



CDSS

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STATE OF CALIFORNIA—HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES AGENCY
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

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July 29, 2015

REASON FOR THIS TRANSMITTAL

- State Law Change
- Federal Law or Regulation Change
- Court Order
- Clarification Requested by One or More Counties
- Initiated by CDSS

ALL COUNTY INFORMATION NO. I-64-15

TO: ALL COUNTY WELFARE DIRECTORS
ALL CALWORKS PROGRAM SPECIALISTS
ALL WELFARE-TO-WORK COORDINATORS
ALL COUNTY REFUGEE COORDINATORS
ALL CONSORTIA REPRESENTATIVES
ALL TRIBAL TANF ADMINISTRATORS

SUBJECT: CALIFORNIA WORK OPPORTUNITY AND RESPONSIBILITY TO KIDS (CalWORKs) PROGRAM: RELEASE OF QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS FOR THE CalWORKs FAMILY STABILIZATION (FS) PROGRAM

REFERENCE: [Assembly Bill \(AB\) 74 \(Chapter 21, Statutes of 2013\)](#); [Welfare & Institutions \(W&I\) Code Section 11325.24](#); [Senate Bill \(SB\)1041\(Chapter 47, Statutes of 2012\)](#) ; [SB 855 \(Chapter 29, Statutes of 2014\)](#); [County Fiscal Letter \(CFL\) No. 14/15-19, dated September 22,2014](#); [CFL No. 13/14-35, dated February 5, 2014](#); [All County letter \(ACL\) No. 14-12, dated February 4, 2014](#); [ACL No. 14-61, dated September 4, 2014](#)

This letter provides answers to questions that the California Department of Social Services received regarding the FS program. Questions regarding FS eligibility, services, and participation in the FS program are addressed.

Initial implementation instructions for the FS program are contained within ACL 14-12, released February 4, 2014.

If you have any questions or need further information regarding the information in this ACIN, please contact your CalWORKs WTW Employment Bureau county consultant at (916) 654-2137.

Sincerely,

Original Document Signed By:

KÄREN DICKERSON, Chief
CalWORKs Employment and Eligibility Branch

Attachment

**Attachment
Questions (Q) and Answers (A):**

Question 1. Can Family Stabilization (FS) services be provided to exempt or excused Welfare-to-Work (WTW) adults in either the family or assistance unit (AU)?

Answer 1. Yes. Individuals who are exempt or excused from participation in WTW are eligible to participate in FS if the county welfare department (CWD) determines that participation in FS will enable future participation in WTW.

Question 2. Can an additional person(s), including a person(s) outside of the AU, be served with FS services if there is at least one WTW mandatory adult in the family?

Answer 2. Yes. The services provided to the additional person(s) must be related to the crisis preventing the WTW mandatory adult from being able to participate in his/her WTW plan.

CWDs should reference [CFL 14/15-19](#) for claiming and time study instructions for the FS program. All FS claiming must be related to the mandatory WTW participant.

Question 3. Are AB 429 (unaided, eligible for WTW while participating in a family reunification plan with Child Welfare Services) clients eligible for FS services?

Answer 3. Yes. The CWD must first determine that AB 429 services are necessary for reunification. The CWD must also establish eligibility for FS services. Linkages families are eligible for FS services if they have a current Family Reunification (FR) plan or WTW plan established by the CWD, and have a situation or a crisis that needs remediation to ensure that the family is stabilized prior to participation in WTW activities.

Question 4. Can a client who is currently in sanction status due to failure to comply with WTW program requirements sign an FS plan to lift the sanction?

Answer 4. Yes. If it is found that a client meets eligibility criteria for FS services then a FS plan can be signed in lieu of a WTW compliance or curing plan. The client is then required to follow their FS plan, the sanction would be cured, and his or her portion

of the cash grant will be restored the first of the following month after his or her FS plan is signed.

Question 5. Can an individual FS plan be used in place of a WTW plan for purposes of beginning to count months toward the WTW 24-Month Time Clock?

