

COUNTY NAME: SANTA BARBARA

CalWORKs County Plan Addendum


Date Submitted to California Department of Social Services: January 4, 2007

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I hereby certify that County Board of Supervisors was briefed regarding the contents of this Plan addendum prior to submittal.


County Welfare Director's
Signature

Kathy Gallagher
Printed Name

December 5, 2006
Briefing Date

This plan addendum is submitted pursuant to Welfare and Institutions Code Section 10534.

1) County Goals

After reviewing the existing CalWORKs County Plan, please provide a general description of how the county will meet the goals defined in Welfare and Institutions (W&I) Code Section 10540, while taking into consideration the work participation requirements of the federal Deficit Reduction Act of 2005.

The goals of W&I Code Section 10540 are the following:

- 1) Reduce child poverty in the State;
- 2) Reduce dependence of needy parents on government benefits by promoting job preparation, work, and marriage; reduce out-of-wedlock births; and encourage the formation and maintenance of two-parent families;
- 3) Meet the requirements of federal law while avoiding unanticipated outcomes that negatively affect child well-being, the demand for county general assistance, or the number of families affected by domestic violence.

A. General description of how the county will meet the goals of W&I Code 10540

While Santa Barbara County's program meets both State and Federal mandates, we are committed to our local communities to improve the lives of those we serve. Through ongoing collaborative efforts, the Department has formed a strong link with the private employer community. The Department will continue to focus on strengthening and expanding these partnerships to ensure the richness of its CalWORKs program. We will utilize both short term and long term approaches in implementing TANF Reauthorization. Immediate steps we can take include a comprehensive review of our CalWORKs plan, assessing our strengths, acknowledging our opportunities for improvement, and partnering with community stakeholders to achieve better results, thereby improving our work participation rates. As Santa Barbara County has a long standing philosophy of work first, we realize much higher work participation rates than many other California counties. As such, the distance we need to travel to achieve the federal work participation rates is shorter, but it will be a monumental undertaking. We have only the hardest to serve to mobilize and that will be a difficult endeavor. These long term measures will include addressing our sanctioned population as well as a renewed focus on job retention. We will meet the requirements of the federal law while avoiding unanticipated outcomes that negatively affect child well-being, the demand for county general assistance, or the number of families affected by domestic violence.

Santa Barbara County formed the TANF Reauthorization Workgroup, consisting of key DSS staff and partner agencies, to conduct a comprehensive analysis of the opportunities for improvement and best practices to build upon. A key component of our initial analysis included administration of the State Self Diagnostic Tool to identify opportunities for improvement in our current business practices.

Subsequently, the TANF Reauthorization Workgroup identified four strategic areas and created sub-workgroups to address them. They are:

- *Countywide WPR & Job Placement Awareness Campaign (educating staff, clients, and partner agencies about TANF Reauthorization Changes)
- *WPR Improvement & Pay 4 Performance Workgroup (focus on engagement and participation data)
- *WTW Re-Engagement Program (re-engaging non-compliant and sanctioned individuals)
- *WTW Did You Know Workgroup (reminding and training staff about various programmatic elements)

Additionally, to leverage existing partnerships and resources, we have collaborated with our local colleges and the Workforce Investment Act program. Additionally, we have reached out to the community via meetings with our local colleges and presentations to the Workforce Investment Board and the Board of Supervisors. We anticipate ongoing analysis and process improvement throughout this year to achieve the necessary realignment of our activities to meet the federal WPR and maintain the integrity of our CalWORKs program.

2) Participation Improvement

Please describe what immediate and long-range actions the county will take to improve the federal work participation rate (WPR) among CalWORKs applicants and recipients. At a minimum, describe how the county will address increased participation in the areas listed below. When responding, provide a detailed description of the policy or strategy in each program area, the anticipated outcome that will result in program improvements, the number of families affected, and how success will be determined. Please note that if a county is already using a particular strategy that is successful, a description of that strategy is sufficient.

B. Providing up-front engagement activities

Description of policy(ies) or strategy(ies) that will result in program improvement (identify whether this is a new policy/strategy, a current policy/strategy that will continue to be promoted, or an expansion of, or revision to, current policy/strategy).

