

November 2, 2022

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

ALL COUNTY WELFARE DIRECTORS LETTER

This All County Welfare Directors Letter (ACWDL) is to inform counties implementing the California Work Opportunity and Responsibility for Kids (CalWORKs) Home Visiting Program (HVP) of the continuation of the Laptop Loaner Program, also known as Laptops 4 Life (L4L) program.



KIM JOHNSON
DIRECTOR

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DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES
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GOVERNOR

November 2, 2022

ALL COUNTY WELFARE DIRECTORS LETTER

TO: ALL COUNTY WELFARE DIRECTORS

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

SUBJECT: CALIFORNIA WORK OPPORTUNITY AND RESPONSIBILITY TO
KIDS (CALWORKS) HOME VISITING PROGRAM (HVP);
CONTINUATION OF LAPTOP LOANER PROGRAM, ALSO
KNOWN AS LAPTOPS 4 LIFE (L4L) PROGRAM

REFERENCE: [WELFARE AND INSTITUTIONS CODE \(WI&C\) SECTIONS 11330.6 AND 11330.7](#); [EXECUTIVE ORDER N-33-20](#); [ALL COUNTY WELFARE DIRECTORS LETTER \(ACWDL\) DATED JUNE 18, 2021](#).

The purpose of this All County Welfare Directors Letter (ACWDL) is to inform counties implementing the CalWORKs HVP of the continuation of the Laptop Loaner Program, also known as Laptops 4 Life (L4L) program.

BACKGROUND

The Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic caused significant changes to the operation of CalWORKs home visiting services statewide, including the transition to socially distanced and virtual participation in CalWORKs HVP. Governor Gavin Newsom issued [Executive Order N-33-20](#) on March 19, 2020. The order advised all non-essential working California residents to remain in their residences to reduce the spread of COVID-19. The stay-at-home order impacted the lives of all Californians, especially those most vulnerable, which limited their access to resources. To increase participation in home visiting services and to address the limited resources for California's most vulnerable population, the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) partnered with Cell-Ed to establish the Laptop Loaner Pilot Program, also known as the L4L program.

The L4L program provides laptops to CalWORKs HVP participants, allowing participating families access to engage in virtual home visiting services and engage in family educational activities. The partnership between the CDSS and Cell-Ed established a laptop distribution program that placed laptops in the hands of California's most vulnerable populations; with the goal of increasing digital literacy, and building essential skills through additional curriculum provided by Cell-Ed. The intended outcome of the program is to enable low-skilled, low-literacy, and low-wage workers access to remote workforce training opportunities that will increase their employability by removing barriers to employment. More information on the CDSS partnership with Cell-Ed, services provided by Cell-Ed, and the L4L program can be found in [ACWDL dated June 18, 2021](#).

ELIGIBILITY

To be eligible for L4L as a CalWORKs HVP participant, individuals must be eligible for and enrolled in the CalWORKs HVP at the time they receive their device. CalWORKs HVP participants may keep their devices and are not required to return them. Refer to [Welfare and Institutions Code \(WI&C\) section 11330.6\(c\)\(2\)](#) for CalWORKs HVP eligibility.

PILOT PHASES

Participation in the L4L pilot was optional. Twenty counties participated in the initial phase of the L4L program. The assessment for device allocations was received in April 2021 and the initial distribution of laptops began in June 2021 for counties participating in L4L. All requests for laptops that were within the allowable allotment were accepted. Smartphones were also distributed to counties but, due to the limited quantity of smartphones available, allocations were on a first-come, first-serve basis.

Phase One: The CDSS commenced phase one in June 2021 with the participation of Alameda, Butte, Fresno, Humboldt, Imperial, Kern, Los Angeles, Mono, Monterey, Napa, Placer, Riverside, Sacramento, San Francisco, San Joaquin, San Luis Obispo, Shasta, Solano, and Stanislaus. The initial distribution for counties began with 50% of the county's total allocation. A total of 668 laptops and 93 smartphones were shipped to counties, home visiting partner agencies, or CalWORKs HVP participants. The CalWORKs HVP allocation of smartphones was exhausted during phase one.

Phase Two: The CDSS continued to fulfill the remaining allocations of laptops for counties. A total of 1000 laptops was shipped to counties, home visiting partner agencies, or CalWORKs HVP participants by the end of phase two.

Phase Three: The CDSS expanded the L4L program to allow other CalWORKs HVP counties an opportunity to opt-in and participate. A survey was sent to the 22 counties that did not participate in phases one or two to assess interest and need for laptops.

Five counties responded back with an interest in participating and all were accepted into the program. Phase three included phase one and two participants, and five additional counties: Mendocino, Merced, Orange, Santa Cruz, and Tulare. Phase three concluded with participation from 25 counties. Equipment distribution concluded with a total of 1738 laptops and 93 smartphones shipped to counties, home visiting partner agencies, or CalWORKs HVP participants. In the final stage of the L4L pilot program completion, closing activities and a final survey were collected as feedback from all participating counties.

NEXT STEPS FOR L4L PROGRAM

The L4L program will continue until September 29, 2023, with no significant changes from the prior year. For Fiscal Year (FY) 2022-2023, CalWORKs HVP counties and their partners are requested to assess the CalWORKs HVP local program need and interest in the L4L program. Surveys will be sent to all CalWORKs HVP counties to collect equipment distribution information from interested counties. The equipment distribution process is outlined in [ACWDL dated June 18, 2021](#). Counties needing additional training regarding distribution and equipment ordering may reach out by emailing CalWORKsHVP@dss.ca.gov.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- [ACWDL dated June 18, 2021](#)
- [Laptop Loaner Kickoff Webinar YouTube Video](#)
- [Laptop Loaner Kickoff Webinar Presentation Slides](#)
- [Laptop Loaner Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQs\)](#)

If you have any questions or need additional guidance regarding the information in this letter, contact the Program Innovation & Evaluation Bureau at (916) 654-5837 or email CalWORKsHVP@dss.ca.gov.