

CalWORKs Housing Support Allocation

Introduction This handbook provides information about the CalWORKs Housing Support Allocation, funded by SB 855.

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CalWORKs Housing Support Allocation, Continued

Purpose

The purpose of the CalWORKs Housing Support Allocation CHSA is to promote housing stability for families in the CalWORKs program, utilizing best practices from the Rapid Rehousing Program model.

The purpose of this BPR is to describe the general characteristics of the Rapid Rehousing Program Model and explain the specific process DESS will follow to administer the CalWORKs Housing Support Allocation in Yolo County.

Background: SB 855

California Department of Social Services (CDSS) recently provided a new allocation for housing support for CalWORKs families. Per SB 855, housing support in the CalWORKs program is necessary to assist families working towards achieving self-sufficiency. Homelessness and housing instability in the CalWORKs program is a challenging problem that impacts children's well-being and parents' ability to engage in employment. One longitudinal study found that over a three year period, one in four families receiving TANF assistance had experienced homelessness, and that nearly half had moved into a shared housing situation in order to manage housing expenses. Senate Bill (SB) 855 provided \$20 million in funding for the CalWORKs Housing Support Program, intended to follow a Rapid Re-Housing Program model. Yolo County Department of Employment and Social Service's (DESS) proposal was approved with an allocation of \$813,142 for fiscal year 2014-15.

Background: Rapid Re- Housing Model- Key Premises

Rapid re-housing is an intervention influenced by a Housing First approach. Rapid re-housing models were implemented across the country through the Homelessness Prevention and Rapid Re-housing Program (HPRP) as part of the American Reinvestment and Recovery Act (ARRA) of 2009. They were found to be highly successful and cost-effective way to end homelessness for a wide range of families.

Key Premises of the Rapid Re-Housing Model:

1. Although they may have additional challenges and service needs, the majority of families experiencing homelessness become homeless due to a financial crisis or other crisis that leads to the loss of housing.
 2. Most families experiencing homelessness have had a recent experience living in permanent housing and can return and remain housed without long-term supportive services. The focus is on identifying and building upon the strengths of families to maintain their own housing.
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CalWORKs Housing Support Allocation, Continued

Background: Rapid Re- Housing Model- Key Premises (continued)

3. Prolonged exposure to homelessness has a significant negative effect on adults and children. The longer a family experiences homelessness, the poorer the outcomes will likely be in a variety of areas.
 4. Resources are limited and should be used most efficiently to ensure that assistance can be provided to the greatest number of families experiencing homelessness. Families should receive 'just enough' assistance to successfully exit homelessness and avoid returning to homelessness.
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Background: Rapid Re- Housing Model- Core Components

Core Components of the Rapid Re-Housing Model:

To help families obtain permanent housing as quickly as possible, rapid re-housing tailors assistance to each family based on their specific strengths and barriers. Some families may only need limited financial assistance to cover rent and move-in costs, some may only need housing search assistance, while others may need a combination of these or a longer period of assistance. These different types of financial and non-financial assistance should be thought of as tools in a rapid re-housing program's 'tool kit' that can be flexibly deployed to achieve individual client goals.

- **Housing Identification**-Provide help with finding housing and troubleshoot barriers that prevent access to that housing. This includes helping families find appropriate rental housing in the community, contacting and recruiting landlords to provide housing opportunities, addressing potential barriers to landlord participation, assisting families to complete applications and prepare for interviews with landlords, helping households to determine if a housing option meets their needs and preferences and help with moving. It could also include identifying co-housing with a friend or family member if that is the most appropriate option for permanent housing.
 - **Rent and Move-In Assistance**-For many families, the primary barrier is their limited finances. Rapid re-housing programs offer financial assistance to pay for move-in costs, deposits, rental and/or utility assistance (typically for six months or less), necessary to allow individuals and families to move immediately out of homelessness and stabilize in permanent housing.
 - **Case Management and Services**-At minimum, rapid re-housing programs must include case management but it may also include other services, such as tenancy supports. Case management and services can help families select among various permanent housing
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CalWORKs Housing Support Allocation, Continued

Background: Rapid Re- Housing Model- Core Components (continued)

options based on their unique needs, preferences, and financial resources, address issues that may impede access to housing (such as credit history, arrears, and legal issues), negotiate manageable and appropriate lease agreements with landlords, and make appropriate and time-limited services and supports available to families and to the landlords who are partnering with the rapid re-housing program. Case management services can also monitor participants' housing stability after securing housing and during program participation, ideally through home visits and communication with the landlord, and be available to resolve housing-related crises should they occur.

