

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

744 P Street, Sacramento, California 95814



February 10, 2004

ALL COUNTY INFORMATION NOTICE NO. I-09-04

TO: ALL COUNTY WELFARE DIRECTORS
ALL CalWORKs PROGRAM SPECIALISTS
ALL FOOD STAMP COORDINATORS
ALL COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEYS
ALL COUNTY CHILD CARE COORDINATORS
ALL CAL-LEARN COORDINATORS
ALL COUNTY REFUGEE COORDINATORS
ALL COUNTY WELFARE TO WORK COORDINATORS
ALL COUNTY WELFARE FRAUD CHIEF INVESTIGATORS
ALL CAL-LEARN CASE MANAGEMENT AGENCIES
ALL CONSORTIUM PROJECT MANAGERS
ALL EBT COORDINATORS

REASON FOR THIS TRANSMITTAL

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

SUBJECT: CALIFORNIA WORK OPPORTUNITY AND RESPONSIBILITY TO KIDS (CalWORKs) AND FOOD STAMP (FS) PROGRAMS QUARTERLY REPORTING AND PROSPECTIVE BUDGETING (QR/PB) QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

REFERENCE: ASSEMBLY BILL (AB) 444, CHAPTER 1022, STATUTES OF 2002; AB 1402, CHAPTER 398, STATUTES OF 2003; ALL COUNTY LETTER (ACL) 03-18 DATED APRIL 29, 2003; ALL COUNTY INFORMATION NOTICE (ACIN) 1-54-03 DATED AUGUST 27, 2003; ACIN I-84-03 DATED DECEMBER 24, 2003

The purpose of this letter is to transmit another series of Questions and Answers (Q&As) regarding the QR/PB system in the CalWORKs and FS programs. As questions are submitted by county and consortia representatives, the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) program and management staff review the questions and develop QR/PB policies and responses with input from members of the County Welfare Directors Association (CWDA) who participated with staff from the CDSS in a Quarterly Reporting Workgroup. As additional QR/PB questions are received by CDSS, they will be released in additional ACINs as they are developed and posted on the Quarterly Reporting (QR) website which allows counties to view responses to questions they have regarding QR.

If you have any questions regarding the QR/PB system, you may contact the following CDSS staff:

QR/PB Qs & As	Rosie Avena (916) 654-1514
CalWORKs Policy	Paulette Dreher (916) 654-3386
CalWORKs Forms, Notices	Shawn Bradley (916) 653-8675
Food Stamp Quality Control	Michael Bowman-Jones (213) 833-2260
TANF Data Collection	Warren Ghens (559)445-6478
Food Stamps Policy	LeAnne Torres (916) 654-2135
FSP Forms and Notices	Frederick Hodges III (916) 653-7973
Fraud Policy	Mark Gagnon (916) 263-5735
IEVS Matches	Nanci O'Brien (916) 263-5713
FSET/ABAWDs	Robert Nevins (916) 654-1408
WTW Program	Milt Yee (916) 657-3399
Work Support Services (WSS)	WSS analyst (916) 654-1424
Cal-Learn/Teen Programs	Consultants (916) 657-4249
Child Care	Suzanne McNamee (916) 657-3815
Refugee Cash Assistance	Camille Ancona (916) 653-7785
EBT/Welfare Technology Unit	Stan Cagle (916) 654-1529

Sincerely,

Original Signed on 2/10/04

Original Signed on 2/10/04

CHARR LEE METSKER, Chief
Employment and Eligibility Branch

RIGHTON YEE, Chief
Food Stamp Branch

Attachment

c: CWDA
CSAC

CALIFORNIA WORK OPPORTUNITY AND RESPONSIBILITY TO KIDS (CalWORKs) AND FOOD STAMP (FS) PROGRAMS QUARTERLY REPORTING AND PROSPECTIVE BUDGETING (QR/PB) QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

