

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

**Sonoma County**

**Visit Date: April 8, 2014**

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

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

---

**Executive Summary**

---

**Purpose of Field Monitoring Visit**

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

**Scope of Field Monitoring Visit**

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

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

**Goals of Field Monitoring Visit**

The CDSS' 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**

The one-day field visit was performed in Sonoma County on Tuesday, April 8, 2014 at the Sonoma County Human Services Department in Sonoma, CA. The field visit team included two managers and two analysts from the CDSS, Welfare-to-Work Division, CalWORKs Employment and Eligibility Branch along with Sonoma County's Division Director, CalWORKs Section Manager, Program Planning & Evaluation Analyst, and three Employment & Training Counselors. The field visit consisted of a kick-off meeting, close-out meeting, staff interviews, and case management observations with county staff.

**Implementation Strategies**

Sonoma County's implementation strategy consisted of the facilitation and sharing of information within the county via staff correspondence materials and updating internal training materials to include the SB 1041 requirements. Sonoma County provided information to staff by email announcements, unit meetings and by providing formal training, including take-way materials for reference.

Various types of guidance methods were provided to Sonoma County staff which included training covering supervisors, coordinators, and the WTW Program Analyst training. There were two days of classroom style training sessions that included follow up sessions ranging from 1-1 ½ hours in length during unit meetings. Sonoma County staff received training materials that included, but was not limited to, a copy of the completed 24-Month Time Clock handbook section, action plan check lists, and adhoc reports that listed their client names, case numbers, and the amount of time left on their CalWORKs 48-Month Time Clock. Materials provided by the county ensured staff had the resources needed to understand and apply the new SB 1041 requirements. County workers were instructed to schedule and meet with everyone in their caseload by July 31, 2013. The face-to-face appointments were to include the in-depth discussion about the SB 1041 new rules, and to complete a new WTW 2 and Welfare to Work Plan (HSD 847 –county form) with the client.

In May 2013, Sonoma County sent out a memorandum regarding the new WTW 24-Month Time Clock implementation to all staff that had received the Training & Work Handbook. The Training & Work Handbook was updated to reflect all the changes under SB 1041. The county staff also received a handout titled “CalWIN How To Guide” which illustrated and provided insight on how to apply or end the young child exemptions along with a method for manual tracking of the WTW 24-Month Time Clock. In addition, a new updated Client Handbook was revised to help participants understand the WTW 24-Month Time Clock, the new hourly requirements and young child exemptions. Sonoma County Orientation script was also revised to include the new SB 1041 rules.

**Some of Sonoma’s Key Successes Included:**

- Leadership and direction from management staff set a very good foundation for the implementation of SB 1041 within the county. The county administrative process for SB 1041 leading up to CDSS visit, along with during the time of visit, was well organized and executed in an effective manner for clients success.
- Sonoma County has been a key contributor and collaborator on the various workgroups related to SB 1041 program changes and as part of the County Advisory Team (CAT). The CAT meetings allowed the county to be aware early of SB 1041 requirements and kept the county informed on policy changes.
- Various modes of communication and training performed within the county to staff that included, but not limited to, supervisors and WTW program analyst. The county approach to facilitation and sharing of new requirements played an integral role in county success.
- Extensive training performed for staff within the county that also included follow up classes. Training classes ranged from 1-1 ½ hours within the county.

**Key Recommendations**

The CDSS recommends county continue to stay current with data submitted through their CalWIN 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 by the CDSS to track and measure program progress.

**Acknowledgments**

The CDSS thanks Sonoma County 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.

## Field Monitoring Visit Summary

---

### Introduction

---

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

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

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

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

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

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

The CDSS' 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**

The one-day field visit was performed in Sonoma County on Tuesday, April 8, 2014 at the Human Services Department in Santa Rosa, CA. The field visit team included two managers and two analysts from the CDSS, Welfare-to-Work Division, CalWORKs Employment and Eligibility Branch along with Sonoma County's Division Director, CalWORKs Section Manager, Program Planning & Evaluation Analyst, and three Employment Counselors. The field visit consisted on a kick-off meeting, close-out meeting, staff interviews, and case management observations with county staff.