Case management will also, as appropriate, assist households with connecting to resources that help them improve their safety and well-being and achieve their long-term goals. This includes access to resources related to income and health care benefits, employment and community-based services (if needed/appropriate) so that they can sustain rent payments independently when rental assistance ends. Case management services should be client-directed, respectful of individual's right to self-determination, and voluntary. Participation in non-financial services should not be required to obtain or maintain rapid re-housing assistance. When households are willing and able, case managers help them connect to community-based services that already exist. Rapid re-housing providers should have knowledge of where to find and how to access these community-based services. Moreover, rather than simply providing referrals to community-based services on behalf of a family, rapid re-housing providers can enlist family members to participate in this process, to help families gain the knowledge and skills necessary to find and access community-based services in the future on their own.

Background: Rapid Re- Housing Model- Practice Considerations

Practice Considerations of the Rapid Re-Housing Model:

- 1. The primary focus is on helping families obtain permanent housing as quickly as possible-** Additionally, rapid re-housing programs do not first require that families meet behavioral prerequisites like sobriety and treatment adherence. Immediately, rapid re-housing programs engage them around where and how to obtain permanent housing and flexibly provide 'just enough' financial assistance to help the household become stable. Possible permanent housing may be in private market apartments, affordable or subsidized housing, or living with friends or family members.
- 2. Rapid re-housing must be highly accessible to families experiencing homelessness-** Programs should be able to quickly

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CalWORKs Housing Support Allocation, Continued

Background: Rapid Re- Housing Model- Practice Considerations (continued)

reach families in a wide variety of settings where they are likely to seek help, including emergency shelters, food pantries and social services programs. Coordinated information lines such as 2-1-1 should integrate rapid-re-housing screening to identify families in need of assistance and engage them in the re-housing process as soon as possible.

- 3. Assistance is guided by assessment of housing barriers, strengths, and preferences-** All assistance should be guided by a housing plan, which is developed based on an assessment of housing barriers and in partnership with families. The initial assessment should be primarily focused on assessing housing needs rather than service needs, and can be used to determine if rapid re-housing is the most appropriate intervention or if longer term assistance is needed and desired. The initial assessment also provides the basis for the initial level of financial assistance and/or supportive services to be provided. Regular reassessments should be built into the housing plan to determine if the level of assistance should be increased, decreased or discontinued once households enter permanent housing.
- 4. Flexibility and adaptability of assistance-**Periodically reassessing the preferences, needs, and abilities of households assisted by rapid-rehousing is critical, as this allows for the determination of whether the levels of both financial assistance and services need to be either increased or decreased. One option is to use a 'progressive engagement' approach, wherein families are given a basic level of financial and services supports. Ongoing monitoring and periodical reassessment determines if and when the basic level of assistance should be changed or increased.

CalWORKs Housing Support Allocation in Yolo County

The characteristics of the Rapid Rehousing Program Model described above, were used when developing the proposal that Yolo County submitted to CDSS for consideration. The sections below describe the specific details of the CalWORKs Housing Support Allocation that will be offered in Yolo County. They also explain the specific processes that will be used to administer assistance from this allocation to homeless families by DESS.

Eligible Assistance Units

Families may be identified at CalWORKs intake, WTW appraisal or at any point during a client's participation in CalWORKs or WTW. Families may also self refer themselves or be referred to us from community partners.

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CalWORKs Housing Support Allocation, Continued

Eligible Assistance Units (continued)

In order to be eligible for the CalWORKs Housing Support Allocation, the family must:

- be receiving CalWORKs;
- reside in Yolo County and intend to stay here;
- have already used or concurrently used the once in a lifetime CalWORKs Homeless Assistance Payment and any exceptions available to them; and
- meet the definition of homelessness as described below.

Individual family members are not required to be eligible for WTW in order to be eligible to the CHSA. This includes parent(s) who are unaided members of the CalWORKs AU due to reasons such as being undocumented non-citizens, CalWORKs Timed Off, drug felons, or receiving SSI. Assistance for these individuals is limited to those services available through the CalWORKs Housing Support Allocation. Normal rules apply for other WTW services and activities.

Note: CalWORKs Applicants may also be referred for the CHSA and every effort will be made to expedite their CalWORKs application in order to establish eligibility for the CHSA.

Available Services

Based on individual needs, the CalWORKs Housing Support Allocation can be used to provide:

- Up to six months of rent assistance, including lot rental for RV or manufactured homes
 - Temporary shelter up to 14 days if needed, only until suitable permanent housing is located. This can be used while the family is working on resolving barriers, locating suitable permanent housing or waiting for an identified apartment to be available. The intent is for the use of temporary shelter to be as short as possible, but an exemption to the 14 day limit can be requested if needed.
 - Up to six months of utility assistance, including set up
 - Move-in costs (security deposit, application or credit check fees)
 - Making home habitable costs (basic furniture/appliances)
 - Legal fines and fees
 - Assistance in locating suitable permanent housing
 - Negotiation of lease
 - Landlord mediation
 - Conflict resolution and eviction prevention
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CalWORKs Housing Support Allocation, Continued

Definition of Homelessness

For purposes of the CalWORKs Housing Support Allocation, homeless is defined as:

1. Lacking a fixed and regular nighttime residence:
 - a. Having a primary nighttime residence that is a supervised publically or privately operated shelter designed to provide temporary living accommodations (including transitional housing operated by the shelter); OR
 - b. Residing in a public or private place not designed for, or ordinarily used as, a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings; or
2. In receipt of a judgment for eviction, as ordered by a court.

