

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

Marin County

Visit Date: November 4, 2014

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

Marin 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 short-term young child exempt population (Assembly Bill [AB] X4 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' goals are to ensure that SB 1041 is being implemented correctly by each CWD, to gather promising practices in regards to implementation, to share these promising practices (when able) amongst all CWDs throughout the state, and to determine 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. If such issues exist, they will be addressed by the SB 1041 Oversight Workgroup.

County Visit General Information

This one-day field monitoring visit was performed in Marin County on Tuesday, November 4, 2014, at the Marin County CalWORKs Employment Services Program office in San Rafael, CA. The field monitoring visit team included three staff from the CDSS, WTW Division, CalWORKs Employment and Eligibility Branch along with Marin County's Program Supervisor, one Program Manager and one Program Planner/Evaluator. The field monitoring visit consisted of a kick-off meeting, close-out meeting, staff and administrator interviews and case management observations with CWD staff.

Implementation Strategies

Marin County implementation strategy consisted of informing staff of SB 1041 related program changes by providing updated training materials covering SB 1041 requirements, the CWD also updated WTW orientation materials and WTW handouts with the SB 1041 related requirements information.

Marin County developed their own training materials dedicated to providing guidance to staff on new SB 1041 rules. The training materials included a 15 page guide for staff conducting comprehensive discussions with clients, a copy of which was given to the clients at the discussion. The CWD provided the materials to staff as a resource and reference.

Marin County started training in December 2012 and provided detailed instructions to staff monthly as additional direction was provided by the CDSS. The CWD utilized various training materials and methods that included, but was not limited to, visual aids, flow charts, Power Point presentations, desk references, interactive group exercises and ongoing email communications in order to keep county staff informed of new SB 1041 requirements. The CWD also held information sharing meetings, question & answer (Q & A) and staff unit meetings with CalWORKs agendas specific to SB 1041 requirements.

The CWD strategies also included, but were not limited to, an ongoing evaluation of policies, procedures and resources that were centered on determining further staffing needs and organizational changes.

Successes

Marin County's approach to SB 1041 implementation was well organized and executed. The county developed informative materials and offered staff a variety of training opportunities ranging from class room style training to informal staff meetings where implementation strategies questions could be discussed openly. This county has also continued to offer ongoing training to staff as further policy decisions are issued by the CDSS.

Marin County has also been a key contributor and collaborator on the various workgroups related to SB 1041 program changes and actively participates on the County Advisory Team (CAT). The CAT meetings are held monthly and provide an opportunity for counties throughout the state to share their promising practices and discuss procedural and process issues and challenges. Marin County's participation in these groups has kept the county informed on all forthcoming policy changes. The participation is believed to have contributed to Marin County's ability to adapt quickly to the program and policy changes related to SB 1041 implementation.

Marin County was able to meet with many clients in a short amount of time. They received compliments from the community college about clients that had been seen for their in-depth discussion and they seemed to have a clear understanding about the 24-Month Time Clock. The county utilizes the WTW plan and their interaction with clients to develop an overall plan for success, both short term and long term. The WTW plan is also used to outline goals and steps to

self-sufficiency. Staff look at education goals, health/wellness goals, along with barriers, if any, and take a holistic approach to evaluating and assisting the whole client and their well-being.

Key Recommendations

As Marin County continues its implementation strategy, the CWD should continue developing and implementing policies and procedures along with formal staff SB 1041 training that will ensure compliance with SB 1041 requirements. The CWD should also continue participating in key workgroups and committees in the future.

Automation issues should be communicated with C-IV to ensure all notices are available and that the ability to document client information is up to date. The county should also collaborate with C-IV to ensure that the automation to track the Welfare-to-Work 24-Month Time Clock is accurately and efficiently updated within the consortium.

The CWD should also continue to expand additional programs in their WTW program including Family Stabilization and expanded subsidized employment, focusing on providing opportunities for expanded subsidized employment positions and completing implementation of the counties Family Stabilization program.

The CDSS also recommends that Marin County review and verify the data which is submitted through their C-IV system to the CDSS for the monthly CalWORKs Cash Grant Caseload Movement Reports (CA 237 CW), and CalWORKs WTW Monthly Activity Reports for All (Other) Families and Two Parent Families (WTW 25/25A). These sources are relied upon heavily by the CDSS to track and measure program progress.

Acknowledgments

The CDSS thanks the Marin County CalWORKs Employment Services Program for hosting this field monitoring visit. The CDSS appreciates the open collaboration with CWD the county staff to ensure the continued success of the CalWORKs program.

Field Monitoring Visit Summary

Introduction

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Marin County CalWORKs Employment Services has one main office that is located in San Rafael, CA with two additional out stationed offices to serve local clients throughout Marin County. The

Marin County main San Rafael, CA office is composed of several health and human services divisions.

