

PLACER COUNTY

CalWORKs County Plan Addendum

Date Submitted to California Department of Social Services:

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

County Welfare
Director's
Signature

Robert Dunstan

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12/19/06
Briefing Date

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

1) County Goals

After reviewing the county's 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

Placer County expects to meet the goals of W & I Code 10540 by maximizing its strong partnerships with other agencies in the community and continuing to build and strengthen new relationships.

Together, the County and its partners will provide a broad range of activities that include existing, successful strategies, restore activities provided in the past, and will introduce new strategies. By continuing or implementing the strategies that follow, Placer County anticipates increasing its work participation rate, thereby helping families move toward self-sufficiency.

1.) Reduce child poverty by:

- Reinforcing Diversion at application
- Expanding our job retention services, including collocating programs such as Transitional Medi-Cal, Stages 2 and 3 Childcare, and Transitional Food Stamps
- Improving our up-front engagement activities
- Encouraging families to resolve sanctions
- Increasing home visits to families and making referrals to appropriate agencies to assist families in overcoming barriers
- Continuing partnerships with the Adult System of Care (ASOC), Children's System of Care (CSOC), Community Health, PEACE for Families (Domestic Violence), Office of Economic Development, Family Resource Centers (FRCs), Education
- Continuing Differential Response with FRCs
- Bringing the Welfare to Work (WTW) program to where the clients live through out-stationing efforts
- Utilizing agencies to provide for supportive work/job coaches
- Following up on referrals to Child Support

- Referring to our SSI advocate as needed
- Assisting families in applying for Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC)
- Strengthening our partnership with Native TANF
- Offering eligibility and employment services through our collaboration and/or outreach with homeless service providers such as HomeStart, Acres of Hope, The Gathering Inn, and others

2.) Reduce dependency 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 (many of these activities are intertwined with Goal 1):

- Improving our up-front engagement activities
- Encouraging families to resolve sanctions
- Encouraging Diversion at application when possible
- Continuing our successful and unique collaboration with Office of Economic Development
- Strengthening our ties with partners to increase classes available for our customers, including life skills and job search skills
- Continuing our successful one-stop partnership at EDD-Roseville and expanding the one-stop in Auburn, with the possibility of becoming the one-stop operator
- Combining the Auburn offices of Human Services, Golden Sierra Job Training Agency, and the ASOC Welcome Center at one location
- Seeking new ways to partner with Golden Sierra Job Training Agency
- Implementing an Early Fraud program, which will increase face to face contact with applicants and assist in identifying barriers to self-sufficiency,
- Continuing our partnerships with Community Health
- Utilizing our linkages with ASOC and CSOC to support families in crisis
- Continuing to provide marriage licenses at the Human Services office at Tahoe
- Exploring the feasibility of the County paying for marriage license fees for clients

3.) Meet the requirements of federal law while avoiding unanticipated outcomes that negatively affect child wellbeing, the demand for county general assistance, or the number of families affected by domestic violence:

- Continuing and strengthening our partnerships with PEACE for Families, Office of Education, CSOC, ASOC, FRCs to prevent our clients from being sanctioned, to support families
- Continuing to partner in Differential Response with the Children's System of Care and the Family Resource Centers
- Exploring reduction of sanctions by partnering with Legal Services of Northern California
- Continuing to collocate eligibility and Welfare to Work Staff

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 percentage 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).

To the extent funding allows, Placer County will improve its up-front engagement activities by modifying several of its processes, continuing its successful strategies, and revisiting prior strategies:

