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April 25, 2019

ALL COUNTY WELFARE DIRECTORS LETTER (ACWDL)

TO: ALL COUNTY WELFARE DIRECTORS

FROM: KIM JOHNSON, Deputy Director  
Family Engagement and Empowerment Division

SUBJECT: ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE FOR IMPLEMENTING THE  
CALIFORNIA WORK OPPORTUNITY AND  
RESPONSIBILITY TO KIDS (CalWORKs) HOME VISITING  
INITIATIVE (HVI)

REFERENCES: [WELFARE INSTITUTIONS CODE \(WIC\) ARTICLE 3.4.  
\(11330.6 - 11330.9\); SENATE BILL 840, CHAPTER 29,  
STATUTES OF 2018; ALL COUNTY WELFARE  
DIRECTORS LETTER DATED JULY 31, 2018; COUNTY  
FISCAL LETTER NO. 18/19-49; COUNTY FISCAL LETTER  
NO. 18/19-50; COUNTY FISCAL LETTER NO. 18/19-51](#)

This All County Welfare Directors Letter (ACWDL) provides additional guidance to counties implementing the CalWORKs Home Visiting Initiative (HVI). This guidance covers minimum cultural competency qualifications, participant informing and outreach recommendations, contract procurement, use of material goods allowance, and automation.

**BACKGROUND**

The purpose of the CalWORKs HVI is to support positive health, development and well-being outcomes for pregnant and parenting women, families, and infants born into poverty. The long-term goals for program participants include expanding their future educational, economic, and financial opportunities, stabilizing families and improving the likelihood of exiting poverty.

[Senate Bill 840](#) (Chapter 29, Statutes of 2018), the Budget Act of 2018, appropriated \$26.9 million for January 2019 through June 2019. [Assembly Bill 1811](#) (Chapter 35, Statutes of 2018) codified the requirements for the HVI. Subject to appropriation in the

annual Budget Act, the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) shall continue to award funds to participating counties who apply biennially and, at least, meet the minimum requirements established by the CDSS.

### **CULTURAL COMPETENCY MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS**

Families in poverty face a multitude of barriers including but not limited to implicit and explicit bias from society. This bias can play a role in the difficulties families have in obtaining equitable access to wellness and economic mobility.

[Welfare Institutions Code \(WIC\) Article 3.4 11330.7\(g\)\(B\)](#) requires that contractors ensure that all home visitors receive implicit bias and cultural competency trainings. It is the Department's responsibility to establish the minimum training standards (Attachment A). Contractors are encouraged to partner with local organizations to develop a curriculum that best suits the needs of the home visiting program participants. The contractor or the county must administer the training prior to serving CalWORKs clients. The Department recommends that cultural competency and implicit bias training be ongoing.

Establishing minimum training standards as a basis for ensuring cultural sensitivity, understanding, and decision making, should be embedded in the overall principles of home visiting practices. Beyond the required minimum training standards, counties are strongly encouraged to 1) recruit home visitors that are culturally and linguistically matched to the CalWORKs population served, 2) utilize culturally relevant community-based partners for resource and referral services, and 3) integrate cultural competency into other training topics.

### **INFORMING NOTICE**

[WIC Article 3.4 11330.6\(d\)\(2\)](#) requires that participation in the program shall be offered in writing to any eligible parent or caretaker relative. The informing notice, at a minimum, shall be included in the county CalWORKs intake packet for eligible HVI participants. This notice shall include a description of the program, its anticipated benefits and duration, and a description of how to terminate participation. Current CalWORKs participants who are eligible for HVI, should also receive the Informing Notice and Request to Opt-In to the HVI program during their re-determination period and/or any time home visiting services are requested.

The Department has included a sample informing notice in the ACWDL (Attachment B). Counties are permitted to substitute forms, provided the forms meet the minimum requirements established by [WIC Article 3.4 \(11330.6-11330.9\)](#) and are approved by CDSS. Substitute forms should be sent to [CalWORKsHVI@dss.ca.gov](mailto:CalWORKsHVI@dss.ca.gov) for approval prior to program implementation.

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.

Counties are reminded that 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. If a county chooses to serve an expanded population, those counties must develop a process to track the eligible target population accepting and declining services by the date this occurred.

Counties and their contractors are reminded that home visiting services are voluntary and shall not be mandatory, random, or unannounced.

The fillable informing notice can be found by clicking on the following link: [CalWORKs Home Visiting Initiative - Informing Notice](#).