Santa Barbara County has a long history (dating back to the former GAIN program days) of successfully providing voluntary WTW services up-front to applicants of CalWORKs assistance. Our highly successful service model incorporates the WTW orientation with the Applicant Rights and Responsibilities presentation. The presentation is dynamic, interactive and meant not only to fulfill program and regulatory requirements, but also to motivate applicants, share the work first philosophy and to inform the client of the array of available services to support the family on their journey to self-sufficiency. This orientation is designed to facilitate and encourage quick engagement while the application for aid is pending. The process, including a voluntary Appraisal, is conducted within a week of application for cash aid. We plan to strengthen this program component by further emphasizing the importance of WTW participants meeting the minimum work participation rates.

The Self Diagnostic Tool analysis revealed opportunities for improvement in explaining the importance of work and participation to clients and county staff. Additionally, we identified a need for ongoing training about the local labor market. We have revitalized our partnership with the Workforce Investment Act program and plan to conduct joint meetings to re-orient each other on program changes and ways to leverage the programs' resources to aid our clients in achieving self-sufficiency. Our workgroups have just commenced, therefore, each of these areas will be thoroughly reviewed and solutions will be incorporated throughout the calendar year of 2007.

What are the anticipated effects and percentage of families affected monthly?

Santa Barbara county enjoys an almost 100% of applicant volunteers participating in our up-front applicant WTW program. Engaging our applicants prior to their approval for cash aid allows the WTW case worker additional time to meet the state requirements under SB1104 of having a WTW plan signed within 90 days of the granting notice of action. The additional time often times allows the case worker to assist in finding solutions to barriers that keep the client from immediate participation into WTW activities.

We anticipate that the effects will primarily be a more knowledgeable staff. 100% of the families receiving CalWORKs services will be affected by a more thoroughly trained staff.

How will success be determined (quantitative and qualitative assessment of effects)?

Santa Barbara County operates under a closely monitored program performance measurement system. Performance measures are developed with improved customer focus, efficiency and accountability as our goals. We utilize them to help our organization further strengthen our service delivery and measure our outcomes. We are currently piloting a new WTW program structure in our largest CalWORKs/WTW program office whereby we assign a career employment specialist to every WTW applicant, who then case manages the client through the signing of the WTW plan. Under this model, we have been able to create performance expectations of our workers to create WTW plans that meet the minimum work

participation hours required under CalWORKs, while adhering to the requirements of SB1104 of having WTW plans signed within 90 days of the granting notice of action. This model has improved our success with up-front engagement by ensuring every client has a quality and reasonable plan that will assist the individual and family to achieve self-sufficiency. We plan on rolling out a similar plan for our remaining offices.

C. Achieving full engagement by individuals who are required to participate, and who are partially participating, not participating, or are between activities

Description of policy(ies) or strategy(ies) that will result in program improvement (identify whether this is a new policy/strategy, a current policy/strategy that will continue to be promoted, or an expansion of, or revision to, current policy/strategy).

The Department has mobilized its contract provider, Arbor Education & Training, to spearhead the effort to emphasize proactive bridging activities planning and implementation of the "Bridges Program." The contractor understands the challenging demand of federal participation hours and has designed a program to be individually tailored to "bridge" Welfare-to-Work activities. The objective of the Bridges Program is to provide a short term, intensive participation activity for clients who are in preparation for transitioning between approved Welfare-to-Work activities. Arbor Education & Training offers specific products to fill this specific need and support TANF requirements to keep clients engaged and participating in Welfare-to-Work. For example, as a student completes one semester and cannot immediately begin the next term, because it is not yet in session, the student may participate in the Employability Skills Training and Implementation Program, a self-paced computerized program that focuses on employment skills.

What are the anticipated effects and percentage of families affected monthly?

We anticipate a more proactive approach to bridging activities by building this into the case plans. We have approximately 10% of our families involved in educational activities, so we expect to have the greatest impact on this population. We will also be reviewing 100 percent of our plans for opportunities to assist our participants to fully engage in WTW activities.