- Offer orientation on a voluntary basis at application, providing applicants with information to move forward with Welfare to Work participation more promptly. If time is limited at application, then an appointment will be scheduled at a later date. Orientation is not a condition of eligibility. (expansion)
- Increase Orientation frequency and flexibility, making it available off hours. (expansion)
- Provide orientations in remote communities such as Colfax, Foresthill, and Sheridan. (expansion)
- Conduct home visits for those recipients who fail to attend orientation and, if necessary, a counselor will conduct an orientation and appraisal at that home visit. (expansion)
- Continue its current strategy "Engaging Families" where the County partners with the Family Resource Center in visiting families who have not shown for Welfare to Work activities. (current)
- Collocate at the Family Resource Centers in the county, conducting orientations and appraisals on site. (new)
- Provide cross training/refresher training for eligibility and counselors to be more attentive to the needs of new applicants. (expansion)
- Provide training to assist staff in identifying clients with cognitive and mental disabilities. (expansion)
- Target specific groups to more quickly direct them to appropriate services. WTW will categorize applicants into three groups: 1.) Those that have recently left employment and are most likely to return as soon as possible, 2.) Those that need brush-up skills and support, and 3.) Those that are in need of deep-end assistance such as mental health and substance abuse counseling. (new)
- Identify a WTW "Worker of the Day" who will be available for eligibility staff to invite into interviews for immediate response to employment services related questions. (expansion)

- Provide Assessment up-front: conduct a pilot program to provide a preliminary assessment prior to job services (new)
- Explore the feasibility of partners providing assessment (PRIDE, Sierra College).(new)
- Install electronic signs in all lobbies with ongoing messages for job opportunities to inform clients of all programs. (new)
- Conduct a client survey. (new)
- Provide a centralized referral person at most HHS offices to provide information and referral. (new)
- Resume collocation of child care staff at each office.
- Explore the feasibility of having participants to assist the Department in these activities, having successful clients become mentors. (new)

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

Placer County anticipates that by having a case manager see the applicant immediately rather than waiting for a referral from eligibility, it will significantly decrease the delay in engagement from eligibility to WTW. Changing this initial timeline will have a "domino" effect on subsequent activities.

It is anticipated that 100% of our families will be affected by these strategies.

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

See Section H below

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).

1. Placer County will increase participant assignment in a variety of ways: (expansion)
 - Increase assignment to work experience sites,
 - Increase On the Job (OJT) placements,
 - Collaborate with the community colleges in increasing work study, and
 - Work with the Office of Education, local Adult Schools, Regional Occupational Program (ROP), Golden Sierra Job Training Agency, PRIDE Industries, the State Department of Vocational Rehabilitation, the County Probation-Day Reporting Center, and other local organizations to increase bridging activities such as short term, open-ended, job readiness and life skills classes.
2. Placer County anticipates its partners will utilize current technology in assisting participants to bridge activities by offering classes on-line, which will be accessible at home or in County offices. Placer will develop other resources for on-line .classes that assist with living and job skills development. (expansion/new)

3. Placer County will actively manage exempted clients, reviewing cases prior to due dates. (revision)
4. Again, Placer County will utilize home visits if necessary to encourage clients to participate. (expansion)
5. Placer County currently has a multi-disciplinary team (SMT- SMART Management Team) comprised of representatives from the Children's System of Care, Education, Probation, and the Adult System of Care that work together in empowering our clients to succeed. Human Services expects to continue its involvement and potentially increase the number of families referred to this team. (current)
6. Human Services currently participates with the Children's System of Care in providing Differential Response and finds this a successful strategy. (current)
7. Placer County will be working towards an agreement with organizations such as PRIDE Industries to provide job coaches and job placement for the participants who need assistance in keeping employment or participation successful. (new)
8. Placer County will be reviewing and revising its CalWORKs Plan for consistency and efficiency.
9. Explore the feasibility to provide incentives or rewards to clients (that are compliant with OMB A-87) for achieving goals, getting married, obtaining and retaining employment. (new)
10. Continuing to collaborate with the judicial system and Victim Witness in assisting clients to resolve legal issues. (current)

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

The County anticipates that by increasing access to a variety of short term classes that are accessible from participants' homes or county offices, increasing the availability of short term life skills and job readiness skills classes, and expanding work experience opportunities, participants will increase their level of participation. Additionally, the County expects that increasing counselors' involvement with participants who face many barriers and providing the necessary support will also improve participation outcomes.

It is anticipated that 100% of our families will be affected by these strategies.

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

See section H below

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)

Some of the strategies in this section mirror the strategies in the previous section.

