

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

Shasta County

Visit Date: August 13, 2014

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

Shasta 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 Shasta County on Wednesday, August 13, 2014, at the Shasta County Health and Human Services Agency (HHSA) in Redding, CA. The field monitoring visit team included three staff from the CDSS, WTW Division, CalWORKs Employment and Eligibility Branch along with Shasta County's Branch Director, one HHSA Program Manager, two HHSA Staff Services Analyst II and one Senior Staff Services Analyst. The field monitoring visit consisted of a kick-off meeting, close-out meeting, staff and administrator interviews, and case management observations with county staff.

Implementation Strategies

Shasta County's implementation strategy consisted of developing a communication plan between key management level staff prior to disseminating information to county staff to ensure a consistent understanding of the SB 1041 requirements was established. Shasta County started in November 2012 and provided detail instructions monthly to county staff as additional direction was provided by the CDSS. Shasta County developed much on their SB 1041 training materials. The county utilized various training materials and methods that included, but was not limited to, flow charts, Power Point presentations, information tables, staff memorandums and ongoing email communications in order to keep county staff informed of new SB 1041 requirements. The county also held weekly information sharing meetings, question & answer (Q & A) and staff unit meetings with CalWORKs agendas specific to SB 1041 requirements.

Shasta County strategies also included an ongoing evaluation of policies, procedures and resources to determine further staffing needs and organizational changes.

Some of Shasta County Key Successes Included:

- Enthusiasm and leadership from the Director, and other management staff which set the foundation for an early start within the county on the SB 1041 implementation process.
- Attendance and participation at County Advisory Team (CAT) contributed to an increased understanding of SB 1041 requirements and strategies needed.
- Weekly meetings provided a good avenue for sharing knowledge and general information to staff on SB 1041 requirements and further explaining and/or clarifying information provided by the CDSS via All County Letter (ACL) and/or All County Information Notice (ACIN).
- Implementation of Steps Toward Earnings Potential & Success (STEPS) program provided clients with course sessions, including but not limited to, marketing yourself, money management, skills to success, and career exploration to name a few.
- ShastaFaces2 subsidized employment program that aided families with finding employment within local community. The clients could be hired for part-time or full-time positions with a minimum of 20 per week subsidized at 100 percent up to \$15 per hour for six months.
- Onsite Job Developer staff who partner with local business on job opportunities for clients. Ongoing network connecting clients with local business that have job vacancies available within the community.
- Child care program liaisons located onsite to assist clients with emergency child care needs, thus connecting clients with available provider immediately.
- Shasta County client customer survey program implemented within the county is an effective means by which the county has taken strides to obtain feedback directly from clients on their CalWORKs Employment Services experiences.

Key Recommendations

As Shasta County completes its remaining implementation strategies, the county should continue developing and implementing procedures along with formal staff SB 1041 training that will ensure compliance with SB 1041 requirements. The county should reevaluate providing opportunities for exempt volunteers to participate in CalWORKs program. During the time of one day visit, the county did not have a program in place for exempt volunteers to participate. Although, some WTW clients population receive home visits as part of other services provided within the county, the county may want to reevaluate non-compliance/pre-sanction home visit program opportunities to engage clients heading down the path towards becoming sanctioned.

The CDSS also recommends that Shasta County pay close attention to the data which is submitted through their Consortium-IV (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) and CalWORKs WTW Monthly Activity Reports for All (Other) Families and Two Parent Families (WTW 25/25A). These data sources are relied upon heavily by the CDSS to track and measure program progress.

Acknowledgments

The CDSS thanks the Shasta County Department of Health and Human Agency for hosting this 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

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Shasta County HHSA main two offices are located in Redding, CA with three additional satellite offices located in Anderson, Burney and Shasta Lake networking to serve local clients throughout Shasta County. The Shasta County main Redding, CA office is composed of several social service divisions.

Shasta County's population consists of approximately 180,000 residents and is comprised largely of a rural area. Limited public transportation is available within Shasta County, mainly the Redding, California (CA) local area. Redding, CA area economy has a diversified service since the 1990s away from timber miles and other wood related products and has now in recent years spread across a wide range of professional services, including, but not limited to, health care services, retail, and tourism.

Background and Data

San Benito at-a-glance

Total Caseload	2,958
(Source: CalWORKs Cash Grant Caseload Movement Report [CA 237 CW] Line Item 8a-June 2014)	
WTW Enrollees	983
(Source: CalWORKs WTW Monthly Activity Report [WTW 25/25A] Line Item 1-June 2014)	
Mandatory Participants (enrollees + sanctioned + non-compliance)	1,701
(Source: CalWORKs WTW Monthly Activity Report [WTW 25/25A] Line Item 1, 3A, and 31-June 2014)	
Reengagement Plan Received	Yes
Beginning Date of Reengagement	January 17, 2013
Consortium System	C-IV

Data/Statistics Available at Time of Field Monitoring Visit:

- Outreached to all 426 sanction 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: **549**.
- Clients that have used the new once in a lifetime young child exemption: **343**.

Summary of Documents provided by Shasta County during visit:

- WTW SB 1041 Update Training Materials.
- SB 1041 CalWORKs Tracking Hours of Participation and Time Clock Materials.
- Shasta County's Reengagement Sequencing Plan.
- Steps Toward Earnings Potential & Success (STEPS) guideline materials and job search log.
- CalWORKs Employment Services Customer Survey and Child Care Provider Evaluation.

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 Shasta County staff regarding SB 1041 implementation performed within the county. The tools were provided to Shasta County in advance of the visit. The interview panel consisted of three CDSS staff and two Shasta County staff. The interviews were conducted by one team of two CDSS staff members, and one single CDSS staff member interviewing one Shasta 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]

Shasta 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. Shasta County completed their comprehensive discussions by December 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 county 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 county completed comprehensive discussions in January 2013. Clients visited the county office and met with county staff and proceeded to sign the new WTW 2 plan.

