

October 19, 2020

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

ALL COUNTY WELFARE DIRECTORS LETTER

The purpose of this All County Welfare Directors Letter is to provide County Welfare Departments guidance on counting homework time as allowable activity hours for clients assigned to Cell-Ed.



KIM JOHNSON
DIRECTOR

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October 19, 2020

ALL COUNTY WELFARE DIRECTORS LETTER

TO: ALL COUNTY WELFARE DIRECTORS

FROM: JENNIFER HERNANDEZ, DEPUTY DIRECTOR
FAMILY ENGAGEMENT AND EMPOWERMENT DIVISION

SUBJECT: COUNTING HOMEWORK TIME ON CELL-ED FOR CALFRESH
EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING (E&T), CALIFORNIA WORK
OPPORTUNITY AND RESPONSIBILITY TO KIDS WELFARE-TO-
WORK (CALWORKS WTW), REFUGEE CASH ASSISTANCE
(RCA), AND TRAFFICKING AND CRIME VICTIMS ASSISTANCE
PROGRAM (TCVAP) CLIENTS

REFERENCE: [MANUAL OF POLICIES AND PROCEDURES \(MPP\) SECTION 42-711.8, 42-716.61, 42-716.611; 45 CODE OF FEDERAL REGULATIONS \(CFR\) 261.60\(e\); ACF Q&A: COUNTING AND VERIFYING HOURS OF WORK PARTICIPATION DATED 12-13-2016; ACF Q&A: TANF AND THE CORONAVIRUS DISEASE 2019 \(COVID-19\) PANDEMIC; CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES TEMPORARY ASSISTANCE FOR NEEDY FAMILIES PROGRAM WORK VERIFICATION PLAN \(CDSS TANF WVP\); ALL COUNTY LETTER \(ACL\) No. 18-40; ALL COUNTY INFORMATION NOTICE \(ACIN\) No. I-55-20](#)

The purpose of this All County Welfare Directors Letter (ACWDL) is to provide County Welfare Departments (CWDs), who intend to use Cell-Ed, guidance on counting homework time as allowable activity hours for CalFresh E&T, CalWORKs WTW, and RCA/TCVAP clients assigned to Cell-Ed.

BACKGROUND

As outlined in [ACIN No. I-55-20](#), CDSS has partnered with Cell-Ed to provide CalFresh E&T, CalWORKs WTW, and RCA/TCVAP participants the opportunity to receive

education and training through distance learning to build skills and engage in countable participation hours. As is outlined in Question 5 of the [ACF Q&A Document: TANF and the COVID-19 Pandemic](#), alternative approaches to engage participants and advance their goals during the COVID-19 pandemic are encouraged.

Verifying Homework Time Hours for CalWORKs Welfare-to-Work, Refugee Support Services, and hours of participation for CalFresh E&T

Clients can utilize Cell-Ed as an option to meet CalWORKs WTW, CalFresh E&T, and Refugee Support Services (RSS) activities requirements. As mentioned in [ACIN No. I-55-20](#), Cell-Ed courses may count as the following CalWORKs WTW and RSS activities, as well as CalFresh E&T activities under Supervised Job Search, Education and Vocational Training:

- Adult Basic Education
- Job Search (Supervised Job Search under CalFresh E&T) and Job Readiness
- Job Skills Training
- Soft Skill Development
- Education Directly Related to Employment
- Vocational Education and Training
- Secondary Education
- English as a Second Language (ESL)

Per [MPP Section 42-716.61](#), an individual assigned to participate in the aforementioned activities may also be assigned supervised or unsupervised homework time as part of their WTW and/or Family Self-Sufficiency Plan (FSSP). [45 CFR 261.60\(e\)](#) states that actual hours spent in supervised homework time and up to one hour of unsupervised homework time for each hour of class time may be assigned as participation.

For unsupervised homework time, the [CDSS TANF WVP](#) states the only documentation required to verify homework time hours of participation is a statement from the educational program indicating the amount of homework time required. However, as referenced in the [ACF Q&A Document for Counting and Verifying Hours of Work Participation](#), if a state chooses to verify hours of education through a combination of daily supervision by the case manager and the client displaying satisfactory progress, then the case manager may be the individual supervising homework time. All hours of homework time required or advised by the educational program may then be counted without additional documentation and without the one-hour per hour of class time limitations as noted in [MPP Section 42-716.611](#) for unsupervised homework time. As such, all Cell-Ed coursework homework time hours are considered supervised homework time hours and can be documented by the case manager. The total

homework time assigned must not exceed the hours required or advised by the education program as referenced in the WVP.

Counting Homework Time Hours on Cell-Ed

Through the Cell-Ed remote learning model, hours of participation will reflect not only the time spent in Cell-Ed courses, but may also include the time an individual dedicates to reinforce learned content outside of each course. These activities can include independent practice as well as the recommended activity suggestions provided at the end of each course. Cell-Ed recommends for every hour spent on the application, three additional hours are credited for homework time or content reinforcement, based on research from program experts. This would equate to a one to three ratio of time on Cell-Ed to homework time, which may be applied to any amount of time spent on Cell-Ed.

Example

- Participant A spends **30 minutes** on Cell-Ed working on Unit X.
- Participant A will receive **90 minutes** of projected homework time or content reinforcement on Unit X.
 - (30 minutes x 3 = 90 minutes).
- The total amount of participation will be **120 minutes or 2 hours**.
 - [30 minutes on Cell-Ed + (30 minutes x 3) of homework time or content reinforcement = 120 minutes or 2 hours].

This recommendation is dependent on a client demonstrating 'satisfactory progress' as defined by the educational provider ([MPP Section 42-711.8](#)). Cell-Ed defines satisfactory progress to be learners who progress through the Cell-Ed units and courses while thoughtfully answering the questions and prompts. Progress is captured by recording every answer submitted, time on platform, as well as pre- and post-assessments in each unit and course.

Cell-Ed indicators of satisfactory progress are as follows:

- Learners actively answer questions on the application to complete units and courses.
- Learners enter timely and correct responses to prompts and questions.
- Learners are consistently moving forward through units and courses.

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Cell-Ed coaches monitor and track learner progress to determine whether a learner is making satisfactory progress in their work. This information will be relayed to the counties. An MOU is not required to receive data reports from Cell-Ed regarding client usage and is only required if the CWD opts for the “no-touch” option. CWDs can also pull data reports and determine whether a learner is making satisfactory progress based on the data. Case managers shall monitor satisfactory progress of individual Cell-Ed users on a case-by-case basis.

For more information on the Cell-Ed program, please visit the [Cell-Ed](#) website or contact Cell-Ed at california@cell-ed.com or at (213) 325-3311. If you have any questions or need additional guidance regarding CalFresh E&T, email CalFreshEandT@dss.ca.gov; for CalWORKs, contact the Engagement Bureau at (916) 654-4356; for RCA/ECA and TCVAP, contact the Refugee Programs Bureau at RPB@dss.ca.gov.