Note: Each situation is unique and any extenuating circumstances will be discussed during the triage process.

80% Restriction

To obtain assistance from the CalWORKs Housing Support Allocation, the monthly rent amount must not exceed 80% of the total monthly household income (TMHI) unless they can show how the amount exceeding 80% will be paid (i.e. a parent or roommate will pay the difference).

TMHI includes income from all AU members and/or any other persons whose income is used to calculate the grant for the AU. This includes, but is not limited to, sanctioned or penalized household members and excluded persons such as undocumented non-citizens and drug felons.

TMHI includes all gross income, both earned and unearned, that is used to calculate the AU's CalWORKs grant the CalWORKs grant and child support paid on behalf of a MFG child.

Student financial aid may or may not be included in the TMHI depending on the type of financial aid the participant is receiving. This will need to be reviewed on a case by cases basis with CalWORKs staff to clarify how to treat the financial aid income

TMHI does NOT include CalFresh, CalWORKs Special Needs and SSI/SSP income. However if an SSI/SSP recipient living in the home contributes toward the monthly rent, the family's total monthly rent amount to which the 80% standard is applied would be reduced by the amount contributed from the SSI/SSP recipient.

Example 1: Participant requests assistance with first months' rent of \$700 and security deposit of \$700. Paystubs are on file from participant's employment. She is paid semi-monthly. Paystub 1 gross is \$550; Paystub 2 gross is \$600 for a monthly total of \$1150. Additionally, client is eligible to \$200 CalWORKs.

- Her total monthly household income is $\$1150 + \$200 = \mathbf{\$1350}$.
- 80% of $\$1350 = \mathbf{\$1080}$

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CalWORKs Housing Support Allocation, Continued

80% Restriction (continued)

Since participant's new rental amount of **\$700** does not exceed 80% of her TMHI, this requirement is met. The CalWORKs Homeless Assistance payment will issue the deposit payment and the CalWORKs Housing Support Allocation will issue the first month's rent.

Example 2: Participant has exhausted all uses of the CalWORKs Homeless Assistance payments. She requests rent assistance for an apartment costing \$700 per month. She is unemployed and her grant amount is \$638. Her family includes herself, two children and her husband who receives \$650 SSI per month. Her husband contributes \$300 of the SSI towards the monthly rent amount.

- Her total monthly household income is **\$638**
- Her portion of the rent is **\$400**
- 80% of \$638 is **\$510.40**.

Since her rent of \$400 does not exceed \$510.40, this requirement is met.

Shared Housing Options:

Because of this restriction, some smaller families without additional sources of income may have difficulty locating traditional single family housing that meets this requirement. For these families, the most suitable permanent housing may be some type of shared housing (e.g. roommate, renting a room etc.)

CalWORKs Homeless Assistance (Including Utilities)

One of the requirements of the CalWORKs Housing Support Allocation is that the client has exhausted all possible uses of the **CalWORKs Homeless Assistance Payments** available to them (including exceptions to the once in a lifetime use).

CalWORKs Homeless Assistance Payments can include:

1. Temporary Shelter-
 - Up to 16 consecutive days of motel/hotel payment
2. Permanent Housing Assistance-
 - Security deposit,
 - Last month's rent (if required) or
 - Up to two months of past due rent to prevent an eviction.
 - Initial utility 'hook up' deposits for essential utilities such as gas, electric, water and sewer. Telephone and cable deposits are not allowed since these are not considered essential utilities. Also, CalWORKs Homeless Assistance Payments cannot pay for past due utility bills.

Note: The cost for the permanent monthly housing cannot exceed 80% of the AU's TMHI unless they can show how the amount exceeding 80% will be paid (i.e. a parent or roommate will pay the difference). Refer to the section above for additional details.

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CalWORKs Housing Support Allocation, Continued

CalWORKs Homeless Assistance (Including Utilities) (continued)

This program is limited to once in a lifetime use (Temporary and Permanent may both be used as part of the same instance), unless the client meets one of these exceptions:

- State or federally declared natural disaster caused the homelessness
- Domestic violence resulted in the homelessness
- Residence is uninhabitable due to condemnation, fire, flood etc.
- Physical or mental illness (excluding alcoholism, drug addiction or psychological stress)

Note: CalWORKs applicants may receive Temporary Shelter if they are determined to be apparently eligible. However, the case must be approved in order for them to be eligible to Permanent Housing Assistance.

Concurrent Use of CalWORKs Homeless Assistance Payments

Clients may utilize the CalWORKs Homeless Assistance payments concurrent with the CHSA as long as the CalWORKs Homeless Assistance payments are utilized to the fullest extent first and there is not duplication of services.