How will success be determined (quantitative or qualitative assessment of effects)?

Success will primarily be qualitative in nature. For example, the Bridges Program enriches our Welfare-to-Work service delivery by providing a continuum of services. Our WTW case managers will have options they didn't have before. We do expect to see a positive effect with our participation rates as a result of the Bridges Program.

D. Providing activities to encourage participation and to prevent families from going into sanction status

Description of policy(ies) or strategy(ies) that will result in program improvement (identify whether this is a new policy/strategy, a current policy/strategy that will continue to be promoted, or an expansion of, or revision to, current policy/strategy).

As a result of our participation in several forums to address being successful with TANF Reauthorization - most recently, the CWDA Annual Conference and the CalWORKs Partnerships Summit - Santa Barbara County has gathered best practices information from several counties utilizing home visit strategies. We have formed a WTW Re-Engagement Program Workgroup to review materials from Los Angeles County, Orange County, San Bernardino County, as well as a pilot project performed in Santa Barbara County several years ago.

The Department will work in partnership with our contracted Alcohol, Drug, and Mental Health provider team to perform home visit outreach to prevent sanctions. Home visits will be attempted for those participants who enter a noncompliance status and are a no show/no call for the determination appointment.

The WTW Re-Engagement Program Workgroup will be responsible for creating the program policies and directives.

What are the anticipated effects and percentage of families affected monthly?

We have approximately 7 percent of our caseload in non-compliance status. We anticipate a substantial decrease in instances of sanction.

How will success be determined (quantitative or qualitative assessment of effects)?

The WTW Re-Engagement Program Workgroup will determine a monthly report format to ensure we have sufficient information to ascertain the effectiveness of the home visit/outreach program. We do expect to see a positive effect with our participation rates as a result of the WTW Re-Engagement Program.

E. Reengaging noncompliant or sanctioned individuals

Description of policy(ies) or strategy(ies) that will result in program improvement (identify whether this is a new policy/strategy, a current policy/strategy that will continue to be promoted, or an expansion of, or revision to, current policy/strategy).

As a result of our participation in several forums to address being successful with TANF Reauthorization - most recently, the CWDA Annual Conference and the CalWORKs Partnerships Summit - Santa Barbara County has gathered best practices information from several counties utilizing home visit strategies. We have formed a Home Visit Workgroup to review materials from Los Angeles County, Orange County, San Bernardino County, as well as a pilot project performed in Santa Barbara County several years ago.

The Department will work in partnership with our contracted Alcohol, Drug, and Mental Health provider team to perform home visit outreach to reengage sanctioned or noncompliant individuals.

The WTW Re-Engagement Program Workgroup will be responsible for creating the program policies and directives.

The Self Diagnostic Tool analysis revealed opportunities for improvement by partnering with local agencies, such as mental health, across all regions of our county. Additionally, we can pursue another opportunity for us to acquire program input by asking sanctioned individuals why they choose to stay in sanction status. We have not yet done so.

What are the anticipated effects and percentage of families affected monthly?

Approximately 12% of our caseload is currently in non-compliance or sanction status. We anticipate a substantial decrease in instances of non-compliance and sanction.

How will success be determined (quantitative or qualitative assessment of effects)?

The WTW Re-Engagement Program Workgroup will determine a monthly report format to ensure we have sufficient information to ascertain the effectiveness of the home visit/outreach program. We do expect to see a positive effect with our participation rates as a result of the WTW Re-Engagement Program.

F. Other activities designed to increase the county's federal work participation rate

Description of policy(ies) or strategy(ies) that will result in program improvement (identify whether this is a new policy/strategy, a current policy/strategy that will continue to be promoted, or an expansion of, or revision to, current policy/strategy):

Santa Barbara County has been operating a very successful WTW program for many years. We plan on building on the solid foundation we have by instituting and/or strengthening new or existing strategies. These strategies include:

Continue to strengthen our successful CWS/CalWORKs Linkages program by conducting refresher training to both CWS and CalWORKs & WTW staff on the goals of our programs; including the new TANF WPR requirements and the new Pay for Performance Program to determine new opportunities we can successfully collaborate to assist our clients.

