

March 24, 2021

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

ALL COUNTY LETTER NO. 21-23

The purpose of this All County Letter is to provide County Welfare Departments with guidance regarding the Golden State Stimulus and Golden State Grant programs pursuant to Senate Bill 88 (Chapter 8, Statutes of 2021), Assembly Bill 88 (Chapter 12, Statutes of 2021) and their treatment in the California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids (CalWORKs), Refugee Cash Assistance, Entrant Cash Assistance and Trafficking and Crime Victims Assistance Programs.



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



GAVIN NEWSOM
GOVERNOR

March 24, 2021

ALL COUNTY LETTER NO. 21-23

TO: ALL COUNTY WELFARE DIRECTORS
ALL COUNTY CALWORKS PROGRAM SPECIALISTS
ALL COUNTY WELFARE-TO-WORK COORDINATORS
ALL CALFRESH PROGRAM SPECIALISTS
ALL COUNTY REFUGEE COORDINATORS
ALL COUNTY CHILD CARE COORDINATORS
ALL TRIBAL TANF ADMINISTRATORS
ALL COUNTY CONSORTIA REPRESENTATIVES

SUBJECT: TREATMENT OF THE GOLDEN STATE STIMULUS AND GOLDEN STATE GRANT PROGRAMS IN CALIFORNIA WORK OPPORTUNITY AND RESPONSIBILITY TO KIDS (CALWORKS), REFUGEE CASH ASSISTANCE (RCA), ENTRANT CASH ASSISTANCE (ECA) AND TRAFFICKING AND CRIME VICTIMS ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (TCVAP) UNDER SENATE BILL (SB) 88 (CHAPTER 8, STATUTES OF 2021) AND ASSEMBLY BILL (AB) 88 (CHAPTER 12, STATUTES OF 2021).

REFERENCE: [SB 88 \(CHAPTER 8, STATUTES OF 2021\)](#); [AB 88 \(CHAPTER 12, STATUTES OF 2021\)](#); [MANUAL OF POLICIES AND PROCEDURES \(MPP\) SECTIONS 42-213.518, 44-101\(I\)\(SAR\)\(1\), 44-111.3\(I\) AND 44-111.61\(I\)](#); [ALL COUNTY WELFARE DIRECTORS LETTER \(ACWDL\) DATED APRIL 15, 2020, ACWDL DATED DECEMBER 31, 2020, ACWDL DATED MARCH 11, 2021 AND ALL COUNTY INFORMATION NOTICE \(ACIN\) NO. I-71-20](#)

The purpose of this All County Letter (ACL) is to provide County Welfare Departments (CWDs) with guidance on the treatment of the Golden State Stimulus and Golden State Grant programs pursuant to SB 88 (Chapter 8, Statutes of 2021), signed by the Governor on February 23, 2021 and AB 88 (Chapter 12, Statutes of 2021), signed by the Governor on March 17, 2021. These payments are intended to provide financial relief for low-income Californians who may have been adversely impacted by the economic disruptions resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic. This letter solely

describes the treatment of these payments in the CalWORKs, RCA, ECA, and TCVAP programs.

In this letter, the phrase “CalWORKs Golden State Grant payment” refers to the payment based on a recipient’s status as a Golden State Grant-eligible CalWORKs Assistance Unit (AU). This payment is from the Golden State Grant program and is not part of the CalWORKs program. The Golden State Grant program also includes the Cash Assistance Program for Aged, Blind, and Disabled Legal Immigrants (CAPI) and the Supplemental Security Income/ State Supplementary Program (SSI/SSP). Guidance for those recipients will be issued under separate cover.

GOLDEN STATE STIMULUS PAYMENT

Effective immediately, households receiving the California Earned Income Tax Credit (CalEITC) for tax year 2020 will receive a \$600 one-time relief payment through the Golden State Stimulus program. In addition, the Golden State Stimulus program will provide a \$600 one-time payment to households that filed with an Individual Tax Identification Number (ITIN) that have income below \$75,000 and were precluded from receiving the \$1,200 per person federal payments issued last spring and the more recent \$600 and \$1,400 federal payments. ITIN households that also qualify for the CalEITC would receive a total of \$1,200. These payments will be provided to eligible households after they file their 2020 tax returns, with the first payments expected to go out in early April 2021. The guidance for the treatment of the two federal stimulus payments (\$1,200 and \$600) can be found in ACWDLs dated April 15, 2020 and December 31, 2020.

