

**Senate Bill 1041 Implementation  
Field Monitoring  
Visit Summary**

**Kings County**

**Visit Date: August 27, 2014**

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES  
Welfare-to-Work Division  
Todd R. Bland, Deputy Director

**Kings County**  
Senate Bill (SB) 1041 Implementation  
Field Monitoring Visit Summary

---

**Executive Summary**

---

**Purpose of Field Monitoring Visit**

The purpose of the Senate Bill (SB) 1041 Implementation Field Monitoring Visit is to obtain information regarding the county's progress in implementing program changes enacted by SB 1041 (Chapter 47, Statutes of 2012).

**Scope of Field Monitoring Visit**

Specifically, the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) will review how each County Welfare Department (CWD) implemented SB 1041 program changes, including but not limited to:

- New Welfare-to-Work (WTW) participation requirements;
- WTW 24-Month Time Clock;
- Reengagement of the former short-term young child exempt population (Assembly Bill [AB] 4X 4 group);
- CWD staff knowledge of SB 1041 changes;
- Training provided to staff in order to implement these changes; and
- Any pertinent data related to these program changes that are available.

**Goals of Field Monitoring Visit**

The CDSS's goals are to ensure that SB 1041 is being implemented correctly by each CWD, to gather promising practices in regards to implementation, and to share these promising practices (when able) among all CWDs throughout the state. The CDSS is also determining whether systematic or program issues relating to the integration of SB 1041 changes into the existing California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids (CalWORKs) and WTW program exist throughout the state.

**County Visit General Information**

The one-day field visit was performed in Kings County on Monday, August 27, 2014 at the Kings County Human Services Agency in Hanford, California. The field visit team included one manager and two analysts from the CDSS, WTW Division, CalWORKs Employment Bureau. Kings County participants included the Deputy Director, an Employment and Training (ET) program manager, an ET program specialist, three ET supervisors, and two case managers. The field visit consisted of a kick-off meeting, staff interviews, case management observations, and a close-out meeting with county staff.

## **Implementation Strategies**

The ET supervisors and managers reviewed each of the All County Letters (ACLs), determined reengagement sequencing, and developed the training format and materials prior to training ET staff. Kings County held several all-staff trainings with lead workers participating as trainers for various SB 1041 topics. Each meeting lasted approximately three-and-a-half hours and covered a different topic of SB 1041. Among the training tools developed by management was a “newsletter” describing the SB 1041 changes for the CalWORKs program and “The Talk” script for comprehensive discussions. Case managers interviewed by the CDSS field monitoring visit team said that “The Talk” and the “newsletter” were great ways to share SB 1041 information, help them do their jobs, and communicate with customers consistently on SB 1041 requirements. Kings County distributed ACLs with SB 1041 guidance from the CDSS by email to ET staff. The ET staff then reviewed the ACLs in unit meetings with their managers.

## **Key Recommendations**

### **Successes:**

- Customers are taking opportunities to attend school under SB 1041 changes to CalWORKs.
- Unique training materials for SB 1041, including the “newsletter” and “The Talk.”
- Weekly all-staff meetings held on Fridays to discuss ET matters, including SB 1041.
- Budget has been approved to hire six additional case managers.
- Onsite Probation Officer assists customers with various legal questions and concerns.
- Gang affiliation training for ET staff helps avoid potential conflicts among rival customers.
- Over half the ET staff is Spanish-English bilingual.
- Two onsite domestic abuse counselors assist customers.
- Home visits are used regularly to enhance case management with customers.

### **Challenges:**

- Continuing to refine and improve guidance for customers on the WTW-24 Month Time Clock and WTW 2 form.
- Developing a long-term strategy for customers to obtain learning disabilities evaluations.
- Alternatives to public transportation for customers to get to services and activities.

## **Acknowledgments**

The CDSS thanks Kings County Human Services Agency for hosting the field monitoring visit. The CDSS appreciates the open collaboration with CWD staff to ensure the continued success of the CalWORKs program.

---

## **Field Monitoring Visit Summary**

---

### **Introduction**

---

#### **Purpose of Field Monitoring Visit**

The purpose of the Senate Bill (SB) 1041 Implementation Field Monitoring Visit is to obtain information regarding the county's progress in implementing program changes enacted by SB 1041 (Chapter 47, Statutes of 2012).