Expand and strengthen our existing SSI Advocacy Program and collaboration with the Department of Rehabilitation to assist clients with disabilities and provide outreach to the "medically exempt" population in an effort to seek rehabilitative services that would assist the individual and family to move towards self-sufficiency.

Develop a technological solution to capture individual caseload and regional office WPR for both TANF and CalWORKs. This data can assist us in identifying individual worker training (or performance management) needs as well as regional community program needs that can assist Santa Barbara County with achieving a higher WPR.

Currently, we are in the process of embarking on a WPR and Job Placement Awareness Campaign at each of our regional offices. The goals of the campaign are to educate partners, clients, and staff of the new WPR requirements and to re-energize our WTW program by celebrating job placements and WPR. Each region will have a workgroup formed to focus on this project and expand the goals to include such things as making our offices look more like employment centers to formalizing regularly scheduled multi-disciplinary team meetings to strategize options on how to achieve success with our hardest to serve clients.

Continue to meet regularly with our partner and contracted agencies to strengthen our collaborative efforts in identifying services that meet the needs of each of our communities and supports the new TANF WPR requirements. Part of this process will include revisiting the scope of work and goals we have established via MOU's and inter-agency agreements (contracts) to ensure they support and emphasize the goals and objectives of this Plan addendum.

Santa Barbara County DSS also administers the WIA program. We will be working with the WIA division to strategize and seek to strengthen our collaborative efforts in serving our mutual clients. We are working closely with the local WIB to ensure they are aware of the new TANF WPR to seek out their support in assisting us with meeting our stated goals.

Santa Barbara County will invest in our staff by offering training opportunities to instill the principles of both our CalWORKs and TANF rules. We will work collaboratively with our Staff Development Division to create a new curriculum that will blend the case management and new program requirements into one dynamic training plan that will reinvigorate our program staff to further assist us in meeting our new challenges.

We are exploring ideas we gathered from the Self Diagnostic Tool including adding a dedicated job developer staff, and keeping staff abreast of changes in the local labor market. We already pilot innovative service delivery models before expanding to other areas, and we do celebrate and recognize our recipients, staff, and partners for their accomplishments

What are the anticipated effects and percentage of families affected monthly?

These strategies will create a renewed awareness of Santa Barbara County's WTW program and how important a role each collaborative partner agency and program staff member plays in the success of our program. Virtually every mandatory and volunteer WTW participant and their families will be affected each month.

How will success be determined (quantitative or qualitative assessment of effects)?

New or revised program measures will be established for each new or revised program strategy. For example, strengthening our Linkages program with CWS may be measured first by the number of staff that are retrained and the number of mutual clients we serve where the CWS Service Plan supports the WTW Plan or vice versa. We believe that these strategies will have a positive impact on our clients and that they should increase our work participation rate.

G. Please provide a description of how the county will collaborate with local agencies, including, but not limited to, local workforce investment boards, community colleges, universities, adult schools and regional occupational centers/programs that provide activities that meet federal work participation requirements and provide participants with skills that will help them achieve long-term self-sufficiency. For each individual agency, responses should include elements such as how information is shared or will be shared, ongoing or planned contracts, ongoing meetings established, etc.

We already have a strong collaboration with local agencies. However, for purposes of updating our community about TANF Reauthorization, we have reached out to the community via meetings with our local colleges, presentations to the Workforce Investment Board, and the Board of Supervisors. We anticipate ongoing analysis and process improvement throughout this year to achieve the necessary realignment of our activities to meet the federal WPR and maintain the integrity of our CalWORKs program.

Additionally, we are working with our Workforce Investment Act program to more completely align our efforts to benefit our mutual clients and effect more positive change within our community.

We have a long standing relationship with local agencies, including non-profits such as Domestic Violence Solutions, as well as adult schools, and the Santa Barbara County Regional Occupational Programs, and we are taking the opportunity to thank them via luncheons coupled with informational sessions regarding TANF Reauthorization.