Example: Client is staying in a shelter and requests assistance in locating a permanent home. CWES ESS works with client to locate a permanent home with rent that does not exceed 80% of the client's total income.

- The **CalWORKs Homeless Assistance** payment can be used first to pay for the security deposit and last months' rent, if required. It can also pay for the utility set up costs. The CalWORKs Homeless Assistance payment cannot be used to pay for the monthly rent, the application/credit check fees or any ongoing utility assistance.
- The **CalWORKs Housing Support Allocation** can pay for up to six months of rent, application/credit check fees and up to six months of utility assistance, if needed.

Once the client has utilized all of the options available through the CalWORKs Homeless Assistance payment, the CalWORKs Housing Support Allocation may be used to pay for eligible remaining expenses if needed.

Intensive Case Management

All participants receiving the CalWORKs Housing Support Allocation will also receive intensive case management services. Eligible participants will be strongly encouraged to participate in Family Stabilization, but this is not required to receive the CalWORKs Housing Support Allocation.

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CalWORKs Housing Support Allocation, Continued

Intensive Case Management (continued)

Wrap around services to connect clients to various County and community programs include, but are not limited to:

- Family Stabilization
 - WTW Employment Services
 - Substance abuse treatment
 - Mental health treatment
 - Domestic abuse services
 - Parenting classes
 - Family counseling
 - Legal services
 - Credit counseling, budgeting or personal finance management workshops
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Referral Sources

Any CalWORKs family experiencing homelessness or housing instability may be referred to the CalWORKs Housing Support Allocation. Referrals may come from any of these sources:

- CalWORKs Employment Services (CWES) Employment Services Specialist (ESS),
 - Public Assistance Specialist (PAS),
 - Child Welfare Services (CWS) Social Worker (SW),
 - Community partner agencies or
 - Self-referral.
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Referral Method

Referrals to the CalWORKs Housing Support Allocation may be made by

- Email HousingSupport@yolocounty.org

The CWES ESS Program Manager and Program Supervisors (PS) assigned to the CHSA will have access to these and will be responsible to check them on a daily basis.

Referral Content

The phone or email message must contain the following information:

- First and Last Name
 - Date of Birth
 - Case Number, if applicable
 - Contact information (Phone, Message Phone Numbers and/or email address)
 - Family composition
 - Description of current housing situation
 - Current employment status (employer, hours, wages)
 - Any other information relevant to their housing need or housing barriers
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CalWORKs Housing Support Allocation, Continued

Referrals Tracking Log

The manager or program supervisor receiving the referral will record all referrals on the CalWORKs Housing Support Allocation Referrals Tracking Log, located on the L-Drive at: <L:\ETS Division\Employment Services\CalWORKs Housing Support Allocation\ Referrals Tracking Log>

Referral Follow Up

When the referral is received, the CalWORKs Housing Support CWES ESS PS will review it and assign it to a CWES ESS, even if the adult is not WTW eligible, for immediate follow up.

The assigned CWES ESS will meet or speak with the client to gather the complete information, using the YC 379 CHSA Housing Needs Assessment Questionnaire. This will include information about whether or not the family meets the definition of homelessness, whether or not they have exhausted all possible uses of the CalWORKs Homeless Assistance payments and why type of housing assistance is needed and why.

Review with Manager and Supervisor

As soon as the YC 379 has been completed, the CWES ESS PS will schedule a meeting to occur within 24 to 48 hours and to include the CWES ESS, the CWES ESS PS and the ESS Division Manager. At the meeting, the CWES ESS will present the information and the group will discuss the details of the assistance requested.

The purpose of the meeting is to confirm that:

- the family meets the eligibility criteria; and
- the request is within the scope of what can be provided by the CHSA.

This includes confirming that the family:

- meets the definition of homelessness;
- meets the criteria for an eligible AU; and
- has housing needs that are not met by other available housing programs, or
- has housing needs that are best served by the CHSA.

Note: The family is not required at this point to have located suitable permanent housing. This may require some additional time and may require the assistance of the CWES ESS.

The outcome of the meeting will be a decision to **approve or deny moving forward** in assisting the family using the CalWORKs Housing Support Allocation.

At the conclusion of the meeting, the CWES ESS PS will record the approval/denial decision on the <CalWORKs Housing Support Allocation Referrals Tracking Log>. If approved, the CWES ESS PS will also add the family to the <CalWORKs Housing Support Allocation Data Reporting Log>.

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CalWORKs Housing Support Allocation, Continued

Denial Process

If the request is denied, the CWES ESS will inform the client and will advise them of other resources to address continuing needs or concerns. CWES ESS will send the YC 381 CHSA Denial Notice to the client within 10 days of the denial decision.

Approval Process

If the request is approved, the CWES ESS will inform the client and will issue the YC 381 CHSA Approval Notice to the client within 10 days of the approval decision.

The CWES ESS will then meet with the client to develop the plan for long term housing stability (using the YC 380 CHSA Housing Stability Plan explained below).

