

March 1, 2023

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

**ALL COUNTY LETTER NO. 23-25**

The purpose of this letter is to provide guidance to County Welfare Departments (CWDs) regarding the California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids (CalWORKs) Outcomes and Accountability Review (Cal-OAR) Client Satisfaction Survey (CSS) client incentives.





**KIM JOHNSON**  
DIRECTOR

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**DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES**  
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**GAVIN NEWSOM**  
GOVERNOR

March 1, 2023

ALL COUNTY LETTER NO. 23-25

TO: ALL COUNTY WELFARE DIRECTORS  
ALL CALWORKS PROGRAM SPECIALISTS  
ALL WELFARE-TO-WORK COORDINATORS  
ALL CONSORTIA REPRESENTATIVES

SUBJECT: CALIFORNIA WORK OPPORTUNITY AND RESPONSIBILITY TO  
KIDS (CALWORKS) OUTCOMES AND ACCOUNTABILITY  
REVIEW (CAL-OAR) CLIENT SATISFACTION SURVEY (CSS)  
INCENTIVES

REFERENCE: [SENATE BILL \(SB\) 89 \(CHAPTER 24, STATUTES OF 2017\);](#)  
[COUNTY FISCAL LETTER \(CFL\) 22-23-18E; WELFARE AND](#)  
[INSTITUTIONS CODE \(WIC\) SECTION 11523.7](#)

The purpose of this All County Letter is to provide County Welfare Departments (CWDs) with guidance regarding client incentives for completion of the California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids (CalWORKs) Outcomes and Accountability Review (Cal-OAR) Client Satisfaction Survey (CSS).

## **BACKGROUND**

[Senate Bill 89 \(Chapter 24, Statutes of 2017\)](#) established Cal-OAR as a local, data-driven program management system that facilitates continuous quality improvement of county CalWORKs programs by collecting, analyzing, and disseminating outcomes and best practices. Cal-OAR consists of three core components: performance indicators, a CalWORKs county self-assessment (Cal-CSA), and a CalWORKs system improvement plan (Cal-SIP) as required by the Welfare and Institutions Code section 11523. The Cal-CSA and Cal-SIP require CWDs to assess their program operations within several categories, among them being their partnership with stakeholders, including clients. To assist counties with this portion of their Cal-CSA report, the CSS was designed to help CWDs gather feedback from their clients on how to better serve them.



The CSS evaluates CalWORKs Welfare-To-Work (WTW) client satisfaction during, approximately, their first six-months on CalWORKs aid. There are three surveys within the (approximate) six-month period which are tethered to the following CalWORKs program milestones: WTW Orientation, the signing of the first WTW Plan, and the first Semi-Annual Report (SAR 7). The data gathered through these surveys will be used by counties to draft their Cal-CSA and Cal-SIP and inform program improvement efforts.

### **CLIENT SATISFACTION SURVEY CLIENT INCENTIVES**

The California Department of Social Services (CDSS) will send the CSS to all CalWORKs clients who have completed WTW Orientation, signed their first WTW plan, and/or who were due for a SAR 7 in the previous month. All three surveys are issued directly to clients on a monthly basis. Survey recipients will receive an email or text message with a link to complete the survey based on the opt-in preference recorded in the Statewide Automated Welfare Systems (SAWS). Clients may also contact the CSS Helpline (1-888-445-1955) to complete the survey telephonically. The survey results are intended to provide CWDs with insight into potential areas to improve CalWORKs service delivery.

All clients who complete the CSS will be entered into an opportunity to be randomly selected to receive the CSS incentive. This means that in any given month all clients who complete the CSS will have an opportunity to receive the incentive, but not every client who completes the CSS will receive the incentive.

On a monthly basis, CDSS will provide each CWD with a CSS incentive list of randomly selected clients who have completed the survey and may receive the CSS incentive. The number of clients provided on the CSS incentive list will remain the same throughout the fiscal year to ensure that CWDs do not overspend their Cal-OAR allocations intended for the CSS incentive. Attachment I provides CWDs with their Fiscal Year (FY) 2022-23 CSS Incentive funding and the number of clients who will be selected to receive the monthly CSS incentive.

The CWDs should provide each client who completed the survey and was randomly selected with a \$50 incentive. The CWDs are encouraged to distribute the CSS incentives within 30 days of receiving the CSS incentive list from CDSS.

The CDSS will add language to the CSS that will inform clients of the opportunity to receive the incentive for completing the survey. This will help ensure clients are comfortable spending the incentive money and reduce the number of calls to county offices from clients who receive this incentive.

The CWDs are encouraged to utilize the inherent flexibility in the CalWORKs single allocation to best meet the unique needs of their clients, individual programs, and diverse service areas, including how the CSS incentive payment is issued and



incentivizing clients for completing the CSS; CWDs may for example, utilize Ancillary Supportive Services to distribute the CSS incentive payments.