1. **Would the receipt of Supplemental Security Income/State Supplementary Program (SSI/SSP) require a mid-quarter action? If action cannot be taken during mid-quarter, wouldn't it be considered duplicate aid to aid someone under SSI/SSP and CalWORKs or FS?**

Answer: Under QR, benefits may only be decreased or discontinued during the quarter under limited circumstance, as specified in ACL 03-18. CWDs shall not discontinue a CalWORKs or FS recipient mid-quarter based on receipt of SSI/SSP. The person who begins receiving SSI/SSP would be discontinued at the end of the quarter. It is not considered duplicate aid if a recipient receives CalWORKs, SSI/SSP or FSP at the same time, because the Social Security Administration (SSA) will use the recipient's portion of the grant as income to the SSI payment. When the recipient is discontinued from the CalWORKs AU, the SSI payment will increase.

Example 1: The quarter is January/February/March, the person begins receiving SSI mid-January, and the discontinuance for this individual would be the end of the current quarter. The information must be reported on the QR 7.

Example 2: The SSI person begins receiving benefits in February mid-quarter; the discontinuance for this individual would be the end of the current quarter. The information must be reported on the QR 7.

Example 3: If the person received SSI in March (the submit month), and timely notice can be given for discontinuance at the end of March, the county shall take action to do so. If 10-day notice cannot be given timely before the end of March, the information must be reported on the May QR 7, the county shall discontinue the individual at the end of the current quarter (June).

2. **When must the CWD generate a NO Change NOA for voluntary mid-quarter reports?**

Answer: The CWD must generate a No Change NOA whenever a voluntary report of a mid-quarter change would result in a decrease, discontinuance or no change in benefits. Under QR, the county would not take action on those reports but would alert the recipient via the No Change NOA that no change was made and remind the recipient to report that information on the next QR7.

3. If a household member dies during the quarter, what action must the CWD take?

Answer: If mid-quarter information becomes known to the county that an AU/HH member is deceased, the CWD shall treat the report as a request for discontinuance. If the report is verbal, the CWD shall decrease or discontinue the case at the end of the month in which timely and adequate notice can be given. If the report is in writing, the CWD shall decrease or discontinue at the end of the month with adequate notice. This represents an exception to mid-quarter decreases that involve discontinuance of an individual AU/HH member mid-quarter.

The death of a recipient must be reported on the QR 7. However, if an AU/Household doesn't report the death of a recipient until the QR 7, no overpayment or overissuance shall be assessed for the failure to report the death mid-quarter. However, if the individual reported the death of a recipient, and the county failed to take action to decrease or discontinue the grant, an agency caused overpayment shall be assessed.

4. Is the CWD required to notify the local child support agency (LCSA) that the non-custodial parent has returned to the home even if the parent cannot be added to the assistance unit the next quarter?

Answer: Yes. MPP Section 82-508.2 and .3 requires that the county notify the local child support agency within two working days of any information pertinent to the child support enforcement that is requested and in writing when persons are added to or deleted from the AU. This information assists the LCSA in determining whether to continue to assign or to unassign future/current support when the absent parent is in the home.

5. If the language regarding zero benefit (suspension) is removed from DFA 377.1 QR NOA and the QR 377.1 NOA, these NOAs become identical which makes one of them redundant. Can one generic NOA be used instead of the two and if so, which one?

Answer: No, the current language on the QR 377.1 pertaining to zero benefits will not be removed because there may be instances where food stamp eligibility may still exist for Public Assistance (PA) Households, even though income exceeds the FSP maximum limit. MPP Section 63-301.7 explains that any household, except certain households containing a disqualified member or a household failing to comply with reporting requirements, shall be considered eligible for food stamp benefits because of their status as a PA recipient.

The DFA 377.1 QR was developed for Change Reporting households that receive PA benefits. For these households, the zero benefit and suspension language is still applicable. The two NOAs would not be identical as shown above, as each form is designed specifically for different household reporting types; e.g., QR,

change reporting and monthly reporting households in counties which are not yet converted to QR.