Marin County’s population consists of approximately 250,000 residents and has a workforce of 150,000. The county of Marin has the fifth highest income per capita in the state of California. The top employment sectors include health/medical, professional/business, retail and hospitality and local government/education.

Background and Data

Marin at-a-glance

Total Caseload	981
(Source: CalWORKs Cash Grant Caseload Movement Report [CA 237 CW] Line Item 8a-October 2014)	
WTW Enrollees	319
(Source: CalWORKs WTW Monthly Activity Report [WTW 25/25A] Line Item 1-October 2014)	
Mandatory Participants (enrollees + sanctioned + non-compliance).....	394
(Source: CalWORKs WTW Monthly Activity Report [WTW 25/25A] Line Item 1, 3A, and 31-October 2014)	
Reengagement Plan Received	Yes
Beginning Date of Reengagement.....	July, 2013
Consortium System	C-IV

Data/Statistics Available at Time of Field Monitoring Visit:

- Outreached to all sanctioned clients, however no clients cured their sanction as a result of SB 1041.
- Former short-term young child exempt clients (Assembly Bill [AB] X4 4) that have been reengaged: **69**.
- Clients that have used the new once in a lifetime young child exemption: **5**.

Summary of Documents provided by Marin County during visit:

- WTW SB 1041 Updated Training Materials.
- WTW SB 1041 Training Outline and Dates.
- Marin County’s Reengagement Sequencing Plan.
- Marin County’s Response to the SB 1041 Implementation Survey.

County Administrator and Caseworker Interviews

The CDSS field monitoring team used the county administrator and caseworker interview tools released in All County Information Notice I-42-13 to interview the Marin County staff regarding SB 1041 implementation performed within the CWD. The tools were provided to Marin County both in advance and on the day of the visit. The interview panel consisted of three CDSS staff and two Marin County staff. The interviews were conducted by one team of two CDSS staff members interviewing one Marin County worker, and one single CDSS staff member interviewing one Marin County worker.

Summary of Observations

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

Transitioning Clients

[Less than and more than 24 months left on their CalWORKs 48-month time limit as of January 1, 2013]

Marin County issued the WTW 24-Month Time Clock General Informing Notice (CW 2205) through the C-IV system. The CW 2205 was first distributed to clients November 2012. Marin County completed their comprehensive discussions by March 1, 2013 on all active cases for clients who had less than or equal to 24 months left on their CalWORKs 48 month time limit as of January 1, 2013. The CWD made contact with clients beyond the CW 2205 by telephoning clients and in person interviews.

For clients who had more than 24 months left on their CalWORKs 48 month time limit as of January 1, 2013, the CWD completed comprehensive discussions in March 2013. Clients visited the CWD office and met with county staff and proceeded to sign the new WTW 2 plan.

Clients who failed to attend SB 1041 appointments

Marin County's actions towards clients who were unresponsive varied depending on the client specific case situation. For unresponsive clients, Marin County scheduled a formal appointment with the client. Clients who did not attend the first scheduled appointment had their absence noted in the C-IV journal and an attempt to re-schedule the appointment was made via letter 10 days after the original appointment. If the client was not able to attend the second scheduled appointment, and was not also fully participating in a signed WTW plan, clients became sanctioned for continued non-responsiveness. If the client had a WTW plan that met hourly requirements and were participating as required, the county prepared a new WTW plan and mailed the plan along with a form letter to the client and asked them to sign and return the contract. If the plan was not returned or the client did not scheduled to change the plan within 30 days of the date of the letter, the new "sign date" entered into C-IV was 30 days from the date of the letter.

General Comments

Marin County's strategy for completing necessary comprehensive discussions with clients was performed via scheduled monthly meetings. Marin County met with all clients, either in person or by phone. All comprehensive discussions were completed during these regularly scheduled meetings. When necessary, caseworkers met clients outside of the building at a location that was convenient for the client to complete the comprehensive discussions.

New Young Child Exemption

Marin County had five of the clients who were part of the reengagement population opt for the new young child exemption. Most of the eligible clients in the county are opting to take the new young child exemption.

Clients with Good Cause for Lack of Supportive Services

Marin County did not use the lack of funding for supportive services with a CalWORKs 48-month time limit exemption.

The New WTW Activity Assignment Plan (WTW 2) Form

The new WTW Plan Activity Assignment (WTW 2) Form was made available by the CWD via uploading the new WTW 2 into the internal document locator system which staff used until the C-IV system was updated. The CWD staff was instructed to utilize the new WTW 2 for all WTW plans completed after January 1, 2013.

General Comments

Some caseworkers noted that the new version of the WTW 2 language and overall length was viewed by many clients as being overwhelming. A few clients also reacted with a common dislike for what they felt was an overly complex WTW 2 document. Caseworkers felt that during interactions with clients with lower educational levels, the lack of understanding of the new WTW 2 increased. They also felt as though the form was difficult for two-parent households. However, the supportive services section is helpful when walking through the plan with clients.