---

## Background and Data

---

### Sonoma At-a-glance

Total Caseload.....	2,954
<small>(Source: CalWORKs Cash Grant Caseload Movement Report CA 237 CW Line Item 8a-February 2014)</small>	
WTW Enrollees.....	785
<small>(Source: CalWORKs Welfare-to-Work Monthly Activity Report WTW 25/25A Line Item 1-February 2014)</small>	
Mandatory Participants (enrollees + sanctioned + non-compliance).....	1149
<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.....	January 1, 2014
Consortium System .....	CalWIN

### 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: 569.
- 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: 243.
- Sanctions that were cured as a result of SB 1041: 6.
- Former short-term young child exempt clients (Assembly Bill [AB] X4 4) that have been reengaged: 69
- WTW plans that have changed as a result of SB 1041 implementation: 37.
- Clients that have used the new once in a lifetime young child exemption: 288.
- Other statistics that the county is keeping related to SB 1041 implementation: None

### Summary of Documents provided by Sonoma County:

- Emailed memorandums provided to county staff relevant to SB 1041 implementation.
- Informing notices and Client Handbook provided to clients relevant to SB 1041 implementation.
- CalWIN How To handouts on SB 1041 related training materials including, but not limited to, a list of training procedures.
- Sonoma County's Reengagement Sequencing Plan.

---

## **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 county administrator and caseworkers in-person regarding SB 1041 implementation. The tool was provided to the county administrator and caseworkers in advance of the visit. The administrator interview panel consisted of four CDSS staff with two county administrators. The caseworker interviews were conducted by four CDSS staff members with three caseworkers.

### **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**

Sonoma County used the CW 2205 that was sent to clients via mass mailing on November 28, 2012. The county began their comprehensive discussions with clients that had less than 24 months left on their clock in June 2013 covering 243 clients. Sonoma County's target completion date was July 31, 2013. As of August 31, 2013, there are no clients with less than 24 months left on their CalWORKS 48-month time limit awaiting an SB 1041 transition that includes a comprehensive discussion. Clients were also sent an SB 1041 Contract/Appointment Letter to provide clients the opportunity to discuss SB 1041 changes, options, and potential amendments to existing plans.

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

Sonoma County started SB 1041 transition for this group in June 2013 for 569 clients. As of August 31, 2013, there were no clients with more than 24 months left on their CalWORKS 48-month time limit awaiting a comprehensive discussion. In general, during the one day visit, it was noted that clients with more than 24 months remaining on their CalWORKS 48-month time limit were choosing to meet federal standards and not tick their WTW 24-Month Time Clock.

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

Clients who failed to show up for their SB 1041 appointments were contacted by phone to try and reschedule the appointment. If after several attempts to make contact with the client and no response, the county staff would then start the noncompliance process. The county called clients to determine why they were not responding to county communication efforts to reengage them into CalWORKS program.

#### **New Young Child Exemption**

During the time of the one day visit, Sonoma County reported 288 clients had received the new young child exemption.

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

The new WTW 2 form was made available on the Sonoma County Intranet forms library and the county began its use of forms effective May 2013. Sonoma county staff utilized the WTW 2 when discussing with clients new SB 1041 requirements and their options. The county also discussed long-term and short-term planning and setting goals with client.

Sonoma County noted that some staff along with clients felt the new WTW 2 form was too long and difficult to understand. Some clients also had trouble understanding and distinguishing between the CalWORKs hours noted on left of the form and Federal Work Activities requirements on the right. One aspect the county staff noted as a positive on new WTW 2 forms was the requirement for clients to initial various sections indicating they understood what was being discussed.

### **Reengagement Process**

The county's reengagement process officially began on January 1, 2014. The CW 2206 mass mailer was sent on November 15, 2013 to all AB X4 4 short-term exempt individuals. Appointment letters go out at least 30 days prior to Reengagement evaluation appointments. The target completion date for reengagement is June 30, 2014.