Housing Stability Plan (HSP)

Content of the HSP:

The CWES ESS will develop a Housing Stability Plan, an ongoing plan to address housing stability, resolve housing barriers and ensure housing retention. The Housing Stability Plan will be based on the family's unique needs, preferences and financial resources. Services that address issues that may impede access to housing (such as locating affordable housing, contacting landlords, credit history, arrears, and legal issues etc.) may also be offered as part of the HSP. The savings plan, explained in the following section is also included in the HSP.

New HSP Form:

The YC 380 CHSA Housing Stability Plan has been developed to document all of the elements explained above.

Supervisor Approval Required:

The CWES ESS will review this plan with the CalWORKs Housing Support Allocation ESSPS for approval and signature prior to approving any payment.

Case Consultation:

At the next opportunity, the CWES ESS will also share the plan at the weekly CWES Case Consultation meeting but this is not required prior to receiving supervisory approval and approving assistance payments. No delay in payments will be caused by waiting for the next case consultation meeting.

Revising the HSP:

The Housing Stability Plan will be reviewed frequently (at least monthly) and revised as needed based on the ongoing needs and progress of the participant towards meeting the goals of the plan.

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CalWORKs Housing Support Allocation, Continued

Savings Plan

One of the elements of the HSP will ask that the family save 10 to 30% of their monthly income while receiving assistance from the CalWORKs Housing Support Allocation. This savings plan, coupled with budgeting and personal finance workshops, will establish a safety net for the future and support housing retention. The CWES ESS will work with the family to establish a savings account and assist the family in developing a budget that includes saving 10 to 30% each month. The CWES ESS will verify their progress towards reaching this goal by viewing monthly statements for the savings account. While this is an expectation of their participation, a family would not be discontinued from assistance for failing to successfully accomplish this goal.

Note: The CWES ESS will assist the family in checking with their CalWORKs PAS regarding asset limits to ensure that they will not exceed the allowable asset amounts for CalWORKs (currently \$2,000 unless the family includes a disabled AU member or an AU member over age 60 in which case it is \$3250). If the family's assets (savings plus other countable assets) reach within \$500 of this limit the CWES ESS will assist the family in inquiring about opening a restricted account to avoid exceeding their asset limit.

Noncompliance with the HSP or Landlord Agreement

If the participant does not comply with the requirements outlined in this plan, or with requirements of the landlord agreement, the CWES ESS will make every effort to resolve any difficulties the participant is experiencing in order to resolve the noncompliance. However, if these efforts are unsuccessful, assistance from the CalWORKs Housing Support Allocation will be discontinued. The CWES ESS must send the YC 382 CHSA Discontinuance Notice to the participant. Any future requests for assistance would first require that the participant is in compliance with the previously failed requirement and will only be considered on a case by case basis.

Housing Support Duration

The CWES ESS will assess the level of ongoing assistance that is needed. The intent of the CHSA is to provide 'just enough' assistance needed for the family to maintain permanent housing. It will not be assumed that the maximum amount of assistance is needed and assistance will only be issued in increments of one month at a time and according to the housing stability plan approved by the CalWORKs Housing Support Allocation ESS PS.

Additionally, the housing stability plan may call for a progressively decreased level of assistance each month, gradually transitioning from DESS paying the full rent amount to having the client pay the full rent amount by the end of the housing stability plan. It may also include several months of only non-cash support assistance to ensure that the family is able to retain housing on their own prior to discontinuing the CHSA.

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CalWORKs Housing Support Allocation, Continued

Housing Support Duration (continued)

Any requests to extend cash assistance beyond six months of permanent shelter assistance (or beyond 14 days of temporary shelter while locating suitable permanent shelter) will be considered on a case by case basis and must be approved by both the ESS PS and the Division Manager.

Subsequent Requests

After the family has been discontinued from the CalWORKs Housing Support Allocation, future requests will be considered if:

- All eligibility criteria have been met and verifications have been provided
- Family did not previously use all six months of assistance
- If previously non-compliant with requirements from landlord or the housing stability plan, family must be in compliance before the request would be approved.

If approved, the family will be eligible for up to six months of cash assistance, including all previous instances of assistance from the CalWORKs Housing Support Allocation. Any exception to this will be considered on a case by case basis and must be approved by both the ESS PS and the Division Manager.