### **SAMPLE OUTREACH FLYER**

In order to notify clients of the new home visiting program and to encourage them to participate, counties and their home visiting partners may distribute outreach flyers. The Department has included a sample outreach flyer in this ACWDL (Attachment C). Other forms of outreach are permitted and encouraged. These may include phone calls, mailed flyers, and social media platforms.

A county may use an alternative name for the program. If a county chooses to use an alternative name, they shall include the following language on the document/form/flier. "Funding for this program is provided by the California Department of Social Services CalWORKs Home Visiting Initiative."

The CDSS requires counties to produce their outreach documents in the languages that best represent the clients they are serving. Pursuant to [MPP Division 21-115.2](#), when a county uses a form, notice or other written material required by CDSS in the county's delivery of services, benefits and programs, and that translated form, notice or other written material has been provided by CDSS, the county must use the translated form, notice or material when serving a non- or limited English-speaking client.

### **MATERIAL GOODS**

Counties, in coordination with home visitors and CalWORKs staff, may establish processes to provide \$500 during the course of home visiting services for the purchase of material goods. The material goods can be used for a program participant's household related to care, health, and safety of the child and family, which shall not exceed five hundred dollars (\$500). Material goods include, but are not limited to: child safety kits, car seats, appliance repairs, adaptive equipment for children with disabilities, and resources related to child and family language and literacy needs. These

resources are not intended to be an incentive for clients to participate, but rather a response to the specific needs of the client.

### **PROCUREMENT**

Due to the deadlines established by [WIC Article 3.4 \(11330.6-11330.9\)](#), if a county has reason to believe that it would be unable to meet the deadlines of this project due to competitive bidding requirements, the CDSS has approved for counties to utilize procurement by negotiation to conduct procurements for the CalWORKs Home Visiting Initiative. ([Manual of Policies and Procedures 23-650.1.18](#))

### **AUTOMATION**

A process must be put in place to meet the requirements of the policy change until necessary automation changes are completed. More information regarding the data collection component and automation of this program with the Consortia will be released in an upcoming All County Letter (ACL).

If you have any questions about the HVI program, you may contact the CalWORKs and Child Care Branch by emailing [CalWORKsHVI@dss.ca.gov](mailto:CalWORKsHVI@dss.ca.gov). If you have any fiscal questions, please direct them to [Fiscal.systems@dss.ca.gov](mailto:Fiscal.systems@dss.ca.gov).

Attachment A: Cultural Competency Requirements

Attachment B: Informing Notice

Attachment C: Sample Outreach Flyer

**CalWORKs Home Visiting Initiative (HVI)  
Cultural Competency and Implicit Bias  
Minimum Training Standards**

| <b>Self-Assessment<sup>1</sup></b>  | <b>Inter-Cultural Competence<sup>2</sup></b>   | <b>Trauma-Informed Care<sup>3</sup></b>  | <b>Disproportionality<sup>4</sup></b>  |
|---|--|--|--|
| <p>Training must include a self-assessment for home visitors that is used as a basis for self-reflection of one's own conscious and unconscious biases toward individuals of different cultural backgrounds.</p> <p>Self-assessment activities must include ongoing reflective supervision and annual re-assessment.</p> <p><b>Frequency:</b> Ongoing</p> | <p>Training must explain the dynamics of cultural humility and inter-cultural communication. Training must include discussion and activities that promote proficiencies in two-generation, family-focused, strength-based prevention and intervention practices.</p> <p>Home visitors should gain knowledge about the cultural belief systems and practices of the families they serve. Home visitors should gain understanding of how to leverage families' strengths and capabilities to increase positive outcomes for families.</p> <p><b>Frequency:</b> Ongoing</p> | <p>Training must explain how trauma impacts diverse individuals as well as cultural groups.</p> <p>Home visitors should learn about culturally informed decision making, engagement practices, and service delivery strategies that address trauma and promote family well-being.</p> <p><b>Frequency:</b> Ongoing</p> | <p>Disproportionality occurs when a particular racial or ethnic group is overrepresented in a social program, a negative measure, or an adverse situation as compared to their representation in the overall population. This mismatch in representation often results from disparity in access to resources, education, culturally sensitive programming and policy, or structural bias.</p> <p>The information provided in the training must discuss the impacts of disparity in child welfare reporting on cultural groups that are most effected.</p> <p><b>Frequency:</b> Ongoing</p> |

<sup>1</sup> [Enhancing Cultural Competence in Social Service Agencies: A Promising Approach to Serving Diverse Children and Families](#)

<sup>2</sup> [California Partners for Permanency and Children's Bureau Exploration & Engagement](#)

<sup>3</sup> [Administration for Children and Families \(ACF\) - Resource Guide to Trauma-Informed Human Services](#)

<sup>4</sup> [Encyclopedia of Social Work - Disproportionality and Disparities](#)

**Resources**

Powell, J. (2012). *Racing to Justice: Transforming Our Conceptions of Self and Other to Build an Inclusive Society*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press. Retrieved January 22, 2019, from Project MUSE database.