As a reminder, tax rebates, credits and/or temporary tax relief measures are not considered income for CalWORKs, CalFresh, and/or Modified Adjusted Gross Income (MAGI) Medi-Cal applicants or recipients. The Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) is seeking federal approval to exempt the Golden State Stimulus payment for Non-MAGI Medi-Cal applicants and recipients. DHCS will release a separate All County Welfare Directors Letter with instructions on the treatment of income and property for Medi-Cal. The CWDs must exempt Golden State Stimulus refund payments from resource consideration for CalWORKs and CalFresh applicants and recipients for 12 months, starting with the month that the payment is received.

Golden State Stimulus payments are likewise exempt from resource consideration for CAPI applicants and recipients for 12 months from the receipt of payment. Further CAPI guidance will be released under separate cover.

GOLDEN STATE GRANT PAYMENT

The CalWORKs Golden State Grant payment will provide a \$600 one-time payment to eligible CalWORKs Assistance Units (AUs) that will be disbursed by the Statewide Automated Welfare Systems (SAWS) by mid-April 2021. This payment is separate from CalWORKs grants and assistance. Receipt of this payment shall be treated in the same manner as the Federal Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC), and as such the payment is not counted as income in CalWORKs, CalFresh, and CAPI, and will not count against the resource limits for 12 months from receipt of the payment.

The CalWORKs Golden State Grant payment is not subject to CalWORKs regulations, including the CalWORKs overpayment regulations outlined in [Welfare and Institutions Code \(WIC\) Section 11004](#) and [MPP Sections 44-350 through 44-353](#). If an AU received a CalWORKs grant and a Golden State Grant payment in the same month, but the AU is later determined ineligible for either the full- or partial-month CalWORKs grant amount, the CWD can only establish an overpayment for the CalWORKs grant. The CalWORKs Golden State Grant payment amount must be excluded from the overpayment establishment and collection.

GOLDEN STATE GRANT PAYMENT ELIGIBLE RECIPIENTS

All active CalWORKs AUs, including TCVAP CalWORKs recipients, as of the eligibility date of March 27, 2021 meet the criteria for issuance of a CalWORKs Golden State Grant payment.

A family that contains a CalWORKs AU may also be eligible to receive additional Golden State Grant payments if it includes SSI/SSP or CAPI recipients.

GOLDEN STATE GRANT PAYMENT COMMUNICATION

The CWDs may implement mass informing practices to communicate these changes to families. As soon as possible, CWDs are encouraged to consider including messages on their websites, social media, Interactive Voice Response System, and other communication tools. In addition, CDSS will be doing direct outreach to inform families via automated phone calls and, for those who have opted in, email. Automated phone calls and emails will be sent to families between March 29, 2021 and April 9, 2021. The phone script and email language will be posted on the [Golden State Grant Payment webpage](#) for reference.

ISSUING AND CLAIMING THE GOLDEN STATE GRANT PAYMENT

Most eligible CalWORKs AUs will receive the \$600 one-time payment via the same method as they receive their CalWORKs grant (i.e. EBT or direct deposit). CWDs are also permitted to issue these payments via checks and warrants if an issue exists that prevents issuance via EBT or direct deposit. Payments are anticipated to be issued to eligible AUs from late March to mid-April 2021. The SAWS will attempt to issue these payments via a batch process, however, any payments that exception out (i.e. unable to issue via batch), and those for cases who receive their payments via direct deposit, may require additional county actions to finalize the payments. CWDs should consult with the SAWS on any challenges encountered when trying to finalize these payments.

An [ACWDL, dated March 11, 2021](#), provides guidance regarding the advances for the Golden State Grant program payments to CalWORKs AUs. CDSS will be issuing claiming details under separate cover.

RCA, ECA, AND TCVAP ELIGIBILITY

RCA, ECA, and TCVAP Cash Assistance recipients are not eligible to receive the CalWORKs Golden State Grant payment, however they may be eligible to receive payment under the Golden State Stimulus program. TCVAP CalWORKs recipients are eligible to receive the CalWORKs Golden State Grant payment and they may also be eligible to receive payment under the Golden State Stimulus program. These payments are treated the same as above for CalWORKs recipients.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Please refer to the [Franchise Tax Board website](#) for additional information regarding the Golden State Stimulus referred to in this letter.