Required Verifications

Prior to issuing any payments, the CWES ESS will do all of the following:

- ✓ Verify that the YC 379 CHSA Housing Needs Assessment Questionnaire has been completed;
 - ✓ Verify that the family is receiving CalWORKs;
 - ✓ Verify that client meets the required definition of homelessness. This may be accomplished by:
 - Contact with the shelter where client is staying documented with a case comment in CalWIN, or
 - A copy of eviction notice, or
 - A statement verifying that client may no longer stay where they have been temporarily living;
 - ✓ Verify that all possible uses of the CalWORKs Homeless Assistance payments have been or are concurrently being utilized;
 - ✓ Obtain verification of the amount and payee for each requested assistance payment and that 80% restriction has been met. This may be accomplished by:
 - A copy of the landlord agreement or lease,
 - A copy of the utility bill, or
 - Contact with the utility company or landlord documented with a case comment in CalWIN;
 - ✓ Verify that the residence is safe and inhabitable. This may be accomplished by:
 - Confirmation that the home is listed through a reputable property management company, or
 - Confirmation that the home is part of an established apartment complex, or
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CalWORKs Housing Support Allocation, Continued

Required Verifications (continued)

- Visual inspection by CWES ESS confirming that the home appears to have functioning electricity, plumbing and heat and is free of pests, visible mold or other safety hazards etc.
- ✓ Verify that all necessary releases of information have been signed and are on file.

The YC 377 CalWORKs Housing Support Checklist Tool has been developed assist the CWES ESS in ensuring that all verification requirements have been met. The CWES ESS and ESS PS will sign the YC 377 verifying that all the documentation has been reviewed and that all required verifications have been met or obtained.

Supervisory Approval Required

1. Each payment made using the CalWORKs Housing Support Allocation will require prior supervisory approval from one of the CalWORKs Housing Support ESS PS. The supervisor will ensure that all of the following are met:
 - Client meets the eligibility criteria for CalWORKs Housing Support;
 - CalWORKs Homeless Assistance payments have been fully utilized;
 - Housing needs and payment amounts have been verified; and
 - Documentation has been obtained and is on file in Compass.
 2. When these requirements have been met, the CWES ESS PS will update the [CalWORKs Housing Support Allocation Data Reporting Log](#).
 3. After supervisory approval has been received, the CWES ESS will approve the first increment of the necessary assistance payments, according to the Housing Stability Plan and using the CalWIN BENDS explained in a later section.
 4. Steps 1 through 3 will be repeated for each subsequent payment for families needing ongoing assistance.
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Family Stabilization and WTW Requirements/Provisions

The CalWORKs Housing Support Allocation is an additional resource that may be provided in conjunction with the client's participation in Family Stabilization or WTW, if applicable. While receiving assistance from the CalWORKs Housing Support Allocation, the client continues to be subject to normal participation requirements according to their Family Stabilization or WTW Plan. Normal Exemptions, Deferral/Good Cause and Noncompliance criteria apply as well.

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CalWORKs Housing Support Allocation, Continued

Avoiding Duplication of WTW Plan and Family Stabilization Plan

In order to avoid duplication of effort with use of the YC 380 CHSA Housing Stability Plan:

- If the participant already has a WTW Plan, then the only needs listed on the YC 380 CHSA Housing Stability Plan will be those housing needs that are being met with the CW Housing Support Allocation. The YC 380 HSP can be listed under the Additional Comments section on page 2 of the WTW 2.
 - If the participant already has a Family Stabilization Plan, then the only needs listed on the YC 380 CHSA Housing Stability Plan will be those housing needs that are being met with the CW Housing Support Allocation. The YC 380 HSP can be listed in the Basic Needs area of the YC 105 and on the YC 105B.
 - If the participant is ineligible to WTW or does not have a WTW plan yet, then the YC 380 CHSA Housing Stability Plan will be used to document all related services being received. In this case, only the YC 380 CHSA Housing Stability Plan will be used to document the housing stability plan and track progress.
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WTW and CW Sanctions and Penalties

In order to receive assistance from the CalWORKs Housing Support Allocation (CHSA), the participant must agree to cure any current WTW or CW sanctions or penalties. This will be included in their Housing Stability Plan and CHSA assistance will be discontinued if the participant does not comply. The assigned CWES ESS will work with the participant to provide any necessary assistance in resolving the sanction and/or penalty.

Discontinuance Process

CalWORKs Housing Support may be discontinued when any of the following occur:

- The AU is no longer receiving CalWORKs (refer to section below);
- The AU is no longer residing in Yolo County;
- The AU has failed to comply with the requirements outlined in their housing stability plan or with the requirements of their landlord's contract;
- The AU has exhausted the maximum duration of assistance available through the CalWORKs Housing Support Allocation;
- The AU has successfully completed the activities in their housing stability plan and no longer needs any assistance; or
- The AU has requested discontinuance from CalWORKs Housing Support.

The CWES ESS will discuss the case with the CWES ESS PS. If the decision is made to discontinue the assistance, the CWES ESS will send the YC 382 CHSA Discontinuance Notice to the participant within 10 days

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CalWORKs Housing Support Allocation, Continued

Discontinuance Process (continued) of the case discontinuance decision, noting the applicable discontinuance reason. The CWES ESS will advise the client of other resources to address continuing needs or concerns.

These cases will be discussed on a case by case basis and every effort will be made to assist the families in a successful transition.

