

April 26, 2021

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

**ALL COUNTY WELFARE DIRECTORS LETTER (ACWDL)**

The purpose of this All County Welfare Directors Letter is to provide guidance to County Welfare Departments (CWDs) regarding the new online Guardian system for California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids (CalWORKs) prospective Stage One Child Care license-exempt providers who are required to be TrustLine-registered.



KIM JOHNSON  
DIRECTOR

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**DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES**  
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April 26, 2021

ALL COUNTY WELFARE DIRECTORS LETTER

TO: ALL COUNTY WELFARE DIRECTORS

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

SUBJECT: GUARDIAN SYSTEM IMPLEMENTATION FOR CALIFORNIA  
WORK OPPORTUNITY AND RESPONSIBILITY TO KIDS  
(CALWORKS) STAGE ONE CHILD CARE LICENSE-EXEMPT  
PROVIDERS WHO ARE REQUIRED TO BE TRUSTLINE-  
REGISTERED

[ALL COUNTY LETTER NO. 19-113; COUNTY FISCAL LETTER 14-15-16 \(SEPTEMBER 5, 2014\); COUNTY FISCAL LETTER 14-15-71 \(JUNE 30, 2015\); COUNTY FISCAL LETTER NO. 20/21-23, \(SEPTEMBER 14, 2020\); PROVIDER INFORMATION NOTICE \(PIN\) 20-03-CCLD; PIN-20-20-CCLD; HEALTH AND SAFETY CODE SECTION 1596.67\(A\); WELFARE & INSTITUTIONS CODE SECTION 15204.2\(E\)](#)

The purpose of this All County Letter is to provide guidance to County Welfare Departments (CWDs) regarding Guardian, an online background check system, for CalWORKs license-exempt providers who are required to be TrustLine-registered. TrustLine is a California's registry of license-exempt child care providers who have been through a criminal background screening and clearance process. TrustLine is administered by the CDSS Care Provider Management Bureau (CPMB) and the [California Child Care Resource and Referral Network](#) (Network). Guardian replaced the current TrustLine Web-based Application (TWA) database system. Guardian is designed to achieve more timely decisions on criminal background checks and improve background check case management for the applicants and registrants of the TrustLine Registry.

## **BACKGROUND**

Pursuant to [Health and Safety Code Section 1596.67\(a\)](#), certain license-exempt providers who receive reimbursements under the CalWORKs Stage One Child Care Program must be TrustLine-registered to receive compensation. License-exempt providers who are the aunts, uncles, or grandparents of the child(ren) in care are exempt from the TrustLine requirement.

## **TRANSITION FROM THE TWA SYSTEM TO GUARDIAN**

On January 15, 2021, the TWA background check system for processing TrustLine applications for CalWORKs Stage One license-exempt providers transitioned to the newly developed Guardian system. Guardian facilitates background checks being completed faster and more efficiently, while making the process easier for applicants to request exemptions.

## **New Application TrustLine Application Form TLR 9163G**

The TrustLine application forms, including the Stage One TLR 1 (In-Home Child Care Providers Subsidized Application), have been consolidated into a single application form for all applicant types: TrustLine Application (TLR 9163G). The TLR 9163G is the only form needed for the TrustLine applicant and serves as 1) the TrustLine application, 2) the Live Scan form for fingerprinting; and 3) the criminal history disclosure statement (currently the Criminal Record Statement, or TLR 508).

## **Guardian Paper Process**

Although Guardian provides an online background check process, there will continue to be a manual/paper process available to TrustLine applicants and CWDs. Additionally, Live Scan vendors will continue to require a paper Live Scan form to be provided for individuals to be fingerprinted. Once completed, the TLR 9163G application can be sent to the CDSS CPMB at [trustline@dss.ca.gov](mailto:trustline@dss.ca.gov) for data entry and processing. The mailing address is Department of Social Services, Care Provider Management Bureau, Attn: TrustLine Registry Program, P.O. Box 944243, M.S. 9-15-57, Sacramento, CA 94244-2430.