Powell, J. (Author), (2017). [Targeted Universalism](#) [Animated Video]. United States: Retrieved January 22, 2019

Mohan, A. (2016). [Study Finds Implicit Racial Bias in Preschool Teachers](#). Retrieved January 22, 2019

## **CALWORKs HOME VISITING INITIATIVE (HVI)**

### **You may be eligible to participate in Home Visiting**

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#### **ABOUT THE CALWORKS HOME VISITING INITIATIVE**

- CalWORKs Home Visiting Initiative is a voluntary program that pairs you with a trained professional who makes regular visits to your home to provide guidance, coaching, access to prenatal and postnatal care, early learning resources, and other health and social services for you and your child.
- Your family may be eligible to receive these home visiting services for up to twenty-four months or until your child's second birthday, whichever is later.

#### **BENEFITS OF HOME VISITING**

- Your family may receive many positive benefits from participating in home visiting including improving your ability to:
  - Keep you and your baby healthy;
  - Be the best parent you can be;
  - Cope with stress in healthy ways;
  - Support your child's development;
  - Obtain employment and training opportunities;
  - Obtain referrals to benefits and resources available for you and your children; and
  - Enroll in high-quality child care services at no cost to you.
- A home visitor will provide you with support, guidance, coaching, and connections to important resources that help improve your families' health education, social, economic, and financial future.

#### **PROGRAM ELIGIBILITY**

- To be eligible for home visiting services you must be:
  - a member of a CalWORKs assistance unit who is first-time 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 old at the time of enrollment.
- If you do not meet the criteria listed above, you still may be eligible to participate depending on your location. Please discuss your options with you CalWORKs eligibility worker.

**CALWORKs HOME VISITING INITIATIVE OPT-IN FORM**

To volunteer to participate in the program, sign and return this form to your worker.

**HOME VISITING INITIATIVE PARTICIPATION REQUEST**

- ☐ I would like to volunteer to participate in the CalWORKs Home Visiting Initiative and understand that I may voluntarily terminate home visiting services at any time.

I volunteer to receive home visiting services for my child(ren) listed below:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Print Name of Child (Age)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Print Name of Child (Age)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Print Name of Child (Age)

- ☐ I am pregnant. My approximate due date is \_\_\_\_\_.
- ☐ I do not want to volunteer to participate in the Home Visiting Initiative at this time but understand that I may volunteer to participate in Home Visiting in the future by informing my worker, who will determine if I am still eligible to participate.

Reason(s) for declining home visiting services:

- ☐ Currently receiving home visiting services.  
☐ Do not feel program will provide any benefits.  
☐ Not interested in receiving home visiting services.  
☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**By signing this form, I understand the following:**

- The information I provided will be shared with the home visiting agency program so they can contact me and schedule a time for the visits to begin,
- I certify that I am pregnant or the parent or caretaker relative of the child(ren) listed above,
- This program is 100% voluntary, and I can cancel home visiting services at any time by notifying the County Welfare Department or home visiting agency in writing,
- This authorization expires one year from the date of signature unless revoked earlier,
- A copy of this form was offered or provided to me, and
- Participation in this program shall not affect my eligibility for any other CalWORKs benefits, supports, or services, including welfare-to-work exemptions.

|   |             |
|---|-------------|
| Case Name                                 | Case Number |
| Name of Parent or Caretaker Relative      | Phone       |
| Signature of Parent or Caretaker Relative | Date        |
| Name of County Contact                    | Phone       |
| Signature of County Contact               | Date        |

# CALWORKS HOME VISITING INITIATIVE



## WHAT IS HOME VISITING?

**Home visiting is a voluntary program that will pair you with a nurse or trained professional who makes regular visits in your home to provide guidance, coaching and access to other health and social services.**

## HOW CAN HOME VISITING BENEFIT ME?

- 1. More job opportunities!**
- 2. Lower your stress levels!**
- 3. Increase opportunities for your children!**



To learn more and sign up for the program, contact your CalWORKs eligibility worker at your local social services agency.