1. Placer County will assign a specialized counselor to manage the non-compliant cases. (expansion)
2. Again, the County will utilize home visits to meet with families to ascertain why there is little or no participation. (expansion)
3. Encourage staff to make appropriate referrals to our SMART (Systems Management, Advocacy and Resource Team) Management Team (SMT), Adult System of Care for Mental Health/Substance Abuse counseling, our Psychologist for a Learning Disability (LO) evaluation, referrals to the local Domestic Violence (DV) agency to assist our customers in overcoming barriers. (current)
4. Placer County will identify those families that have a difficult time completing forms or that regularly discontinue for failing to provide a QR7, and will work more closely with them, as that may be an indicator of other barriers. (new)
5. Placer County will utilize job coaches and successful participants to provide peer support to assist and encourage clients to participate. When needed, staff will obtain a release of information/confidentiality prior to participation. (new)
6. Cross train staff in other divisions or agencies to learn about WTW (Probation, ACCESS, Public Health Nursing, City of Roseville Housing, etc.) (expansion)

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

The County anticipates that increasing contact with participants (and thereby increasing communication) will increase the number of participants referred to other agencies to assist with addressing barriers. Additionally, the County anticipates that identifying clients that may need additional assistance/referrals sooner will ultimately increase participation and reduce the sanction rate.

It is anticipated that 100% of our families will be affected by these strategies.

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

See Section H below

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).

1. Placer County has sent a "Cure Sanction" flyer to currently sanctioned clients, informing them of the change in regulations. (current)
2. Eligibility employees are discussing sanction status at redetermination and reapplication (when the whole family re-applies after having been off aid). (current)
3. The County plans to conduct home visits to encourage participation and to identify barriers. (expansion)
4. Placer will assign a specialized counselor to manage the sanctioned cases. (expansion)

5. The County is planning to increase home visits, which may include a Fraud Investigator and/or a WTW counselor. This would assist with identifying barriers and getting assistance to clients sooner. (new)
6. Placer will examine the possibility. of expanding the Engaging Families program in the Auburn area. (expansion)
7. Explore the feasibility of providing rewards/incentives to participants for resolving sanctions and completing a Welfare to Work plan. (new)

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

Placer County has identified all sanctioned households and has sent flyers to each, encouraging a return to participation. Placer County anticipates that increasing contact with sanctioned households will lead to fewer families remaining in sanction status. Additionally, the County anticipates that by conducting home visits and increasing contact, (and thereby increasing communication), it will improve case managers' ability to identify barriers. This will increase the number of participants referred to other agencies to assist with addressing these barriers. Placer County is in the process of analyzing and identifying information about the sanctioned population in an effort to determine better strategies. At the same time, Placer is working towards establishing a baseline for determining the sanction rate by analyzing and validating CalWIN information.

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

See Section H below.

F. Other activities designed to increase the county's federal WPR?

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):

Placer County plans to review all of its existing policies and practices to review for opportunities to increase participation and engagement. Some of these include:

- Invite all voluntary (exempt and others not required to participate) recipients to participate. (expansion)
- Continuing the successful partnership with the Office of Economic Development. (current)
- Reviewing our partnership with Golden Sierra Job Training Agency and taking a lead role in the One-Stop in Auburn, (expansion, new)

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

Placer County anticipates that by inviting all volunteers to participate that their participation may positively impact the work participation rate. Additionally, the County anticipates that by taking a lead role in the Auburn One Stop that additional resources and opportunities will be available to participants in that region.

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

Placer County is currently analyzing and validating data from the CalWIN system to establish a baseline. Once that baseline is established, then Placer will be able to estimate an improvement 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.

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).