## **Processing Pending TrustLine Applications under TWA**

The TWA background check process system was decommissioned on January 13, 2021. The CWDs are advised to discontinue using TWA forms as these forms do not have the coding necessary for Live Scan vendors to fingerprint applicants. However, if the individual was able to get fingerprinted for TrustLine, but completed the TLR 1 and TLR

508 forms, those forms can still be submitted to the CDSS CPMB for data entry and processing at [trustline@dss.ca.gov](mailto:trustline@dss.ca.gov). The applications can also be mailed to: Department of Social Services, Care Provider Management Bureau, Attn: TrustLine Registry Program, P.O. Box 944243, M.S. 9-15-57, Sacramento, CA 94244-2430.

**Guidance for Designated Agencies (County Welfare Departments, Local Child Care Resource and Referral Programs, and Alternative Payment Programs)**

- CWDs that process TrustLine applications are assigned a code that starts with TLR. This code links the provider application to the CWD that processed the application, not the applicant. However, the individual's driver's license is used to link the applicant to their application and status in Guardian.
- CWDs or designated agencies that are currently entering applications into TWA will still be able to enter applications into Guardian using the TLR unique identifier assigned to their agency.
- CWDs or designated agencies will be able to log on to Guardian and find out if the applicant has an application in Guardian and whether they need to be fingerprinted (Live Scan).
- Applications can also be completed in paper format and sent to the CDSS CPMB for data entry into the Guardian system.

**Guidance for TrustLine Provider Applicants**

- An email address is needed to create a profile on Guardian.
- Once a profile is created, the applicant can monitor the status of their background check and apply for an exemption if they have a criminal or child abuse history. The exemption process will remain the same. However, the applicant now can submit exemption paperwork through Guardian.
- The provider can check the status of their application in real time.
- The provider can receive notifications, communicate electronically, and upload and print documents in response to CDSS communication.

**COUNTY EXPENSE CLAIM (CEC) PROCESS**

Beginning in Fiscal Year (FY) 2021-22, the CalWORKs Child Care funding will be allocated to the counties separately from the CalWORKs Single Allocation as stated in [Welfare & Institutions Code Section 15204.2\(e\)](#). The current process for reimbursement between the CDSS and CWDs to claim some or all the costs associated with administering the TrustLine program through the CEC process will remain the same.

Child care claiming instructions are provided in the CalWORKs County Fiscal Letter (CFL) [CFL 14/15-16 \(September 5, 2014\)](#). The [CFL 14/15-71 \(June 30, 2015\)](#) provides

claiming guidance for TrustLine expenses for costs associated with fingerprinting (rolling fees) and data entry. The [CFL No. 20/21-23, \(September 14, 2020\)](#) provides information regarding CalWORKs Child Care funding.

CWDs may choose not to establish a local agreement and administer their own TrustLine process. Additionally, CWDs may opt to reimburse prospective provider applicants for the costs incurred for the fingerprinting process (Live Scan). CWDs can then claim for some or all TrustLine processing expenses through the CEC process.

### **BILLING CODE ON TLR 9163G APPLICATION**

All counties will continue to use a specified billing code on the new application form to ensure the fees associated with the background check process (except for the rolling fees) are charged directly to CDSS under an Interagency Agreement with the Department of Justice (DOJ). Those fees include the DOJ fees for the check of the California Criminal Records, Child Abuse Central Index, and Federal Bureau of Investigation databases. For subsidized applicants, the billing code is 100126 that is placed in Box 4 (Applicant Information); Misc. No: BIL field on the TLR 9163 application form.

### **CDSS GUARDIAN RESOURCES**

For more information regarding Guardian, please visit the [Guardian Webpage](#) on the CDSS website and view an [Guardian Introductory Youtube video](#) or contact [guardian@dss.ca.gov](mailto:guardian@dss.ca.gov) with any questions. For information, please visit the [TrustLine Website](#) or call 1-800-822-8490.

If you have any questions regarding this letter, please contact the Child Care and Intergenerational Services Bureau at (916) 657-2144.

c: Pallavi Shimoda, Care Providers Management Bureau  
Jazmin Hicks, County Welfare Directors Association  
Cindy Mall, California Child Care Resource and Referral Network