[County Fiscal Letter 22/23-18E](#) provides the Single Allocation for CalWORKs, inclusive of funding for Cal-OAR. The Single Allocation for FY 2022-23 included an additional \$195,600 in Temporary Assistance for Needy Families funds and State General Fund to fund the CSS client incentives for each county. Subsequent year funding will be communicated in future County Fiscal Letters (CFL).

Claiming instructions for CSS incentives will be provided in a forthcoming CFL.

### **INCOME EXEMPTIONS FOR CSS INCENTIVES**

According to [Welfare and Institutions Code Section 11523.7](#) the \$50 CSS incentive payment received by survey participants shall not be considered as a resource or income for the purposes of determining eligibility, nor the amount or extent of benefits or assistance, under any state or local program, including CalWORKs.

### **CALFRESH INCOME EXCLUSION**

Per [MPP Section 63-502.2\(j\)](#) and [ACIN I-12-19](#), money received in the form of a nonrecurring lump-sum payment, such as the \$50 CSS incentive payment, must be excluded from consideration as income. However, per the [Food and Nutrition Service Revised Treatment of Gift Cards Memorandum](#) and [MPP Section 63-501.11](#), the \$50 CSS incentive payment must be considered a resource in the month received when determining CalFresh eligibility for those households subject to a resource test. Please note most CalFresh households are conferred Categorically Eligible or Modified Categorically Eligible and are not subject to the resource test. For more information on Categorical Eligibility or Modified Categorical Eligibility see [ACL No. 14-56](#).

If you have any questions about this letter, contact your [Continuous Quality Improvement Specialist](#) or the Cal-OAR main line at (916) 657-2128 or [Cal-OAR@dss.ca.gov](mailto:Cal-OAR@dss.ca.gov).

Sincerely,

***Original Document Signed By***

JESSIE ROSALES  
Deputy Director (Acting)  
Family Engagement and Empowerment Division

Attachment



\*\*Because of the intended launch date of March 2023, the FY22-23 CSS incentives calculation include March, April, May, and June 2023.

<b>COUNTY</b>	<b>FY 2022-23 CSS FUNDS</b>	<b>MONTHLY CSS BUDGET</b>	<b># of CLIENTS TO RECEIVE \$50 CSS INCENTIVE (March 2023- June 2023)</b>
Alameda	\$5,000	\$1,250	25
Alpine	\$1,600	\$400	8
Amador	\$1,600	\$400	8
Butte	\$3,400	\$850	17
Calaveras	\$1,600	\$400	8
Colusa	\$1,600	\$400	8
Contra Costa	\$5,000	\$1,250	25
Del Norte	\$1,600	\$400	8
El Dorado	\$3,400	\$850	17
Fresno	\$5,000	\$1,250	25
Glenn	\$1,600	\$400	8
Humboldt	\$3,400	\$850	17
Imperial	\$5,000	\$1,250	25
Inyo	\$1,600	\$400	8
Kern	\$5,000	\$1,250	25
Kings	\$3,400	\$850	17
Lake	\$3,400	\$850	17
Lassen	\$1,600	\$400	8
Los Angeles	\$7,000	\$1,750	35
Madera	\$3,400	\$850	17
Marin	\$3,400	\$850	17
Mariposa	\$1,600	\$400	8
Mendocino	\$3,400	\$850	17
Merced	\$5,000	\$1,250	25
Modoc	\$1,600	\$400	8
Mono	\$1,600	\$400	8
Monterey	\$3,400	\$850	17
Napa	\$3,400	\$850	17



Nevada	\$1,600	\$400	8
Orange	\$5,000	\$1,250	25
Placer	\$3,400	\$850	17
Plumas	\$1,600	\$400	8
Riverside	\$5,000	\$1,250	25
Sacramento	\$5,000	\$1,250	25
San Benito	\$1,600	\$400	8
San Bernardino	\$5,000	\$1,250	25
San Diego	\$5,000	\$1,250	25
San Francisco	\$5,000	\$1,250	25
San Joaquin	\$5,000	\$1,250	25
San Luis Obispo	\$3,400	\$850	17
San Mateo	\$3,400	\$850	17
Santa Barbara	\$3,400	\$850	17
Santa Clara	\$5,000	\$1,250	25
Santa Cruz	\$3,400	\$850	17
Shasta	\$3,400	\$850	17
Sierra	\$1,600	\$400	8
Siskiyou	\$1,600	\$400	8
Solano	\$3,400	\$850	17
Sonoma	\$3,400	\$850	17
Stanislaus	\$5,000	\$1,250	25
Sutter	\$3,400	\$850	17
Tehama	\$3,400	\$850	17
Trinity	\$1,600	\$400	8
Tulare	\$5,000	\$1,250	25
Tuolumne	\$1,600	\$400	8
Ventura	\$5,000	\$1,250	25
Yolo	\$3,400	\$850	17
Yuba	\$3,400	\$850	17
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>\$195,600</b>	<b>\$48,900</b>	<b>978</b>