1. Placer County .anticipates hosting forums to receive community input from all of the stakeholders. (new)
2. Placer will conduct customer surveys. (new)
3. The County will be meeting with each partner individually in addition to planning "Partner Meetings/Mixers" to strengthen our existing partnerships and to re-engage with others. Human Services will be working with its partners to expand classes, increase living skills classes, create open ended short-term classes that quickly refresh job skills (i.e. computer) (expansion)
4. Placer County is communicating with the local Legal Services of Northern California for input and feedback. (expansion)
5. Placer County is currently assessing the strengths of its local WIA agency and proposing improvements to providing services for the CalWORKs population. Human Services anticipates expanding the hours of operation at the second one-stop in the county. (current/expansion)
6. Placer County HHS has a unique relationship with its Office of Economic Development (OED). WTW counselors are out-stationed at OED where they provide job development services and interface with the local business community to provide direct links for participants. These counselors conduct seminars to employees who face layoffs as well as provide assistance to large companies that need mass hiring. (current)
7. Placer County currently partners with Employment Development Department, Office of Education, Sierra College, 49er ROP, Placer Adult School, Roseville Adult School, Placer Independent Resources (PIRS), Golden Sierra Job Training Agency (GSJTA), PRIDE, Vocational Rehab and others, and will continue to work with them to expand job readiness and living skills classes, as well as develop strategies to assist in meeting participation rates. (current/expansion)
8. Human Services will work with the County Office of Organizational Development to develop staff training to improve interviewing skills, re-energize staff for a commitment to excellence. (expansion)

9. Human Services will consider the feasibility of contracting with PRIDE or other organizations to provide supported work and/or job coaching. (new)
10. Human Services of Office of Economic Development will apply for additional ETP funds to provide expanded job training opportunities. (expansion)

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

Placer County will identify those who are not fully participating for referral to bridging activities. The County anticipates that the flexible and increased class availability will improve a participant's ability to meet the work participation rate. Additionally, the County expects that the classes offered will improve the job and the life skills of each participant, ultimately leading to self-sufficiency.

One of the successful programs in the County has been provided through ETP grants that assist employed participants training opportunities for advancement in their field. Expanding these programs will increase recipients' income and lead to self-sufficiency.

It is anticipated that 100% of our families will be affected by these strategies.

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

See Section H below.

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

Placer is planning to pilot many of the new policies or strategies on a three-month basis and then measure progress. Placer will then retain policies that are effective, and re-engineer for those that do not improve participation or contribute to self-sufficiency.

Measures of quarterly progress:

Preliminary research shows that most recipients in Placer County are sanctioned for failure to show for early activities such as orientation, appraisal, and job search. By engaging recipients sooner, and with increased contact through home visits, phone calls, and by other employees, Placer County anticipates the participation rate for orientation, as well as for subsequent activities, to increase.

Once the following baselines are established, Placer will measure the corresponding changes:

Baseline rate of CalWORKs approval date to orientation participation: # of days

Baseline rate of time between orientation and welfare to work plan: # of days

Baseline rate of percent in sanction status: percent decrease

Baseline WPR: Percent increase

Baseline rate of those partially or non-participating: percent increase

Projected impact on county's federal WPR:

With the strategies listed in the addendum Placer County anticipates its participation rate to improve by 2% for 06/07 and by 3% of 07/08, and by 3% for 08/09 so that Placer meets the 50% and 90% rates.

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 2006007 Budgeted Amount	Description of how additional funding provided in Fiscal Year 2006-07 will be used
CalWORKs Eligibility Administration	2,286,858	1,762,538	NA
WTW Employment Services	3,789,050	4,629,032	*See below
CalWORKs Child Care	1,790,187	1,726,242	Placer County anticipated it will need 2.2 million for child care services due to increased utilization and the increase to the RMR The County has requested additional funding from the reserve but has not been approved.
Cal-Learn	81,028	65,830	NA
CalWORKs Funded Mental Health Services	297,837	242,274	NA
CalWORKs Funded Substance Abuse Services	83,947	116,631	*See below
Other Performance Incentive	140,201	332,280*	*Amount of PI intended to fund reliability
Other	NA	NA	NA

*Placer County's 06/07 allocation is less than 05/06 and includes the use of Performance Incentive Funds. With this allocation, Placer County does not realize an increase in funding for improving Welfare to Work Services as it has had to fund basic CalWORKs programs with the Employment Services' increase.