

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

**Yuba County**

**Visit Date: March 25, 2014**

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

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

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**Executive Summary**

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**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) amongst 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 Yuba County on Tuesday, March 25, 2014 at the Yuba County Health and Human Services Department and the Yuba County Center for Business and Workforce Development (aka "One Stop") in Marysville, California. The field visit team included two managers and two analysts from the CDSS, WTW Division, CalWORKs Employment Bureau. Yuba County participants included the interim Employment Services program manager, an Employment Services program specialist, a social worker supervisor, and two social workers. The field visit consisted of a kick-off meeting, case management observations, staff interviews, and a close-out meeting with county staff.

## **Implementation Strategies**

Yuba County began SB 1041 trainings in January 2013 and held additional trainings throughout the year with all members of their Employment Services Division. The initial training included background information on the SB 1041 changes, new procedural requirements, an overview of the new and revised forms to be used, and an implementation schedule. Additional trainings were conducted at unit and divisions meetings, including two WTW 24-Month Time Clock trainings. Tools at these trainings included PowerPoint presentations, case work scenarios, outlines, and flowcharts. Yuba County also held a series of trainings on the comprehensive discussion and completing a thorough WTW plan. Trainers also used the CDSS training aid from All County Information Notice I-08-13.

## **Successes**

- Multiple, thorough trainings for successful SB 1041 implementation, including the comprehensive discussion, reengagement, and WTW activity plans.
- Social work supervisors review new WTW 2 plans for completeness and accuracy, as well as the achievability of goals, before WTW 2 plans form are signed.
- Social workers have been completing most clients' SB 1041 reengagement appointments at redetermination.
- A thorough and personalized approach allows clients to understand how the SB 1041 changes impact them, and clients get all of their questions answered.
- Social workers enjoy making home visits, including for the comprehensive discussion and reengagement.
  - Home visits help social workers to get to know their clients better.
  - Clients are often more comfortable and, as a result, cooperative at home.
- Consistent offers of learning disabilities screenings for all participants and conscientious documentation of the offer, the results, and/or the waiver for each screening.
- The CalWORKs program and the Yuba County Center for Business and Workforce Development (aka One-Stop) work as a team.

## **Key Recommendations**

- Yuba County needs to continue to ensure that clients are provided with timely notices for reengagement activities.
- Yuba County is encouraged to continue developing its relationship with Yuba College to expand and improve CalWORKs services through the college.
- Yuba County may need to perform outreach to WTW clients that want to save their WTW 24-Month Time Clocks, but who are not meeting CalWORKs Federal Standards.
- Yuba County is additionally recommended to explore distance learning and transportation alternatives for clients in remote areas of the county where access to services is limited.

## **Acknowledgments**

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

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## **Field Monitoring Visit Summary**

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### **Introduction**

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

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- 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) amongst 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**

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## General Comments

*“Social Worker” is the title for Yuba County’s Employment Services case workers, who handle both ongoing eligibility (CalWORKs, CalFresh, and cash-linked Medi-Cal) and Welfare-to-Work services for their cases. Intake Social Workers handle applications, provide the initial eligibility determinations, and take care of the initial WTW appraisal and assessment.*

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## Background and Data

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### Yuba at-a-glance:

Total Caseload.....	<b>1739</b>
<small>(Source: CalWORKs Cash Grant Caseload Movement Report CA 237 CW Line Item 8a-February 2014)</small>	
WTW Enrollees.....	<b>578</b>
<small>(Source: CalWORKs Welfare-to-Work Monthly Activity Report WTW 25/25A Line Item 1-February 2014)</small>	
Mandatory Participants (enrollees + sanctioned + non-compliance).....	<b>866</b>
<small>(Source: CalWORKs Welfare-to-Work Monthly Activity Report WTW 25/25A Line Items 1, 3A, and 31-February 2014)</small>	
Reengagement Plan Received.....	Yes
Beginning Date of Reengagement .....	April 1, 2013
Consortium System.....	C-IV

Other data:

- Yuba County receives an average of 200 welfare-to-work-related calls each day.
- Yuba County had a total of 48 social work staff as of March 25, 2014:
  - 20 social workers;
  - Eight intake social workers;
  - Six employment and training specialists;
  - Four supervisors;
  - Six clerical support; and
  - One program specialist.