CalWORKs Discontinuance If the family is receiving CHSA assistance at the time of CalWORKs discontinuance, the CWES ESS will discuss the case with the CWES ESS Program Supervisor and/or Program Manager to determine if additional assistance may be available through any of the following means:

- If the family contains an aided WTW eligible adult who meets Post Aid Services criteria, the CHSA assistance may continue until the original intended completion date of the YC 380 CHSA Housing Stability Plan.
- If Post Aid Services is not appropriate, additional assistance may be available through TANF or State Maintenance of Effort funds
- If neither of those are appropriate, one additional month of CHSA assistance can be pre-paid and issued in the final month of CalWORKs assistance in order to assist the family in transitioning off both CalWORKs and CHSA assistance.

CalWIN BENDS **Registration Status:**
If client is eligible to WTW, then no BENDS is needed. CWES ESS will ensure that the WTW status listed in CalWIN is correct based on their individual situation. If client is not eligible to WTW, then CWES ESS will manually add a status of Registered to CalWIN in facilitate the payment being issued through the Employment Services subsystem.

'Marker' Activity:
A new activity, **CalWORKs Housing Support**, has been added to CalWIN. This will be used to identify CalWORKs Housing Support clients for reporting purposes. This activity must be added for any client receiving assistance from the CalWORKs Housing Support Allocation.

- The activity must be referred and scheduled.
 - The end date will be left blank and the status may remain in satisfactory progress until the assistance from the CalWORKs Housing Support Allocation is discontinued.
 - Attendance hours are not expected.
 - At the time of discontinuance, the activity status will be updated to Completed or End Before Expected, depending on the situation, and the CWES ESS will ensure that the Actual End Date is populated.
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CalWORKs Housing Support Allocation, Continued

CalWIN BENDS
(continued)

Other Supportive Services:

All payments related to CalWORKs Housing Support will be made under the **CalWORKs Housing Support** activity, using 'Other' Supportive Services Type in CalWIN. On **Assign Other Supportive Services** window, when entering the 'Supportive Service Description', select from one of the following options that begin with 'CWHS':

- **CWHS-Rent Assistance**
- **CWHS-Utility Assistance**
- **CWHS-Move-In Costs** (Security Deposit or Application/Credit Check Fees)
- **CWHS-Legal Fines and Fees**

CWHS-Housing Barrier (Other than noted above)

The supportive service assignment will be entered with a frequency of '**One Time**' and a separate supportive service assignment will be approved for each payment.

Payment to Provider:

In most cases, the payments will be made directly to the housing or utility provider. If payment is being made directly to the landlord, utility provider, or other business, this provider must be added to CalWIN as a supportive service provider. When submitting the ticket request to DESS Systems Support, the CWES ESS will:

- request a '**CalWORKs Housing Support provider**'; and will provide:
- Provider Name
- Provider Address
- Provider taxpayer ID (business) or SSN (individual)
- Provider Phone Number
- Supportive Service Type ('Other')
- Supportive Service Description (one of the five new values above that start with 'CWHS')

Notes:

If payment is being made directly to the service provider, the CWES ESS will advise the financial management account clerk to search by provider in order to assist them in locating the pending authorization.

Making home habitable costs (basic furniture and appliances) are usually issued via credit card payment made in person by an ESS Division Manager who has approved the purchase.

Case Comments:

All CalWORKs Housing Support decisions must be documented in CalWIN Case Comments. A new case comment type of '**CalWORKs Housing Support**' has been added to CalWIN. The CWES ESS will use this case comment type for all CalWIN case comment entries related to the CalWORKs Housing Support Allocation.

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CalWORKs Housing Support Allocation, Continued

Rush Processing/ Same Day Check

When **next day** processing is needed for **office pick-up or mailing**, the CWES ESS must send a rush request to financial management via email. The email will contain a screen print of the approved supportive service window. It will be copied to the CWES ESS supervisor, but additional approval is not needed in order for financial management to process the payment.

When **same day** processing is needed for **office-pick up or mailing**, the CWES ESS must send a rush request to financial management via email. The email will contain a screen print of the approved supportive service window. It will be copied to the CWES ESS supervisor, but additional approval is not needed in order for financial management to process the payment. The YC 48 must also be completed by the CWES ESS and tasked to the warrant control desk. If the payee is a provider, CWES ESS will include the provider ID number on the YC 48.

The table below shows the timeframes to expect for same day check requests. If an exception is needed, please contact financial management to discuss.

Request received by Warrant Control from:	Check will be ready for pick up at:
8:00 AM to 10:45 AM	11:00 AM
10:46 AM to 12:45 PM	1:00 PM
12:46 PM to 3:30 PM	3:30 PM
3:31 PM or later	Call financial management to discuss

When **same day** processing is needed for **EBT card issuances** the CWES ESS must send a rush request to financial management via email. The email will contain a screen print of the approved supportive service window. It will be copied to the CWES ESS supervisor but additional approval is not needed in order for financial management to process the payment. The YC 171H must also be completed by the CWES ESS and tasked to the warrant control desk. The YC 171H must contain the EBT card number.