#### **Scope of Field Monitoring Visit**

Specifically, the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) will review how each County Welfare Department (CWD) implemented SB 1041 program changes, including but not limited to:

- New Welfare-to-Work (WTW) participation requirements;
- WTW 24-Month Time Clock;
- Reengagement of the former short-term young child exempt population (Assembly Bill [AB] 4X 4 group);
- CWD staff knowledge of SB 1041 changes;
- Training provided to staff in order to implement these changes; and
- Any pertinent data related to these program changes that are available.

#### **Goals of Field Monitoring Visit**

The CDSS's goals are to ensure that SB 1041 is being implemented correctly by each CWD, to gather promising practices in regards to implementation, and to share these promising practices (when able) among all CWDs throughout the state. The CDSS is also determining whether systematic or program issues relating to the integration of SB 1041 changes into the existing California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids (CalWORKs) and WTW program exist throughout the state.

#### **County Visit General Information**

The one-day field visit was performed in Kings County on Monday, August 27, 2014 at the Kings County Human Services Agency in Hanford, California. The field visit team included one manager and two analysts from the CDSS, WTW Division, CalWORKs Employment Bureau. Kings County participants included the Deputy Director, an Employment and Training (ET) program manager, an ET program specialist, three ET supervisors, and two case managers. The field visit consisted of a kick-off meeting, staff interviews, case management observations, and a close-out meeting with county staff.

#### ***General Comments***

*Kings County Human Services Agency calls clients "customers" and caseworkers "case managers."*

---

## Background and Data

---

### Kings County at-a-glance:

Total Caseload.....	<b>2,929</b>
(Source: CalWORKs Cash Grant Caseload Movement Report CA 237 CW Line Item 8a-June 2014)	
WTW Enrollees.....	<b>1,191</b>
(Source: CalWORKs Welfare-to-Work Monthly Activity Report WTW 25/25A Line Item 1-June 2014)	
Mandatory Participants (enrollees + sanctioned + non-compliance).....	<b>1,631</b>
(Source: CalWORKs Welfare-to-Work Monthly Activity Report WTW 25/25A Line Items 1, 3A, and 31-June 2014)	
Reengagement Plan Received.....	Yes
Beginning Date of Reengagement .....	February 28, 2013
Consortium System.....	C-IV

Other data: Kings County had 40 case managers as of August 27, 2014.

### Data/Statistics:

- Customers who had more than 24 months left on their CalWORKs 48-month time limit as of January 1, 2013, that have had their comprehensive discussion: **All**.
- Customers who had less than or equal to 24 months left on their CalWORKs 48-month time limit as of January 1, 2013, that have had their comprehensive discussion: **All**.
- Sanctions that were cured as a result of SB 1041: **None**.
- Former short-term young child exempt customers (Assembly Bill [AB] X4 4) that have been reengaged: **All**.
- WTW plans that have changed as a result of SB 1041 implementation: **Five**.
- Customers that have used the new once-in-a-lifetime young child exemption: **205**.

### Summary of Documents provided by Kings County:

- "Newsletter" describing SB 1041 changes for staff.
- "The Talk": Comprehensive Discussion talking points for case managers.
- Updated WTW Handbook, including SB 1041 changes.
- Outline of Reengagement process including potential scenarios.
- CalWORKs 2205 and 2206 with Kings County information.
- PowerPoint training for the WTW 24-Month Time Clock.
- Handouts for Pathways (life skills) workshop.
- Instructor's Guides for "Overcoming Barriers to Employment Success" and "Motivation" workshops.
- Employment and Training Self-Appraisal form (for developing WTW Employability Plan).
- WTW Employability Plan form (used in addition to and in conjunction with the WTW 2 form).
- Community Service/Skills Enhancement Activity (SEA) summary and SEA Referral Form.
- Worksite Weekly Schedule table (template).
- Flier for Nineteenth Annual Kings County Job Fair (September 11, 2014).
- Kings County Human Services Agency organization chart

---

## **County Administrator and Caseworker Interviews**

---

The CDSS Field Monitoring Team used the county caseworker and administrator interview tools released in All County Information Notice (ACIN) I-42-13 to interview two case managers, the Deputy Director, an ET program manager, an ET program specialist, and three ET supervisors regarding SB 1041 implementation. The tool was provided to the supervisors and case managers in advance of the visit.

### **Summary of Observations**

#### **WTW 24-Month Time Clock Implementation and New WTW Participation Requirements**

##### **For clients with less than 24 months left on their CalWORKs 48-month time limit**

Kings County sent out the CW 2205 form in early November 2012. Kings County began comprehensive discussions on March 1, 2013 with customers who had less than or equal to 24 months left on their CalWORKs 48-month time limit. All comprehensive discussions were completed as of December 31, 2013. The county sent appointment letters to customers to contact them about the SB 1041 changes to the CalWORKs WTW program. If customers did not respond to the letter, the county made phone calls and home visits for customers to receive the comprehensive discussion.