6. **The quarterly cycle is January/February/March. The HH reports in March a change in California Food Assistance Program (CFAP) status effective March. Is the change effective by the first of the month following the change (April) by the end of the current quarter (March) or by the end of the next quarter (June)?**

Answer: CFAP "status change" occurs when an individual (legal noncitizen) who has been aided under the state-funded program becomes federally eligible, and therefore, is no longer eligible to CFAP. The county would evaluate the result of the change from state to federal to see if there is any impact on benefits. The change in status could end up just being a change in the funding source (federal vs. state) without any effect on the allotment. CFAP status changes will be acted upon by the CWD at the end of the month in which timely and adequate notice can be provided (see page 58 of ACL 03-18 under "County-Initiated Mid-quarter Actions").

7. **A) When a CFAP person is changed to Federal FS in the middle of the quarter, which is a CWD initiated change, must the CWD use income based on sponsor deeming mid-quarter, and decrease the benefits?
B) If the CWD changes a CFAP person to Federal FS in the middle of the quarter, and the client "opts out" of the HH due to fear of INS retribution, what action does the CWD take?**

A) A mid-quarter change in the status of a CFAP person would be considered information known to the county and, if the status change requires deemed income (from the sponsor) to be considered, the CWD would determine whether or not the change results in a decrease in benefits. The CWD will not decrease benefits mid-quarter due to sponsor deeming. Benefits will be decreased beginning with the next quarter.

B) Once approved for benefits, the client, a member of the certified household does not have the ability to "opt out." A noncitizen is able to "opt out" of being included as a member of the household only in the initial application process. Therefore, no action would be needed by the county other than making the change from CFAP to Federal FS. (References: ACIN I-97-01, Administrative Notice 00-66, MPP 63-300.55(b) (6), MPP 63-503.442).

8. **Mom and two children are receiving CW/FS in an EBT county. Dad with income moves in the HH the first month of the QR payment quarter. Adding Dad would cause a decrease in benefits, so the change is held until the next QR 7. Mom goes to jail in the 2nd month for shoplifting. Mom has not requested discontinuance. The CWD would want to discontinue mom's case at the end of the 2nd month so Dad could apply and receive his own EBT account.**

- A) Can the CWD discontinue Mom from the case at the end of the 2nd month with adequate 10-day notice?**
- B) Can Dad apply to establish his own case and EBT account?**
- C) Can Dad get an EBT card for mom's existing case when he is not in the AU?**

Answer: A) Under QR, benefits are "frozen" for the three months of the quarter and may only be decreased or discontinued during the quarter under limited circumstance, as specified in ACL 03-18. The CWD may only take action on those changes that result in an increase to the household's benefits. Mom leaving the home would be considered a mid-quarter change in household composition. Mom would be discontinued from the AU/HH with timely and adequate notice at the end of the quarter. The father, whose income would cause the grant to decrease, could be added to the AU/HH the first of the following quarter.

B) If Dad has applied for aid for himself and the two children and establishes care and control of the two children, Mom's case would be discontinued as soon as possible with adequate 10-day notice.

C) The CWD must assure that only eligible payees and their authorized representatives have access to the EBT account. If the father is not in the AU, the county cannot give the father an EBT card and PIN for Mom's EBT account. Since Dad cannot be added to the AU/HH because his income would cause a decrease to the grant, he can only have an EBT card for the mother's account if she consents to add him as an authorized representative or payee.

The Temp 2201 is required to be used when a recipient requests a designated alternate cardholder or authorized representative.

- 9. ACL 03-18 page 80 states that "A recommended supplemental form will be provided by CDSS in a Question and Answer ACL, which will be released under separate cover."**

Answer: CDSS has decided that it is not necessary to develop a supplemental form to transition from MRRB to QRPB. The only additional information needed from recipients for the transition is anticipated income and expenses. All other information is captured on the final CW 7. Counties may send the QR 7 along with the final CW 7, ask recipients to fill out question #8 and sign, date and return both the QR 7 and the CW 7. Alternatively counties may send a separate page with the final CW 7 having only Question #8 printed.