Reengagement Process

Marin County's reengagement efforts began in January 2013. The required first notification was sent via mass mailing utilizing C-IV. In anticipation of the reengagement process, caseloads were reviewed for families who were previously exempt.

Marin County's Reengagement Sequencing Plan is as follows:

- **July, 2013 -** First engaged group – clients who have expired exemptions in Jan-June 2013.
- **December, 2013 -** Second group – clients who have expired exemptions in July-December 2013.
- **June, 2014 -** Third group – clients who have expired exemptions in Jan- June 2014.
- **December, 2014 -** Fourth group – clients who have expired exemptions in July-December 2014.

Implementation Strategies

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Marin County developed their own training materials dedicated to providing guidance to staff on new SB 1041 rules. The training materials included a 15 page guide for staff conducting comprehensive discussions with clients, a copy of which was given to the clients at the discussion. The CWD provided the materials to staff as a resource and reference.

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Case Reviews

The CDSS field monitoring team reviewed five cases selected by Marin County in advance of the visit. The purpose of this component of the visit was to review how SB 1041 program changes were being integrated into case management, to understand how SB 1041 policies were being operationalized by CWD staff, and better comprehend case management within Marin County.

There were five specific case types requested:

- Case One - A client with ***less than or equal to*** 24-months left on the CalWORKs 48-month time limit as of January 1, 2013;
- Case Two - A client with ***more than*** 24-months on the CalWORKs 48-month time limit as of January 1, 2013;
- Case Three - A new client (beginning date of aid January 1, 2013, or later);
- Case Four - A client who was sanctioned, had reported earnings and whose case was curable based on the new participation requirements (preferably a case actually cured since January 1, 2013, based on new participation requirements); and
- Case Five - A client that was part of the short term young child exemption (AB X4 4) population, and was in the process of or has been reengaged (if applicable).

General Comments

Marin County uses the C-IV case management system. The following is a summary of the case findings:

- Noticing Requirements
All noticing requirements for the New Rules for CalWORKs WTW Activities Informing Notice (CW 2205) and Your WTW 24-Month Time Clock Notice (CW 2208) were met for all cases reviewed.
- Comprehensive Discussions and Additional Outreach
All cases reviewed had received a comprehensive discussion during an in person appointment with their caseworker at the CWD. Journal entry notations were completed in all case files.
- Welfare-to-Work Plan Activity Assignment (WTW 2) Form
All five case files reviewed used the new WTW 2.
- Sanction Case
The sanction case reviewed was for one-parent household. The WTW plan did not change. The strategy for engaging the client during the sanction process was primarily by appointment, phone calls and letters. The Learning Disabilities Screening tool was completed and waived.
- Reengagement Case
The reengagement case reviewed met all reengagement noticing requirements, including the “Young Child Exemption Ends December 31, 2012 - New Rules for CalWORKs WTW Activities” (CW 2205) was provided on November 9, 2012 to the client. The timelines for the secondary contact/appointment, third contact reminder, etc. met the requirements. The Learning Disabilities Screening tool was completed October 19, 2013.
- New Young Child Exemption
The client received the comprehensive discussion by appointment and telephone conversation. The case reviewed was eligible and the client chose to use the New Young Child Exemption. The new WTW 2 was used.

Conclusion

Successes

Marin County’s approach to SB 1041 implementation was well organized and executed. The county developed informative materials and offered staff a variety of training opportunities ranging from class room style training to informal staff meetings where implementation strategies questions could be discussed openly. This county has also continued to offer ongoing training to staff as further policy decisions are issued by the CDSS.

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Challenges

Marin County found it was difficult to implement the new program changes within the given timeframe. Guidance released from the CDSS was distributed in a short time frame which limited time available to adequately train staff. The information given at the SB 1041 oversight workgroups was continuously changing which made it difficult to implement the changes quickly. In addition, the county noted that clients struggle with understanding such a significant amount of changes in a short time.

There were also delays with automation which led to a manual tracking process. The inability to accurately track client participation hours in C-IV led to a need for manual calculation of client hours throughout the month to ensure they are meeting their minimum weekly participation requirement.

Additionally, caseworkers acknowledged that at times was difficult explaining SB 1041 related changes to clients, especially the 24-month time clock and how that differs with the 48-month TANF clock.

Key Recommendations

As Marin County continues its implementation strategy, the CWD should continue developing and implementing policies and procedures along with formal training that will ensure compliance with SB 1041 requirements. The CWD should also continue participating in key workgroups and committees in the future.

Automation issues should be communicated with C-IV to ensure all notices are available and that the ability to document client information is up to date. The county should also collaborate with

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Contact

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