Some customers chose to make use of the SB 1041 WTW 24-Month Time Clock options by starting to attend school or furthering their education activities. Case managers stated that many customers expressed a strong understanding of the new WTW program rules, while some customers find the information about core and non-core activities for CalWORKs Federal requirements and two different time clocks challenging. Case managers and customers worked together to set realistic goals and develop “maps” to achieve goals in the time remaining on their clocks.

##### **For clients with more than 24 months left on their CalWORKs 48-month time limit**

Kings County also sent out the CW 2205 form in early November 2012 and began comprehensive discussions on March 1, 2013 with customers who had more than 24 months left on their CalWORKs 48-month time limit. All comprehensive discussions were completed as of December 31, 2013. The county sent appointment letters to customers to contact them about the SB 1041 changes to the CalWORKs WTW program. To complete all of their comprehensive discussions, Kings County made phone calls and home visits, as needed, if customers did not respond to the letter.

As with customers who had less than or equal to 24 months left on their 48-month clocks, the case managers used “The Talk,” a talking points outline designed for case managers to make sure they covered all elements of the comprehensive discussion consistently and thoroughly. “The Talk” included information about exemption options, conditions that stop the WTW 24-Month Time Clock, and opportunities for customers to change their activities and hours.

Case managers spoke highly of the efficacy of this tool and how it helped customers understand how different choices and activities would impact their WTW 24-Month Time and 48-month clocks. Case managers stated that many customers understand the new WTW program rules, while others continue to find the information about core and non-core activities for CalWORKs Federal requirements and two different time clocks challenging.

### **Customers who failed to attend SB 1041 appointments**

When customers were unresponsive to multiple attempts by case managers to contact them by phone or through home visits about the comprehensive discussion, case managers initiated the non-compliance process.

#### ***General Comments***

*Case managers noted that sanctions encouraged customers to participate in their comprehensive discussions, although it took months for some customers to participate. As a result, some sanctions were cured, while some sanctioned customers who had comprehensive discussions did not participate after that and consequently did not remain out of sanction.*

### **New Young Child Exemption**

Most of Kings County CalWORKs customers who are eligible for the one-time, new young child exemption are opting to use it. Case managers make great efforts to clearly communicate the one-time limitation. Approximately 200 cases on average are receiving this exemption on a monthly basis.

#### ***General Comments***

*Case managers proudly shared that they have had a lot of success with getting customers who are taking the Young Child exemption to participate in WTW activities voluntarily. Most of these volunteer participants are taking advantage of this time while their clocks are not ticking to participate in education activities. Kings County encourages exempt clients to participate voluntarily.*

### **Clients with Good Cause for Lack of Supportive Services**

Kings County has never had customers in good cause due to lack of supportive services. Thus, the county did not need to notify any customers that their 48-month time limits were starting again effective January 1, 2013, or to reengage any customers in this population.

### **The new WTW Activity Plan/Form WTW 2**

Kings County started using the new WTW 2 form in January 2013. Until the form was automated through the C-IV consortium in March 2013, the county used the WTW 2 form available on the CDSS website.

### **General Comments**

*Administrators, case managers, and customers in Kings County find the WTW 2 form has a busy appearance, is unnecessarily confusing, and is difficult to use and understand. Kings County strongly encourages the CDSS to consider simplifying the format of the WTW 2.*

*Kings County uses its own “Welfare-to-Work Employability Plan” and “Employment and Training Self-Appraisal” forms when developing WTW plans. The case managers use the information from these forms to help complete the WTW 2 with customers.*

*By attending County Advisory Team (CAT) and CalWORKs Policy Committee (CPC) meetings with the CDSS in early 2013, Kings County was able to obtain insights about SB 1041 requirements (including the new WTW 2 form) and effective implementation strategies. Kings County administrators commend the information and support available from counties at CAT and CPC meetings.*

### **Reengagement Process**

On January 17, 2013, Kings County started sending out the Young Child Exemption Ends December 31, 2012, New Rules for CalWORKs Welfare-to-Work Activities form (CW 2206) notifying all AB X4 4 exempt customers of changes to the CalWORKs program implemented by SB 1041. The county began reengagement on February 28, 2013 with AB X4 4 exempt customers who were voluntarily participating. On March 20, 2013, Kings County began reengaging customers with children ages zero to 23 months. On April 20, 2013, Kings County began reengaging customers with children ages two- to six-years-old and with three children or fewer. On June 1, 2013, Kings County began reengaging customers with children aged two- to six-years-old and with more than three children. Kings County completed reengaging customers by December 31, 2013.

