

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

744 P Street, Sacramento, California 95814



March 3, 2008

ALL COUNTY INFORMATION NOTICE NO. I-17-08

TO: ALL COUNTY WELFARE DIRECTORS
 ALL CalWORKs PROGRAM SPECIALISTS
 ALL COUNTY CONSORTIUM PROJECT MANAGERS

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) PROGRAM HOURS OF OPERATIONS

REFERENCE: All COUNTY LETTER (ACL) 94-108, ACL 95-08, MANUAL OF POLICIES
 AND PROCEDURES (MPP) SECTION 11-601, SECTION 63-205

The purpose of this notice is to remind counties of the requirements regarding County Welfare Departments (CWDs) hours of operations under the CalWORKs Program. These requirements were delineated in the Blanco v Anderson court case, to ensure that individuals could apply for and receive aid, including emergency benefits, when counties close their offices during regular office hours. The court order issued by the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals on February 16, 1995, also affected the Food Stamp and MediCal programs. However, this letter addresses CalWORKs only.

As stated in Manual of Policies and Procedures (MPP) Section 11-601.31, if a CWD closes its offices at any time during the regular eight hours of a working day, the CWD shall do all of the following during those hours of office closure:

- Provide individuals the opportunity to file an application for and receive CalWORKs cash aid within the time limits prescribed by state law.
- Make applications for CalWORKs readily available in hard copies to individuals.
- Provide a drop-box, mail slot, or other reasonable means for filing applications.

The CalWORKs regulations define normal working days as eight hours per day Monday through Friday, excluding federal and state holidays. CWDs are responsible for determining the location and hours of operation. Regular eight hours of a working day means the eight hours period the CWDs are open to the public. If counties choose to be closed during any normal working day, all mandated services must be provided using one or more of the following alternatives:

- Provide a drop-box or mail-slot to receive applications and to process such applications as though they had been submitted on the previous working day.
- Maintain a local telephone service with sufficient staff to accept and act upon all requests for emergency benefits as though such request were made in person at the welfare department's office.

ALL COUNTY INFORMATION NOTICE NO. I-17-08

Page Two

- Maintain sufficient staff during “closed” days to accept and process applications as necessary to meet requirements for Immediate Need, and Homeless Assistance. However, offices are not required to be open during specific hours on these days.

Counties shall prominently display a poster at the main entrance of all district offices listing available community resources necessary to meet needs for interim housing, food, and emergency medical services.

Counties shall also prominently display within their office and on public areas, including doors, immediately outside the county welfare department’s offices, the hours or days during working days when the office will be closed, the procedure for receiving and filing applications, and the procedures for applying and receiving emergency benefits, unless the county maintains sufficient staff in the office to provide this information in person.

The CWD’s incoming mainline telephone calls shall be greeted with an announcement informing the caller of the hours or days during working days when the office will be closed, the procedure for receiving and filing applications, and the procedures for applying and receiving emergency benefits.

Applications are to be made available for pick-up during normal business hours on all normal working days, even when county welfare offices are closed.

The counties may choose to implement other methods for compliance. However, any alternative methods developed must insure that the intent of the court order is satisfied regarding emergency services and application filling, and be reported to the California Department of Social Services. Currently the counties report the required information through the Annual Food Stamp Program Survey of Operations and Access.

If you have any questions or need further information regarding this letter, please contact your CalWORKs county consultant.

Sincerely,

Original Document Signed By:

KÄREN DICKERSON, Chief
Employment and Eligibility Branch

c: CWDA
CSAC