Answer 5. Yes. For purposes of initiating the WTW 24-Month Time Clock, an individual FS Plan shall be used in place of a WTW plan. Once a client signs their individual FS plan, months will begin counting towards their WTW 24-Month Time Clock; unless a good cause determination has been made. Clients may receive six months of good cause in which months would not count towards a client's WTW 24-Month Time Clock while participating in FS.

Question 6. In a two-parent household, are both parents required to have an individual FS plan?

Answer 6. Yes. If the household meets the CWD's FS eligibility criteria, then each adult in the household is required to have an individual FS plan to reflect the goals for the individual.

Question 7. If a client is receiving a Domestic Violence (DV) waiver can they participate in the FS program?

Answer 7. Yes. A client receiving a DV waiver may participate in the FS program if the crisis or situation is such that it is impacting the client's ability to participate in work/WTW activities.

Question 8. Once a client is ready to transition from FS back to WTW due to the crisis or situation being resolved, is it necessary to provide a referral to an assessment?

Answer 8. If a client is participating in FS as an early engagement activity and no assessment for WTW has been completed then the CWD shall provide a referral to assessment at the conclusion of their participation in FS.

If the client has completed an assessment prior to their participation in FS, then the CWD must make a determination as to whether the individual's prior WTW plan is still appropriate. If as a result of FS their situation has changed then the individual may require reassessment and a new WTW plan.

Question 9. Can a CWD revise their CWD FS plan and resubmit their plan if their plan changes?

Answer 9. Yes. CWDs must submit updated plans to the CDSS if the county makes significant changes to its FS Program. CWDs shall submit completed plans electronically to FSProgram@dss.ca.gov. The CDSS WTW Employment Bureau will review county submittals and contact the county with any questions.

CWDs are required to use the AB 74 CWD FS Plan ([WTW 40](#)) form to submit a written plan to the CDSS that describes their FS program. CWDs should include any policy documents or county forms to document progress of FS clients, including, but not limited to the FS plans for clients described above.

Question 10. Can a CWD carry over unspent Single Allocation funds from one fiscal year and use them to pay for some of the FS program costs in the following fiscal year?

Answer 10. No. There is no rollover authority for FS funds or CalWORKs Single Allocation. A CWD must use funding in the fiscal year for which it is allocated.

Question 11. Can CWDs use the CalWORKs Mental Health/Substance Abuse (MH/SA) allocation concurrently with their FS program funding for MH/SA services?

Answer 11. Yes. If a FS program recipient meets the qualifications necessary to claim MH/SA funds, the MH/SA funds may be used concurrently with FS funds to provide MH/SA services.

Question 12. Can CWDs use the CalWORKs MH/SA allocation to provide additional funding for their Family Stabilization program (in addition to funding MH/SA services, see question 11)?

Answer 12. No. These programs have separate funding sources and may not be used interchangeably to provide funding for the FS program. The CalWORKs MH/SA allocation may be used to pay for MH/SA services under the FS program; however, additional FS program costs may not be covered by the CalWORKS MH/SA allocation.

Question 13. If a county is reporting individuals receiving Family Stabilization services on the FSP14 Quarterly Status Report, should those individuals be reported on the WTW25/25A as well?

Answer 13. Yes. Those individuals receiving FS services that are reported on both forms (i.e. substance abuse, mental health, etc.) must be reported on both the FSP14 and the WTW25/25A reports.

Question 14. Can a client whose crisis requires services outside of those indicated in the CWDs FS plan participate in FS?

Answer 14. Yes. Clients with identified crisis outside of those indicated on their CWD FS plan should assess the client for any appropriate exemptions and provide barrier removal services via the traditional WTW program. Additionally, CWDs may choose to service these clients with intensive case management services through their FS program even if additional services are not available through the FS program.

Question 15. Must a client who has been evaluated and determined eligible for the FS program participate in FS?

Answer 15. No. If a client is referred and evaluated for the FS program, but does not agree to participate in the referred activities, they shall be referred back to the WTW program.