### Data/Statistics:

- Clients 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 (not including some reengagement clients)**
- Clients 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 (not including some reengagement clients)**
- Sanctions that were cured as a result of SB 1041: **Two**
- Former short-term young child exempt clients (Assembly Bill [AB] X4 4) that have been reengaged: **225**
- WTW plans that have changed as a result of SB 1041 implementation: **None**
- Clients that have used the new once-in-a-lifetime young child exemption: **146**

### **Summary of Documents provided by Yuba County:**

- SB 1041 PowerPoint training, including implementation schedule.
- PowerPoint on developing an excellent WTW plan, including a handout example.
- Sample WTW appointment notification letters (form WTW 9), customized for Yuba County reengagement clients.
- WTW 24-Month Time Clock quick reference guide.
- Various training materials, including:
  - WTW 24-Month Time Clock question and answer reference.
  - Examples of personal life skills to be aware of (strengths and issues).
  - Examples of barriers ranging from transportation to poor attitude.
  - Various sample client scenarios to develop sample WTW plans.
- Yuba County Health and Human Services Department (YCHHSD) 309 form used for assessment before completing the WTW plan.
- YCHHSD 461 form for a comprehensive WTW plan; used with the CDSS WTW 2 form.
- Tools for working with different personality types and developing career goals.

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### **County Administrator and Caseworker Interviews**

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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 social workers and a social worker supervisor (administrator) regarding SB 1041 implementation. The tool was provided to the supervisor and social workers in advance of the visit. The supervisor interview panel consisted of four staff from the CDSS with one county administrator. The caseworker interviews were conducted by two staff from the CDSS with one county caseworker each.

### **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:**

Yuba County sent out the CW 2205 form through the C-IV consortium to all CalWORKs clients in early November 2012. Yuba County began comprehensive discussions January 10, 2013 with clients who had less than or equal to 24 months left on their CalWORKs 48-month time limit. These comprehensive discussions were completed as of March 31, 2013 (not including clients in the reengagement population). The county sent appointment letters (WTW 9s) to clients to contact them about the SB 1041 changes to the CalWORKs WTW program. If clients did not respond to the letter, the county made phone calls and home visits as needed to ensure that clients received the comprehensive discussion.

Some clients who became eligible for CalWORKs cash assistance after January 1, 2013 (i.e., clients developing their first WTW plans) chose to make use of the SB 1041 24-Month Time Clock options, including educational opportunities such as enrolling in General Education Development (GED) classes or continuing vocational education past the 12-month federal time limit. However, most clients are opting to try to save their WTW 24-Month Time Clocks by

participating in enough hours of activities that meet CalWORKs Federal Standards so their WTW 24-Month Time Clocks will not run. Single parents are benefitting from the new hourly requirements to decrease their WTW participation from 32 hours to 30 or 20 weekly hours in order to better manage their households while continuing to meet participation requirements.

### ***General Comments***

*Although many clients want to save their WTW 24-Month Time Clocks, most are not successful in meeting CalWORKs Federal Standards. As a result, many of these clients must utilize their WTW 24-Month Time Clocks.*

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

Yuba County also started and completed comprehensive discussions for clients with more than 24 months left on their 48-month time limit in May 2013 (not including some clients in the reengagement population). As with the clients with less than 24 months left on their 48-month time limit, the county sent letters, made phone calls, and made home visits as needed to ensure all clients received their comprehensive discussions.

Both populations received the same thorough and personalized approach to ensure that all clients understood the SB 1041 changes, how the changes would impact them, and that all of the clients' questions were answered. Social workers track comprehensive discussions with journal entries for each case using county-established formatting and information. After entering the comprehensive discussion information into the case, each case is flagged as having had its comprehensive discussion. The Yuba County social workers and supervisors that the CDSS spoke with emphasized their commitment to flexibility in activities for clients in the WTW 24-Month Time Clock.

### **Clients who failed to attend SB 1041 appointments:**

When clients were unresponsive to multiple attempts by the social workers to contact them about an appointment for the comprehensive discussion, social workers sent out Notice of Action 840 forms to reflect non-compliance for failure to sign a WTW 2 plan. Comprehensive discussions were then held during the good cause and compliance meeting, which was sometimes completed as a home visit. Sanctioned clients also went through the comprehensive discussion process, and two sanctions were cured as a result of SB 1041 changes. All comprehensive discussions—excluding some reengagement clients—in Yuba County were completed by December 31, 2013.

### ***General Comments***

*At the same time Yuba County started comprehensive discussions with clients with less than 24 months left on their CalWORKs 48-month time limit, the county also targeted single parents who were in sanction, had earnings, and could cure their sanctions because they were participating in enough hours to meet the new, reduced hourly requirements.*

*Yuba County is completing comprehensive discussions with reengagement clients, as they are reengaged at redetermination. This is discussed in more detail in the "Reengagement Process" section, which begins on page 8.*

**New Young Child Exemption:**

The majority of Yuba County CalWORKs clients who are eligible for the one-time, new young child exemption are opting to use it. As of February 2014, 146 ongoing and new clients were using this exemption.