Clients who failed to attend SB 1041 appointments

Shasta County's actions towards clients who were unresponsive varied depending on the client specific case situation. For unresponsive clients, Shasta County schedules a formal appointment with the clients. If client did not attend the scheduled appointment, the non-compliance process is initiated. Depending on client situation, some clients become sanctioned for continued non-responsiveness. Other client unresponsive scenario's also occurred whereas the clients were exempt and simply were non-responsive to communications from the county.

General Comments

Shasta County strategy for completing necessary comprehensive discussions with clients was performed via scheduling ongoing appointments and telephone calls which clients were contacted based on individual caseworker and supervisor strategies on number of time contacted and method.

New Young Child Exemption

Shasta County had approximately 75 percent of the clients that were eligible for the new young child exemption choose to take the exemption. In addition, some clients chose to preserve their exemption for future use.

Clients with Good Cause for Lack of Supportive Services

Shasta 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 county via uploading the new WTW 2 into the internal document locator system which staff used until the C-IV system was updated. County staff was instructed to utilize the new WTW 2 for all WTW plan completed after January 1, 2013.

General Comments

Some caseworkers noted that the new version of the WTW 2 language and overall length of four pages was viewed by many clients as being overwhelming. Some clients also reacted with a common dislike for what they felt was an overly complex WTW 2 document. Some caseworker's felt that during interactions with clients with lower educational levels, the lack of understanding the new WTW 2 increased.

Reengagement Process

Shasta 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.

Shasta County's Reengagement Sequencing Plan is as follows:

- **June, 2013 -** First engaged group – clients who have a child between the ages of 0 and 23 months.
- **September, 2013 -** Second group remainder of the reengagement population.

Implementation Strategies

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

Shasta County developed their own training materials dedicated to providing guidance to staff on new SB 1041 rules. The county provided additional access to materials over the internet. Resource tools in the form of checklist were provided to aid staff in discussing new rule changes with clients.

Shasta County started in November 2012 and provided detail instructions monthly to county staff as additional direction was provided by the CDSS. The county utilized various training materials and methods that included, but was not limited to, flow charts, Power Point presentations, information tables, staff memorandums and ongoing email communications in order to keep county staff informed of new SB 1041 requirements. The county also held weekly information sharing meetings, question & answer (Q & A) and staff unit meetings with CalWORKs agendas specific to SB 1041 requirements.

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

Case Reviews

The CDSS field monitoring team reviewed five cases selected by Shasta 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 county staff, and better comprehend case management within Shasta 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

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

- Noticing Requirements

Noticing requirements for the New Rules for CalWORKs WTW Activities Informing Notice (CW 2205) were provided November 2012. The CW 2208 Your WTW 24-Month Time Clock Informing Notice client distribution process was provided starting in May 2014. During the time of the visit, the sanction case was scheduled to receive CW 2208 during upcoming renewal.

- Comprehensive Discussions and Additional Outreach

All cases reviewed had received a comprehensive discussion during an in person appointment with their caseworker at the county. Journal entry notations were completed in 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 two-parent household. The WTW plan did not change. The strategy for engaging the client during the sanction process was primarily, appointment, phone calls and letters. The Learning Disabilities Screening tool was completed and waived by both parent.

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 November 9th 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 November 25, 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

Shasta County's strong leadership from the Director, and other management staff set the foundation for an early start within the county on the SB 1041 implementation process. Shasta County involvement and participation at the and CDSS County Advisory Team (CAT) meetings were an additional avenue that contributed to the counties upfront understanding of the SB 1041 changes and allowed management to further strategize on SB 1041 implementation within the county. The county maintained weekly meetings to share and disseminate information to staff on SB 1041 requirements.

Shasta County has very promising programs to assist clients transition to the workforce and gain employment. The implementation of Steps Toward Earnings Potential & Success (STEPS) program provided clients with course sessions, including but not limited to, marketing yourself, money management, skills to success, and career exploration to name a few. In addition, Shasta County has developed a subsidized employment program referred to as ShastaFaces2. The ShastaFaces2 subsidized employment program provides aided families with finding employment within local community. The clients could be hired for part-time or full-time positions with a minimum of 20 per week subsidized at 100 percent up to \$15 per hour for six months.

Challenges

As Shasta County completes its remaining implementation strategies, the county should also reevaluate providing opportunities for exempt volunteers to participate in CalWORKs program. During the time of one day visit, the county did not have a program in place for exempt volunteers to participate. Although, some WTW clients population receive home visits as part of other services provided within the county, the county may want to reevaluate possible non-compliance/pre-sanction home visit program opportunities to engage clients heading down the path towards sanction before they get to sanction stage.

During the time of visit, additional requests by management for additional hiring of staff had been initiated administratively in order to increase staffing needs. The delay in the issuance of instruction by the CDSS was also a hardship; the continued issuance of Question and Answer All County Letters to clarify policy has been beneficial.

Key Recommendations

As Shasta County continues its implementation strategy, the county should continue developing and implementing policies and procedures along with formal staff SB 1041 training that will ensure compliance with SB 1041 requirements.

As Shasta County completes its remaining implementation strategies, the county should also reevaluate providing opportunities for exempt volunteers to participate in CalWORKs program. During the time of one day visit, the county did not have a program in place for exempt volunteers to participate. Although, some WTW clients population receive home visits as part of other services provided within the county, the county may want to reevaluate possible non-compliance/pre-sanction home visit program opportunities to engage clients heading towards potential sanction stage sooner.

The CDSS also recommends that Shasta to pay close attention to 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.

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