CDSS has launched a [Golden State Grant Payment webpage](#) to support CWDs and community-based organizations serving recipients of programs overseen by CDSS and other members of the public. The materials are designed to be used by CWDs and other partner organizations to raise awareness of the Golden State Grant and notify clients of the grant. The webpage includes information and resources for:

- [County Welfare Departments or Community-Based Organizations](#) (CBOs), including:
 - Client Facing Flyer (English and Spanish versions)
 - Social Media Post Schedule (English and Spanish included)
 - Social Media Graphics
- [Members of the Public](#), including:

- Frequently Asked Questions

ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS

An Attachment to this ACL provides additional information regarding the Golden State Stimulus and CalWORKs Golden State Grant payments.

If you have any additional questions or need additional guidance regarding the information in this letter, contact:

For CalWORKs, the Early Engagement and Bureau at (916) 654-1322.

For RCA, ECA, and TCVAP, the Refugee Programs Bureau at (916) 654-4356.

Sincerely,

Original Document Signed By

Jennifer Hernandez
Deputy Director
Family Engagement and Empowerment Division

Attachment

Attachment

QUESTION AND ANSWER (Q&A)

GENERAL

Q1: Is there a prohibition of receiving both a Golden State Stimulus payment and a Golden State Grant payment?

A1: There is no disallowance if a recipient were to qualify for both.

Q2: How will CalWORKs AUs be notified if they are eligible recipients of the CalWORKs Golden State Grant payment?

A2: Recipients may check their EBT balances and direct deposits starting in late March 2021 to confirm if they received payment as an eligible AU. All payments are expected to be issued by mid-April 2021. CWDs may also confirm via SAWS if the CalWORKs Golden State Grant payment was issued. It is recommended that CWDs and CBOs use the resources available from the CalWORKs Golden State Grant Payment webpage to raise awareness of the CalWORKs Golden State Grant payment.

Q3: Will CalWORKs applicants receive a CalWORKs Golden State Grant payment?

A3: A CalWORKs application must be approved by the March 27, 2021 eligibility date for an AU to be eligible to receive the CalWORKs Golden State Grant payment. Applications pending as of March 27, 2021 are not eligible to receive the CalWORKs Golden State Grant payment, even if the CalWORKs is granted later with a beginning date of aid of March 27, 2021 or earlier.

CALWORKS OVERPAYMENT RECOUPMENTS/TIME LIMITS

Q4: May a portion of the CalWORKs Golden State Grant payment be used for an automated CalWORKs overpayment recoupment (i.e. 5%, 10% of payment)?

A4: No, the CalWORKs Golden State Grant payment is separate from the grant and other assistance provided through CalWORKs, and therefore no automated recoupments may be made.

Q5: Can recipients use the CalWORKs Golden State Grant payment to pay an existing overpayment or overissuance?

A5: Yes, recipients may voluntarily choose to use their payment to pay an existing CalWORKs overpayment or CalFresh overissuance.

Q6: What impact will the CalWORKs Golden State Grant payment have on CalWORKs and TANF time limits?

A6: The CalWORKs Golden State Grant payment is not CalWORKs assistance and therefore will not tick either the CalWORKs or TANF time clocks. CWDs are reminded to review whether the recipient's time limit is accurate at application, redetermination, and when the 42nd and 46th month was reached.

Q7: Will the CalWORKs Golden State Grant payment affect the Unreimbursed Assistance Pool (UAP)?

A7: No, the payment is to have no impact to the UAP. The UAP is the portion of received CalWORKs aid that has not been collected from child support payments. As the CalWORKs Golden State Grant payment is separate from the grant and other assistance provided through CalWORKs, when CWDs untick months on a current or former recipient's CalWORKs time limit clock they must verify the \$600 payment was not included as CalWORKs aid.

EBT

Q8: May CalWORKs Golden State Grant payments be replaced if a recipient reports electronic theft from their EBT account?

A8: CalWORKs Golden State Grant payments that are issued via the EBT system are subject to the requirements stipulated in [WIC Section 100072](#). If an individual or AU incurs skimming or scamming of their cash benefits and applies for reimbursement, the CWD may follow existing processes describe in [ACL 18-148](#).