The reengagement process for Kings County included the following:

- All case managers handled their own caseloads for reengagement.
- Each case manager reviewed their reengagement cases and categorized them into groups.
- The CW 2206 notices were sent starting January 17, 2013.
- Appointment letters were sent 30 days prior to reengagement appointments and included the following:
  - Copies of the CW 2206;
  - CW 2186A: CalWORKs Exemption Request Form;
  - A statement that the individual may volunteer if exempt under a different (non-AB X4 4) exemption; and
  - A reminder of the policies regarding non-compliance for not participating in the appointment.



- Case managers contacted customers prior to their appointments to make sure the customers were able to attend.
- Appointments were handled as home visits when needed.
- Case managers noted details of the reengagement appointments in the C-IV consortium system.

During the reengagement appointment, customers received their comprehensive discussions. All reengagement customers were provided with a general description of supportive services available, program requirements, and flexibility under the WTW 24-Month Time Clock. Workers determined customers' needs and if another WTW exemption applied. Customers were also informed of the number of months remaining in their CalWORKs 48-month time-limit and assigned appropriate WTW activity(ies) that included addressing barriers as needed.

#### **General Comments**

*Some Kings County AB X4 4 exempt customers requested to reengage early after they received the CW 2206. Case managers scheduled appointments, provided comprehensive discussions, and completed all of the reengagement steps. Supportive services were provided and customers signed the WTW 2 to complete reengagement. Kings County has a longstanding policy of encouraging exempt customers to voluntarily participate in WTW and to contact their case managers when they want to volunteer. This policy may have helped to encourage some clients to request to reengage early.*

#### **Implementation Strategies**

The ET supervisors and managers reviewed ACLs, determined reengagement sequencing, and developed the training format and materials prior to training case managers. Kings County held several all-staff trainings, and lead case managers participated as trainers for various SB 1041 topics. Each meeting lasted three-and-a-half hours and covered a different topic of SB 1041.

One of the training tools developed by management was a "newsletter" describing the SB 1041 changes for the CalWORKs program. Case managers interviewed by the CDSS field monitoring visit team said that the newsletter provided a fun format to clearly share SB 1041 information. Another unique tool developed for SB 1041 trainings and implementation was the "The Talk," a talking points outline that guided case managers through the comprehensive discussions. Additionally, Kings County distributed ACLs with SB 1041 guidance from the CDSS by email to case managers. Case managers then reviewed the ACLs in unit meetings with their managers. The units would review the ACLs in one meeting then, in their next meeting, discuss issues that had come up in relation to the guidance in the ACLs.

Since the initial trainings, Kings County has provided an additional, refresher training for the WTW 24-Month Time Clock because of the complexity of this process. Participation in CAT and CPC meetings with the CDSS was helpful for Kings County regarding challenges with their SB 1041 processes because other counties provided clarification and insights.

The greatest challenges that Kings County has dealt with in implementing the SB 1041 changes are the same as challenges faced by other counties: the complexity of the WTW 24-Month Time Clock process and difficulty for customers understanding the new WTW 2 form.

In addition to the SB 1041 “newsletter,” and “The Talk,” Kings County provided ET staff with the following materials for SB 1041:

- List of ACLs, ACINs, and other documents related to SB 1041 changes (updated regularly).
- Reengagement summary for case managers including noticing and potential case scenarios.
- WTW 24-Month Time Clock summary with examples.
- PowerPoint presentation.

---

## **Case Reviews**

---

The CDSS Field Monitoring Team reviewed five cases selected by Kings County in advance of the visit. The purpose of this component of the visit is to review how SB 1041 program changes are being integrated into case management, understand how SB 1041 policies are being operationalized by the case managers, and better comprehend case management within the county.

There were five specific case types requested:

- Case One: Sanctioned;
- Case Two: New customer (beginning date of aid after January 1, 2013);
- Case Three: Less than 24 months left on the CalWORKs 48-month time limit as of January 1, 2013;
- Case Four: More than 24 months on the CalWORKs 48-month time limit as of January 1, 2013; and
- Case Five: Former short-term young child exemption (AB X4 4); reengaged.

Cases One, Two, and Five were single-parent cases; Cases Three and Four were two-parent cases.