Individual agencies:

Alcohol, Drug, and Mental Health Services (ADMHS) – MOU to articulate component of mental health and substance abuse treatment as well as involvement in the WTW Re-Engagement Program. The MOU is renewed annually and ADMHS participates in the ongoing TANF Reauthorization Workgroup, the WTW Re-Engagement Program Workgroup, and the Self-Sufficiency team meeting.

Arbor Education & Training – Contract for employment support services including Orientation, Job Club/Job Services, Appraisal, Assessment Testing, and Career Advancement Services. Current contract ends June 30, 2009. Contractor participates in the ongoing TANF Reauthorization Workgroup, the Increasing Participation Rates Workgroup, and the Self-Sufficiency team meeting.

Description of policy(ies) or strategy(ies) that will result in program improvement (identify whether this is a new policy/strategy, a current policy/strategy that will continue to be promoted, or an expansion of, or revision to, current policy/strategy).

The strategies that we anticipate improving our program are those that involve relationship building with our community colleges, Workforce Investment Board, and local agencies. This is not a new approach for us, but an opportunity to recommit to collaborative solutions.

What are the anticipated effects and percentage of families affected monthly?

We anticipate looking at virtually every family over the course of TANF Reauthorization implementation and are committed to pursuing every opportunity to enhance our service delivery and increase our work participation rates. As our specialized workgroups tackle strategic issues, we will be establishing specific performance goals to incorporate into subsequent Plan addenda.

How will success be determined (quantitative or qualitative assessment of effects)?

We will incorporate measures for both quantitative and qualitative assessment of the effects of our various TANF Reauthorization implementation strategies. We expect to continue to our process improvement to increase our WPR to meet the federal standards.

3) Plan to measure quarterly progress

Please describe how the county will measure the extent to which cumulative policies or strategies in the Plan addendum are successful, and how the county will measure progress on a quarterly basis (for example, participation rate of a specific population, sanction rate, orientation show rate, etc.). In addition, include the projected cumulative impact the county's policies or strategies will likely have on the county's federal work participation rate for each year of the next three years (for example, current rate of X will be increased to Y).

H. Plan to measure quarterly progress

Measures of quarterly progress:

Our TANF Reauthorization oversight committee will provide our Director with information on the various strategies implemented in Santa Barbara County no less than once each quarter. Key measures will include tracking orientation show rate, noncompliance rate, sanction rate, and WPR. Additionally, as a result of our participation in the recent CalWORKs Partnerships Summit and learning about promising practices in two counties, Santa Clara for WPR and Sonoma for engagement, we are actively pursuing technological innovations to allow us to more accurately track WPR and engagement within Santa Barbara County.

Projected impact on county's federal work participation rate:

We enjoy a federal WPR well-above the State average. The strategies identified in this plan addendum will help us meet or exceed the federal WPR within three years. Additionally, we will closely monitor the P4P program to strive to achieve performance incentive dollars to keep our program whole.

4) Funding

Describe how the county has spent and plans to utilize single allocation and other funding for the county's CalWORKs program. This section will help explain to county and State stakeholders how increased funding will be used.

Program Component	Fiscal Year 2005-06 Actual Expenditures	Fiscal Year 2006-07 Budgeted Amount	Description of how additional funding provided in Fiscal Year 2006-07 will be used
CalWORKs Eligibility Administration	5,498,324	5,471,260	
Welfare-to-Work Employment			Arbor Education and Training WTW

Services	5,679,927	6,465,463	contract augmented to include Bridges program.
CalWORKs Child Care	2,454,988	2,491,764	
Cal-Learn	215,048	238,442	
CalWORKs Funded Mental Health Services	140,527*	476,938	
CalWORKs Funded Substance Abuse Services	421,582	359,438	
Other			
Other			

*\$84,517 in late billing from ADMHS for the period of June 1 – 30, 2006 was just submitted to DSS in October. It was for services provided in FY 05/06, yet not paid for until 06/07. Additionally, we are planning to utilize Mental Health Services employees in the WTW Re-Engagement Program, so we are expecting to fully expend the 06/07 allocation.