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

Yuba County did not have any clients in good cause due to lack of supportive services as of January 1, 2013. Thus, the county did not need to notify any clients that their 48-month time limits were starting again effective January 1, 2013, or to reengage any clients in this population.

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

Yuba 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**

*Social workers who were interviewed agreed that while the new WTW 2 is a good tool overall, they have had some technical issues related to dating the form. The initialing and dating by the client does not often work because there is not enough space, and the date usually gets left off. Also, C-IV prefills the date on page four, so the requirement to initial and date seems redundant. The element of the new WTW 2 that the social workers described as being most effective is the way it clearly shows and reinforces the hourly requirements for the CalWORKs WTW 24-Month Time Clock and CalWORKs Federal Standards.*

*Yuba County also has two supplementary forms when completing the WTW 2: they are the YCHHSD 309 (Assessment), which is used to gather initial information on an individual's challenges as well as strengths, and the YCHHSD 461 (Comprehensive Plan/Agreement), which expands and compiles the information gathered and outlines a step-by-step plan on how the County will work with an individual to achieve their goal.*

*Yuba County has a close working relationship with the Yuba County Center for Business and Workforce Development (aka One-Stop). All of Yuba County's classroom activities and instruction are completed there, including the newly formed "Subsidized Employment Academy" (employability skills) classes. Furthermore, Yuba County has nine staff located at the One Stop location. Yuba County also partners with the Sutter County One-Stop which is open more hours for GED and other classes. There is a CalWORKs Counselor stationed at the county's one community college, Yuba College, who helps*

*CalWORKs clients attending school with education plans, work study, and more. Yuba College also performs learning disability evaluations for CalWORKs clients. Yuba County is continuing to build its coordination of CalWORKs services with Yuba College, which has satellite campuses in Butte, Colusa, Yolo, and Lake Counties, and also at Beale Air Force Base.*

### **Reengagement Process**

Yuba County sent 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 clients of changes to the CalWORKs program implemented by SB 1041 in January 2013. The county began reengaging clients on April 1, 2013, so CW 2206s were sent out more than 60 days before the WTW 9s appointment notifications were sent. All WTW 9s were sent at least 30 days before the date of the appointment. Yuba County has several versions of the WTW 9 that it uses based on the client's current status and requirements for reengagement. For example, a WTW 9 sent to a volunteer participant who is meeting participation requirements is not the same as the WTW 9 for a client who needs to be engaged in WTW activities for the first time. All versions of the WTW 9 contain the CDSS-required contents, as well as the customized text. Yuba County includes a copy of the CW 2206 reengagement notice and the CalWORKs Exemption Request form (CW 2186A) with each WTW 9.

Yuba County began reengaging clients based on which came first: the date the client's child would exceed the age for the AB X4 4 young child exemption or the case's redetermination date—the date annually when a client's case is verified as still being eligible for CalWORKs cash assistance. Clients whose children would not exceed the age for the expired AB X4 4 exemption by the reengagement deadline of December 31, 2014 have been and continue to be reengaged on their redetermination date. Yuba County started with a reengagement population of 299 clients on April 1, 2013, and, as of the SB 1041 Field Monitoring Visit on March 25<sup>th</sup>, 2014, had 74 clients left to reengage.

The reengagement process for Yuba County includes the following:

- Send a CW 2206 at least 60 days prior to sending the WTW 9 to notify the client of the reengagement evaluation appointment;
- Case file review;
- Send a WTW 9 including a CW 2186A and copy of the CW 2206 at least 30 days before the reengagement evaluation appointment;
- Contact the client(s) a third time to ensure they are able to attend the appointment; and
- If clients are unresponsive after multiple follow-up attempts, the social workers send out an NA 840 to set a good cause and compliance appointment that can also be used as the reengagement appointment. Social workers also make home visits as needed to complete the reengagement appointment and comprehensive discussion requirements.

During the reengagement appointment, clients receive their comprehensive discussions. Regardless of the steps the social worker and client may need to complete for reengagement, all clients are seen in-person in the Yuba County office or at a home visit.

All reengagement clients are provided with a general description of supportive services available, program requirements, and flexibility under the WTW 24-Month Time Clock. Workers determine clients' status and needs and if another WTW exemption applies. Additionally, clients are informed of the number of months remaining in their CalWORKs 48 month time-limit and assigned appropriate WTW activity(ies) that include addressing barriers as needed.

