve additional eligible CalWORKs participants as long as the county continues to offer and provide home visiting services to the target population noted above.

A member of the assistance unit does not need to be eligible for, nor is required to participate in, the Welfare-to-Work program in order to receive home visiting services.

## **PRIMARY PROGRAM COMPONENTS**

### Voluntary Evidence-Based Home Visitation

CalWORKs participants electing to participate in the HVI will receive coaching and guidance through regular, planned home visits. Participants will obtain information about strategies to improve their family's health and provide better developmental opportunities for their children. CalWORKs participants will also receive information that will connect them to an array of employment and other services. Home visitors will provide resources directly and refer families to services so that families can receive the support they need. If a family chooses to participate in this program, their participation shall not affect their application for aid nor eligibility for any other CalWORKs benefits, supports, or services.

### Case Management Services

The county and home visiting agency shall establish a collaborative case management plan. These activities include assessing the family's needs, developing a case plan, monitoring progress in achieving case plan objectives, and ensuring the provision of all services specified in the case plan. The case plan should build on the strengths established during the home visiting period, and the family's associated connections to child care.

### Coordination with County Staff

Home visitors shall coordinate closely with county CalWORKs staff. Close coordination and communication between home visitors and the county staff is essential to ensure that families have access to services without adding any additional burdens to the clients or duplication of processes and services by the county or home visiting agency. In order to promote collaboration between the two groups, counties are encouraged to co-locate home visitors and county CalWORKs staff.

### Enrollment in Early Learning Programs

High-quality early learning programs have a demonstrated ability to improve both short-term and long-term outcomes for children with unmet needs. The home visitors will encourage families to enroll their child(ren) in high-quality early learning settings, participate in playgroups, or engage in other child enrichment activities. Parents will have an opportunity to select from high-quality early learning settings that may provide developmental screenings and assessments, and offer a core curriculum that is developmentally, culturally, and linguistically appropriate. If a parent volunteers in the

early learning setting, these hours shall count towards their allowable activities under their Welfare-to-Work (WTW) plan. Children enrolled in an early learning setting through the HVI, may remain enrolled for 24-months regardless of the parent's participation in activities.

## **DATA COLLECTION AND PROGRAM EVALUATION**

As a condition of funding, participating counties must provide data necessary to administer the program and demonstrate the outcomes of participants and children by race, ethnicity, national origin, primary and secondary language, and county. The data collection shall include program outcomes for the parents and children served in the program, models utilized, and measures specific to CalWORKs objectives.

Counties must develop a data sharing agreement with the home visiting agency and provide a copy of the agreement(s) to the Department. A sample data sharing agreement will be provided (Attachment C). Counties that are selected to participate in the HVI will also be required to participate in the evaluation.

## **INSTRUCTIONS FOR COUNTY APPLICATION**

### Criteria for Evaluation

Counties that choose to submit a Request for County Plan (RFCP) must use an evidence-based home visiting model. For this program, an evidence-based home visiting model means a home visiting model approved by the Department, which shall be evaluated considering criteria developed by the United States Department of Health and Human Services for evidence-based home visiting ([HomVEE](#)).

### Applicant

The CDSS will accept one application per county from either the County Welfare Department (CWD) or county Department of Public Health (DPH). Counties should determine which department has the greatest capacity to meet the requirements of the program and deliver services effectively and efficiently. A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the participating county agencies must be submitted prior to implementation. This agreement should include, but not be limited to, each agencies' specific roles and responsibilities, data sharing, and communication expectations. If the county DPH serves as the lead, the CWD must agree to participate and collaborate.

### Regional Partnerships

Counties may choose to partner with other counties to deliver home visiting services regionally. Partnering counties must submit a joint RFCP by the due date. Additionally, a MOU between the counties, and an outline of specific roles and responsibilities in the implementation of the HVI shall be submitted to the CDSS prior to implementation.

### Multiple Models May Be Utilized

Counties may choose to fund more than one home visiting model within their county. Each model must be outlined in the RFCP.

### Funding Allocations

The first cycle of funding is allocated for January 1, 2019 through June 30, 2019. The first application cycle will operate January 1, 2019 to June 30, 2020 (18 months). The next opportunity for application and funding cycle will be July 1, 2020 – June 30, 2022. Funding is subject to an appropriation in the annual Budget Act.

The services offered via the HVI are not entitlement services and participating counties may limit the number of families participating in the program to ensure that the costs do not exceed the amount of funds awarded to the county for this purpose. Funding awarded for the purpose of home visiting services provided under this article shall not supplant expenditures from any other existing funding sources subject to county control for home visiting services. Funding appropriated may be used in combination with funding from other sources, if the entirety of services provided meet the award requirements of the program.

Initial county allocations are based on the distribution of eligible cases per county, assuming statewide implementation, ensuring that each county has a minimum allocation of \$10,000. An amount of \$989,000 for Employment Services associated with the HVI will be included in the CalWORKs Single Allocation for counties participating in the HVI. After the approval of submitted plans, the CDSS will distribute any unallocated funds among participating counties. Final funding allocations and claiming instructions will be included in forthcoming County Fiscal Letters (CFLs).

### Scoring

The nature of this application is a competitive process. It is possible that counties may not receive funding or may not receive the full amount of their request. In order for an application to be considered, the model selected must be evidence-based and meet the minimum requirements established on Page 4 of the RFCP. After demonstrating that the minimum requirements have been met, the application will be scored on criteria established by the CDSS (Page 5 of the RFCP).

A complete scoring rubric can be found in Attachment D.

### **TIMELINE**

Please note the following timelines:

- Mandatory HVI Conference Call: August 10, 2018 from 1:30 PM – 3:30 PM
- Request for County Plan (RFCP) due: September 28, 2018
- Tentative Award Notification: October 2018
- Final Allocation letter for approved counties: November 2018
- Implementation Date of Program: January 2019

All RFCPs must be submitted to the Child Care Programs Bureau **by 5:00 p.m. on September 28, 2018.** RFCPs received after the deadline will not be reviewed or considered for funding.

Please e-mail completed applications  
(Subject line: **FY 2018-19 HVI Request for County Plan**) to:

**[CalWORKsHVI@dss.ca.gov](mailto:CalWORKsHVI@dss.ca.gov)**

If you have any questions or are interested in applying for this program, please submit a request to **[CalWORKsHVI@dss.ca.gov](mailto:CalWORKsHVI@dss.ca.gov)**. The application, along with any attachments, will be emailed to you.