Sonoma County's Sequencing Plan is as follows:

- **01/2014**-Two-Parent Families, first parent participating and second parent AB X4 4 Exempt.
- **01/2014**-AB X4 4 Exempt Volunteers.
- **01/2014**-AB X4 4 Exempt Individuals from most time on aid remaining to the least.

The reengagement process for Sonoma County includes the following:

Sonoma County began scheduling 20 clients per month into the regular weekly orientation session in January 2014. Clients were scheduled based on the amount of time left on their CalWORKs 48-Month Time Clock. The county started with clients that had 48 months left on their time on aid (TOA) clock and will continue until they reach clients with the least amount of time left. The county reengagement process is planned to be completed by June 30, 2014.

### **Volunteers**

Clients that volunteered followed the same reengagement process. All clients were seen based on the amount of time left on their CalWORKs 48-Month Time Clock. The county did not differentiate between regular time limited exemptions and exempt/volunteer time limited exemptions.

### **Implementation Strategies**

Sonoma County staff were given two separate classroom trainings to review the new rules, the new WTW 2, and the new county Welfare to Work Plan (HSD 847). Staff received training materials that included a copy of the completed 24-Month Time Clock handbook section, action plan check lists, and adhoc's that listed their clients names, case numbers, and the amount of time left on their CalWORKs 48-Month Time Clock.

County workers were instructed to schedule and meet with everyone in their caseload by July 31, 2013. The face-to-face appointment was to include the in-depth discussion about the SB 1041 new rules, and to complete a new WTW 2 and Welfare to Work Plan (HSD 847 –county form) with the client.



---

## Case Reviews

---

The CDSS Field Monitoring Team reviewed five cases selected by the CWD in advance of the visit. The purpose of this component of the one day county 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-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 is sanctioned that has earnings and is curable based on the new participation requirements (may be a case actually cured since January 1, 2013 based on new participation requirements); and
- Case Five-a client that is part of the former short-term young child exemption (AB X4 4)/ reengagement population, and is currently in the process of or has been reengaged.

### **General Comments**

*Sonoma County uses the CalWIN case management 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 and CW 2208 when applicable in addition to the use of the new WTW 2.*

---

## Conclusion

---

### **Successes**

Sonoma County leadership and direction from management staff set a very good precedence for what was required for the implementation of SB 1041 within the county. Sonoma County was a key contributor and collaborator on the various workgroups related to SB 1041 program changes and as part of 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 process issues and challenges. Sonoma County's participation in these groups kept the county informed on all forthcoming policy changes. The participation is believed to have contributed to Sonoma County's ability to adapt quickly to the program and policy changes related to SB 1041 implementation.

Sonoma County administrative process and practices were thoroughly organized and information disseminated to staff was well established. Various modes of staff communication and training were performed within the county that included, but was not limited to, supervisors and WTW program analyst.

The county approach to facilitation and sharing of new requirements played an integral role in county success. Extensive training performed for staff within the county and included follow up classes were held for staff. Training classes ranged from 1-1 ½ hours within the county.

Sonoma 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. The county continued to offer ongoing training to staff as further policy decisions are issued by the CDSS.

Sonoma County's was able to meet with many clients in a short amount of time. They received positive compliments from the community college about clients that had been seen for their comprehensive 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 utilized to establish goals and steps to self-sufficiency plan. Staff reviewed 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.

### **Challenges**

Sonoma County noted that their greatest challenge was the implementation of such significant changes to the program in such a short amount of time. Additionally, caseworkers acknowledge that at times it has been difficult explaining those choices to clients.

### **Key Recommendations**

The CDSS recommends county continue to stay current with data submitted through their CalWIN 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 by the CDSS to track and measure program progress.

---

### **Contact**

---

Joseph Jackson, *FMV Summary Author*  
CalWORKs Employment Bureau, Welfare to Work Division  
California Department of Social Services  
744 P Street, M.S. 8-8-33  
Sacramento, CA 95814  
Phone: (916) 651-6567  
Email: joseph.jackson@dss.ca.gov