### **General Comments**

*Yuba County AB X4 4 exempt volunteers are able to continue participating in WTW activities until they are reengaged according to the schedule discussed in this "Reengagement Process" section. If volunteer participants want to change their activities while still in volunteer status, the social worker reviews the change with the volunteer and proceeds with updating the plan. No volunteer participants or other clients in the reengagement population have requested to reengage early in Yuba County.*

### **Implementation Strategies**

On January 10, 2013, Yuba County began the first of their SB 1041 trainings with all members of their Employment Services Division. The initial training included background information on the SB 1041 changes, new procedural requirements, an overview of the new and revised forms to be used, and an implementation schedule. Additional trainings were conducted at unit and divisions meetings, including two WTW 24-Month Time Clock trainings. Tools at these trainings included PowerPoint presentations, case work scenarios, outlines, and flowcharts. Yuba County also had a series of trainings on the comprehensive discussion and completing a thorough WTW plan. These trainings included case work scenarios, group work, and PowerPoint presentations. Trainers also used the CDSS Training Aid from ACIN I-08-13.

In addition to trainings, Yuba County provided staff with reference documents:

- WTW Activity flowcharts;
- WTW 24-Month Time Clock quick-reference guide;
- SB 1041/WTW 24-Month Time Clock Questions and Answers; and
- Meeting notes.

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### **Case Reviews**

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The CDSS Field Monitoring Team reviewed five cases selected by Yuba 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 caseworker, and better comprehend case management within the county.

There were five specific case types requested:

- Case One: Sanctioned;
- Case Two: New client (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, and Cases Three and Four were two-parent cases.

### **General Comments**

*Yuba County uses the C-IV consortium case management data system. The cases shared at this visit had all received the appropriate notices and applicable benefits and supportive services. This included the issuance of the CW 2205, CW 2206, WTW 9, and CW 2208. Yuba County began using the new WTW 2 form in January 2013 with supplemental, county-only forms to obtain additional client information that assist with barrier removal and goals development. The social worker has had phone and home visit contact with the sanctioned case. That case was not coming into compliance as of March 25, 2014.*

*One of the standout elements of each case was that the social worker had offered a learning disabilities screening. Two clients waived the screening; all others accepted and completed the screening. None of the clients scored high enough to warrant the need for additional evaluations.*

*WTW social workers in Yuba County generally had approximately 60 or more cases at the time of the CDSS's visit due to staff shortages. Yuba County was in the process of hiring two new social workers which was expected to bring the average caseload back to a more typical 50 to 55 cases. Social workers with Cal-Learn cases have smaller caseloads in order to be able to provide the more in-depth case management services required for Cal-Learn clients. Yuba County has specialized social workers for exempt and sanction cases. Social workers are expected to perform five home visits each month; interviewed social workers said that they enjoy home visits and that home visits are successful.*

*New Young Child Exemption: None of the cases reviewed were eligible for the new young child exemption as the children in each case were older than two-years.*

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## Conclusion

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### Successes

- Multiple, thorough trainings for successful SB 1041 implementation, including the comprehensive discussion, reengagement, and WTW activity plans.
- Social work supervisors review new WTW 2 plans for completeness and accuracy, as well as the achievability of goals, before WTW 2 plans form are signed.
- Social workers have been completing most clients' SB 1041 reengagement appointments at redetermination.
- A thorough and personalized approach allows clients to understand how the SB 1041 changes impact them, and clients get all of their questions answered.
- Social workers enjoy making home visits, including for the comprehensive discussion and reengagement.
  - Home visits help social workers to get to know their clients better.
  - Clients are often more comfortable and, as a result, cooperative at home.
- Consistent offers of learning disabilities screenings for all participants and conscientious documentation of the offer, the results, and/or the waiver for each screening.
- The CalWORKs program and the Yuba County Center for Business and Workforce Development (also referred as One-Stop) work as a team.

### Challenges

At the time of the visit, Yuba County was experiencing some workload challenges due to staff shortages, but the county was also engaged in efforts to fill vacancies. Although Yuba County's case files are thorough and up-to-date, some information—such as client noticing—could be more clearly noted. Yuba County staff that participated in the visit stated that many clients are opting to save their WTW 24-Month Time Clocks; however, these clients may not be meeting the CalWORKs Federal Standards, thus they are utilizing their WTW 24-Month Time Clocks without taking advantage of the opportunities afforded by this more flexible period of participation. Another ongoing challenge is transportation and access to services for clients located in the remote, foothill areas of eastern Yuba County.

### Key Recommendations

- Yuba County needs to continue to ensure that clients are provided with timely notices for reengagement activities.
- Yuba County is encouraged to continue developing its relationship with Yuba College to expand and improve CalWORKs services through the college.
- Yuba County may need to perform outreach to WTW clients that want to save their WTW 24-Month Time Clocks, but who are not meeting CalWORKs Federal Standards.
- Yuba County is additionally recommended to explore distance learning and transportation alternatives for clients in remote areas of the county where access to services is limited.

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**Contact**

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