

September 10, 2020

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

**ALL COUNTY WELFARE DIRECTORS LETTER**

The purpose of this letter is to provide County Welfare Departments with guidance regarding the treatment of unemployment benefits received under the Lost Wages Assistance Program and the Disaster Unemployment Assistance (DUA) benefits for those impacted by widespread fires in multiple California counties for CalFresh, California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids (CalWORKs), Refugee Cash Assistance (RCA)/Entrant Cash Assistance (ECA), and the Trafficking and Crime Victims Assistance Program (TCVAP).



**KIM JOHNSON**  
DIRECTOR

STATE OF CALIFORNIA—HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES AGENCY  
**DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES**  
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**GAVIN NEWSOM**  
GOVERNOR

September 10, 2020

ALL COUNTY WELFARE DIRECTORS LETTER

TO: ALL COUNTY WELFARE DIRECTORS

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

SUBJECT: TREATMENT OF UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFITS UNDER THE  
LOST WAGES ASSISTANCE PROGRAM AND DISASTER  
UNEMPLOYMENT ASSISTANCE FOR THOSE IMPACTED BY  
WIDESPREAD FIRES IN MULTIPLE CALIFORNIA COUNTIES  
FOR CALFRESH, CALIFORNIA WORK OPPORTUNITY AND  
RESPONSIBILITY TO KIDS (CALWORKS), REFUGEE CASH  
ASSISTANCE (RCA)/ENTRANT CASH ASSISTANCE (ECA), AND  
THE TRAFFICKING AND CRIME VICTIMS ASSISTANCE  
PROGRAM (TCVAP)

REFERENCE: [PRESIDENTIAL MEMORANDUM \(AUGUST 8, 2020\)](#); [MANUAL OF POLICY AND PROCEDURES \(MPP\) SECTION 44-111.61\(i\) AND 63-507\(a\)\(10\)](#); [ROBERT T. STAFFORD DIASTER RELIEF AND EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE ACT](#); [EMPLOYMENT DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT NEWS RELEASE NO. 20-41](#); [ALL COUNTY WELFARE DIRECTORS LETTERS \(ACWDL\) DATED APRIL 21, 2020, MAY 5, 2020, AND JUNE 11, 2020](#)

The purpose of this letter is to provide County Welfare Departments (CWDs) with guidance regarding the treatment of unemployment benefits received under the Lost Wages Assistance (LWA) Program and the separate Disaster Unemployment Assistance (DUA). This guidance applies to applicants and recipients of CalFresh, California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids (CalWORKs), Refugee Cash Assistance (RCA)/Entrant Cash Assistance (ECA), and the Trafficking and Crime Victims Assistance Program (TCVAP).

### **Treatment of LWA Unemployment Benefits**

Pursuant to the Presidential Memorandum issued on August 8, 2020, the President authorized the LWA Program, in accordance with section 408(e)(2) and 408(f) of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, "Stafford Act." The California Employment Development Department (EDD) will begin issuing LWA supplemental payments of \$300 per week for claimants who:

1. Are currently eligible to receive at least \$100 per week in unemployment benefits; and
2. Have provided a self-certification that they are unemployed or partially unemployed due to disruptions caused by COVID-19.

Stafford Act funded benefits, including LWA are exempt from consideration as income for the purposes of determining eligibility and allotment/grant amounts for CalFresh, CalWORKs, RCA/ECA and TCVAP.

### **Treatment of DUA Unemployment Benefits**

Federal DUA benefits have been [approved for individuals who have been directly affected by recent wildfires in selected counties](#). The federal disaster declaration on August 22, 2020, provides DUA benefits for individuals who do not qualify for regular state unemployment insurance, Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation (PEUC), [Federal-State Extended Duration](#) (FED-ED) extensions, or Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA) benefits. DUA benefits are issued in accordance with the Stafford Act. Like LWA benefits, DUA benefits are exempt for the purposes of determining eligibility and allotment/grant amounts for CalFresh, CalWORKs, RCA/ECA and TVCAP.

Please refer to the All County Welfare Directors Letters dated [April 21, 2020](#), [May 5, 2020](#), and [June 11, 2020](#), for guidance regarding the treatment of PEUC and PUA under the CalFresh, CalWORKs, RCA/ECA and TVCAP.

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

For CalFresh, the CalFresh Policy Bureau at (916) 651-8047.

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

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