

June 1, 2020

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

**ALL COUNTY INFORMATION NOTICE No. I-44-20**

The purpose of this All County Information Notice (ACIN) is to provide county child welfare agencies and probation departments with information regarding fiscal support for eligible at-risk families with child welfare contact. Funds will be provided to help eligible families to stay together by providing assistance that enables families to heed public health orders, mitigate the economic harm caused to families and communities during the COVID-19, and broadly support the health and wellbeing of children.



**KIM JOHNSON**  
DIRECTOR

STATE OF CALIFORNIA—HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES AGENCY  
**DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES**  
744 P Street • Sacramento, CA 95814 • [www.cdss.ca.gov](http://www.cdss.ca.gov)



**GAVIN NEWSOM**  
GOVERNOR

June 1, 2020

ALL COUNTY INFORMATION NOTICE NO. I-44-20

TO: ALL COUNTY CHILD WELFARE DIRECTORS  
ALL FAMILY MAINTENANCE PROGRAM MANAGERS  
ALL EMERGENCY RESPONSE PROGRAM MANAGERS  
ALL FOSTER CARE MANAGERS  
ALL CHIEF PROBATION OFFICERS

SUBJECT: FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR AT-RISK FAMILIES DURING NOVEL  
CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19) CALIFORNIA STATE OF  
EMERGENCY

REFERENCE: [GOVERNOR'S PROCLAMATION OF A STATE OF EMERGENCY,  
MARCH 4, 2020](#)

This ACIN provides county child welfare agencies and probation departments with information regarding fiscal support for eligible at-risk families with child welfare contact during the COVID-19 California state of emergency.

On April 13, 2020, [Governor Newsom announced \\$42 million in additional investments](#) to address COVID-19 impacts on children and families. These investments included more than \$27 million for at-risk families to support families staying together.

Prepaid Cards will be issued to eligible recipients to provide an assistance payment for the months of April, May, and June of 2020. The fiscal supplement is \$200 per month per eligible household, or a supplement up to \$400 per month for eligible households with three or more children at risk of entering foster care (FC).

**ELIGIBILITY**

The California Department of Social Services (CDSS) will provide each County Child Welfare Services agency with a list of its potentially eligible clients via Secure File Transfer. At the time of the file share, CDSS will provide each county with instructions and deadlines for ensuring the accuracy of client information, including their eligibility, name, and address, in order to facilitate the families receiving this resource.

CDSS will coordinate with the Chief Probation Officers of California and provide county probation departments with instructions and deadlines for each county to provide CDSS with lists, through encrypted email, of appropriate candidates whose families will receive this resource.

A household is eligible to receive Supporting Families Struggling to Stay Together Initiative assistance payments if it meets one of the following criteria:

- Households with a Family Maintenance (FM) service component without a subsequent entry into FC.
  - Inclusive of cases open at some point in April 2020, and new cases opened in May and June 2020.
- Households with an Emergency Response (ER) service component without a subsequent entry into FC.
  - Inclusive of cases open at some point in April 2020, and new cases opened in May and June 2020.
- Households with a substantiated ER referral, without an accompanying case opening or entry into FC.
  - Inclusive of referrals received in April 2020 with a disposition in April, May, or June 2020, and new referrals received in May and June 2020.
- Households with an inconclusive ER referral, without an accompanying case opening or entry into FC, where the Structured Decision Making (SDM) Risk Assessment was considered "high" or "very high."
  - Inclusive of referrals received in April 2020 with a disposition in April, May or June 2020, and new referrals received in May and June 2020.
- Probation cases where children or youths were at "imminent" or "serious" risk of removal or candidates for FC.
  - Inclusive of candidates identified in April 2020, and new candidates identified in May and June 2020.

If a household is determined to be eligible, counties may use this as an opportunity to engage clients to explain the program to the family, i.e., what to expect, who is eligible, and spending flexibility, indicating that it is to help cover expenses in any way the family feels is necessary. Counties may refer to this letter when explaining the program.

## **PAYMENTS**

For those households meeting the eligibility requirements above, Prepaid Cards will be issued to provide the supplement to all eligible cases to assist with purchasing basic necessities (e.g., food or rent). The assistance payment is \$200 per month per eligible household, or \$400 per month for an eligible household with three or more children at risk of entering FC.

Households with one or two children at risk of entering FC meeting the eligibility requirements outlined above will receive payments as follows:

- Families with open cases and referrals received in April 2020 will receive a total one-time payment of \$600, consisting of \$200 per month for April, May and June of 2020.
- Families with new cases opened and referrals received in May will receive a total one-time payment of \$400, consisting of \$200 per month for May and June 2020.
- Families with new cases opened and referrals received in June will receive a total one-time payment of \$200, consisting of \$200 for June 2020.

Households with three or more children at risk of entering FC meeting the eligibility requirements outlined above will receive payments as follows:

- Families with open cases and referrals received in April 2020 will receive a total one-time payment of \$1,200, consisting of \$400 per month for April, May and June of 2020.
- Families with new cases opened and referrals received in May will receive a total one-time payment of \$800, consisting of \$400 per month for May and June 2020.
- Families with new cases opened and referrals received in June will receive a total one-time payment of \$400, consisting of \$400 for June 2020.

Families who receive a card under one of the eligibility requirements will NOT be given a second card if their case moves to another eligibility category. For example, a family that has a referral that is inconclusive, then subsequently has a Family Maintenance case opened, will not receive more than one payment.

The Prepaid Card will be sent directly to the recipient, along with a letter stating the following in both English and Spanish:

- As mentioned by your case manager, you are receiving this card to assist in meeting basic needs for your family during this public health emergency.
- You can use this card to make purchases (including online), or at an ATM to withdraw cash. (Note: there is a minimum \$2.50 fee per transaction to withdraw cash.)
- The value on this card expires in one year from the date of issuance. Please note the valid thru date on the card front.
- Please be careful when using your card as there is a replacement fee of \$3 to obtain a new card.
- You will not be asked to report what purchases were made or how you used the card.
- Use of this card will not affect eligibility for CalWORKs or CalFresh.
- If you have questions about this assistance, please contact your case manager.

### **ENGAGING CLIENTS**

The Department strongly encourages caseworkers to use this as an opportunity to engage the clients and to communicate that Prepaid Cards are being provided to families to use in ways that meet their basic needs. Caseworkers can inform clients that there is no requirement to account for how the funds are used, and that this information will not be collected by counties or the state.

It is important to note for clients who may be receiving CalWORKs or CalFresh, and are concerned that this will result in an overpayment because of income reporting requirement, that these cards do NOT count as income and will not impact those benefits.

If you have any questions or need additional guidance regarding the information in this ACIN, please e-mail [CFSD@dss.ca.gov](mailto:CFSD@dss.ca.gov).

Sincerely,

***Original Document Signed By***

DAVID McDOWELL, Ph.D.

All County Information Notice No. I-44-20  
Page Five

Chief, Children's Services Operations and Evaluation Branch  
Children and Family Services Division