### **General Comments**

*Kings County uses the C-IV consortium case management data system. An ET program manager reviewed the cases with the CDSS staff. The reviews were completed very efficiently, with the manager able to easily navigate the C-IV system and answer all questions related to the cases. The cases had all received the appropriate notices, applicable benefits, supportive services, and screens (or waivers) for learning disabilities. Appropriate notices included the issuance of the CW 2205, CW 2206, appointment letter, and CW 2208. Kings County began using the new WTW 2 form in January 2013 with supplemental, county-specific forms to obtain additional customer information that assist with barrier removal and goals development.*

*The case manager completed the comprehensive discussion with the sanction case that was reviewed during the visit, but the customer has not complied with WTW requirements since that time. Case managers make multiple phone calls and also attempt home visits when customers enter non-compliance and sanction. Also, supervisors review the sanction caseload periodically to check for customers who might have become employed or may be eligible for an exemption. The supervisors then attempt to contact the customers and discuss options for curing sanctions.*

*Case managers had approximately 50 actively participating cases as well as 50 sanction, exempt, and other types of cases in August 2014. Kings County was in the process of hiring six additional case managers at the time of the visit.*

*Kings County is also expecting about 150 new cases as fleeing and drug felons become eligible for CalWORKs starting in the spring of 2015.*

*New Young Child Exemption: Two of the reviewed cases were eligible for and receiving the exemption.*

---

## **Conclusion**

---

### **Successes:**

- Kings County's participation at the CPC and CAT meetings contributed to the county's understanding of the SB 1041 changes SB 1041 implementation.
- Some customers have been able to attend school and further their education due to the SB 1041 rules and the flexibility of the WTW 24-Month Time Clock.
- Kings County management implemented creative approaches to training, including the "The Talk" script for comprehensive discussions and a "newsletter" for SB 1041 changes.
- Weekly all-staff meetings are held on Fridays to cover various ET matters, including ongoing SB 1041-related concerns.
- Case managers are committed to using home visits to work with customers; UC Davis provided trainings for the ET staff on performing successful home visits.
- Kings County has budgetary approval to hire six additional case managers, which will lead to lower caseloads and improve case managers' ability to assist their customers.
- Over half the ET staff is Spanish-English bilingual, which is very beneficial to the large Spanish-speaking CalWORKs population in Kings County.
- An onsite probation officer assists customers with various legal questions and concerns to help eliminate barriers and increase customers' likelihood of success in CalWORKs.
- The ET staff has had gang affiliation training so case managers can recognize and effectively assist customers who are from rival gangs.
- Two onsite domestic abuse counselor assist customers as needed.

**Challenges:**

Kings County found that one of their challenges was the limited time frame allowed for SB 1041 implementation, including the June 30, 2013, deadline to complete outreach to all transitioning WTW clients. However, the county made very good progress in implementing SB 1041 with the resources available. The WTW-24 Month Time Clock is a complicated process for case managers and customers. Some customers struggle to understand the differences between “core” vs. “non-core” activities and the 48-month time clock versus the WTW 24-Month Time Clock. In addition, some clients are confused by the complexity and length of the new WTW 2 form. Furthermore, the delay in the issuance of SB 1041 instruction by the CDSS was a hardship for Kings County, as it was for other counties. However, Kings County staff informed the field monitoring visit team that the continued issuance of SB 1041 question and answer ACLs by the CDSS to clarify policy has been beneficial.

Kings County has also had challenges with scheduling learning disabilities evaluations due to scarce resources, but ET management is addressing this challenge by working on a variety of potential strategies. Lastly, Kings County has limited public transportation options, which can hinder customers’ access to services and activities.

**Key Recommendations:**

- Continue trainings, consult other counties (including at CAT and CPC meetings), and contact the CDSS Employment Bureau as needed to improve case managers’ skills and confidence with the WTW 24-Month Time Clock and WTW 2.
- Develop a long-term strategy for Kings County to be able to routinely refer customers for learning disabilities evaluations.
- Consider employing a transportation aide or other strategies to deal with limited public transportation to help customers—especially those who are remotely located—reach services and activities.

---

**Contact**

---

David Van Gee, Analyst  
CalWORKs Employment and Eligibility Branch, Welfare-to-Work Division  
California Department of Social Services  
744 P Street, M.S. 8-8-33  
Sacramento CA 95814  
Phone: (916) 651-2049  
Email: [david.vangee@dss.ca.gov](mailto:david.vangee@dss.ca.gov)