In **CalWIN** select an **Issuance Type** of:

- Check (if same day pick-up or mailing is needed)
- Warrant (for next day or later pick-up or mailing)
- EBT (only if payable to participant)

Reminders: When requesting rush processing from financial management, the CWES ESS will:

- Clearly indicate whether the issuance will be picked up the same day, picked up the following day or mailed to the recipient;
- For pick-up, indicate whether the pick-up location is the Woodland or West Sacramento office;
- Indicate that the payment is for "Housing Support" (to avoid confusion with CalWORKs Homeless payments); and
- For payments made to providers, the CWES ESS will include the provider ID number in their request.

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CalWORKs Housing Support Allocation, Continued

- Compass Pilot** All CalWORKs Housing Support required verifications and forms/NOAs must be imaged and filed in Compass Pilot. The following new items have been added to Compass:
- **Document Type:** Housing Support Allocation (CalWORKs)
 - **Document Type Group:** Supporting Documents for CalWORKs Housing Support Allocation
 - **Examples:** YC 377, YC 379, YC 380, YC 381, YC 382, shelter receipts, landlord agreements, eviction notices and any other supporting documentation related to the CalWORKs Housing Support Allocation.

The document imaging taxonomy guide has been updated to include these.

- Reporting Requirements** California Department of Social Services (CDSS) has provided the HSP 14 for the required reporting for CalWORKs Housing Support. Yolo has created an individual case version of the HSP 14 for the CHSA ESS PSs to complete monthly for each of their CHSA cases. It is located on the Green Tree \\ess-robo1\Intranet\dessintra\eycforms\HSP_14_Individual_Case_Copy_1_23_15.pdf
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- Monthly Data Reporting Log** Each case approved for CalWORKs Housing Support Allocation will be recorded on the CalWORKs Housing Support Monthly Data Reporting Log, located on the L-drive at [L:\ETS_Division\Employment_Services\CalWORKs Housing Support Allocation\Data Reporting Log](L:\ETS_Division\Employment_Services\CalWORKs_Housing_Support_Allocation\Data_Reporting_Log) The CHSA ESS PS will do this at the time the approval decision is made with the Division Manager.
- The CHSA ESS PSs will update this log at least monthly, recording approved payments and using data gathered from the CWES ESSs. This data will be used by data reporting staff to complete the report for CDSS.
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- CalWORKs and CalFresh Rules** The assistance provided by the CalWORKs Housing Support Allocation is designed to be temporary and fluctuating, and will be tailored to suit the individual needs and situation of each family. The amount or duration of assistance that will be provided is not determined in advance.
- After meeting with the family, the CWES ESS will work with the CalWORKs Housing Support ESS PS to determine the amount and type of the initial assistance needed and issue the payment. The CWES ESS will continue to work with the family to address their unique barriers and goals and any ongoing assistance will be determined on a month to month basis with the amount depending on the needs and resources of the family.
- The Financial Expense Plan section of the YC 380 Housing Stability plan will initially be completed only for the first approved payment. Each month thereafter, any additional assistance will be recorded at the time that it is approved. This will continue until the family is discontinued from the CHSA.
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CalWORKs Housing Support Allocation, Continued

CalWORKs and CalFresh Rules (continued) Because assistance amounts and duration are not reasonably certain and/or cannot be reasonably anticipated, it is expected that the assistance received through the CalWORKs Housing Allocation will not impact the family's CalWORKs or CalFresh benefit amounts.

Drought Relief Rental Assistance In addition to the CalWORKs Homeless Assistance program and the CalWORKs Housing Support Allocation, Yolo County received two other grants that may be available to provide housing or utility assistance to Yolo County residents whose income has been reduced due the California drought. These grants are administered by Yolo County Housing (YCH). DESS and YCH are working closely together to avoid duplication of services and provide referrals to each other when appropriate.

All referrals for YCH grant assistance may be directed to:

Elizabeth Montoya
Yolo County Housing
147 W. Main Street
Woodland, CA 95695
Phone (530) 669-2257
Fax (530) 669-2241
Email emontoya@ych.ca.gov
www.ych.ca.gov

Hierarchy of Housing Assistance Available In order to most efficiently use the funding available from various housing assistance programs, the CWES will consider the following hierarchy and direct the family to the first program for which they meet eligibility criteria:

1. CalWORKs Homeless Assistance
2. Drought Assistance from Yolo County Housing
3. CalWORKs Housing Support Allocation
4. Family Stabilization Housing Assistance

Diversion Another resource that may be an option for families not currently on CalWORKs is the CalWORKs Diversion program. CalWORKs Diversion may be able to pay for a one time, lump sum payment to meet a financial need that would prevent a family from needing to apply for CalWORKs. Examples of possible Diversion scenarios include a family with stable housing who is behind on their utility payments, moving costs if moving out of the county or other short term financial needs. Requests for CalWORKs Diversion are made during the CalWORKs application process.

References SB 855 (Chapter 29); ACWDL 7/18/2014; HUD Rapid Rehousing Document
