



CDSS

WILL LIGHTBOURNE  
DIRECTOR

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

744 P Street • Sacramento, CA 95814 • www.cdss.ca.gov



EDMUND G. BROWN JR.  
GOVERNOR

March 19, 2015

ALL COUNTY LETTER NO. 15-21

TO: ALL COUNTY WELFARE DIRECTORS  
ALL CALWORKS PROGRAM SPECIALISTS  
ALL WELFARE-TO-WORK COORDINATORS  
ALL COUNTY REFUGEE COORDINATORS  
ALL COUNTY CALFRESH SPECIALISTS  
ALL CONSORTIA REPRESENTATIVES

SUBJECT: CALIFORNIA WORK OPPORTUNITY AND RESPONSIBILITY TO  
KIDS (CaWORKs) PROGRAM: RELEASE OF SIXTH SET OF  
QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS FOR SENATE BILL (SB) 1041  
(CHAPTER 47, STATUTES OF 2012) CaWORKs  
WELFARE-TO-WORK (WTW) PROGRAM CHANGES

REFERENCE: SB 1041; ALL COUNTY LETTERS (ACLs) 12-67, 12-69,  
12-72, 13-01, 13-02, 13-12, 13-37, 13-59, 13-68, and 14-16;  
WELFARE AND INSTITUTIONS CODE (WIC) SECTIONS  
11320.3, 11322.8, and 11322.85; MANUAL OF POLICIES AND  
PROCEDURES (MPP) SECTION 42-721.43.

The purpose of this letter is to provide answers to questions that the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) has received about the implementation instructions issued to County Welfare Departments (CWDs) for major changes that were made to CalWORKs WTW requirements pursuant to SB 1041, codified in WIC sections 11320.3, 11322.8, and 11322.85. This letter addresses general questions regarding:

1. When to change the hourly participation requirement when one parent in a two-parent assistance unit becomes eligible for a disability exemption;
2. When months are counted toward the CalWORKs federal standards 12-month lifetime limit for vocational education;
3. Reengagement of sanctioned clients who received a temporary young child exemption; and
4. Issuance of the WTW 38 form.

REASON FOR THIS TRANSMITTAL

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

Initial implementation instructions for these program changes are contained in ACLs 12-67 and 12-69. The first, second, third, fourth, and fifth set of answers to questions relating to these program changes are contained in ACL 13-15, ACL 13-37, ACL 13-59, ACL 13-68, and ACL 14-16, respectively. Attached is the sixth set of answers to questions relating to these program changes (Attachment A).

If you have any questions or need further information regarding this letter, please contact the following CDSS representatives:

- CalWORKs Eligibility County Consultant (916) 654-1322
- Employment Bureau County Consultant (916) 654-2137
- Child Care Programs (916) 657-2144
- Program Integrity (WDTIP) (916) 654-2125
- Refugee Programs (916) 654-4356
- Federal Data Reporting & Analysis (916) 657-3659

Sincerely,

***Original Document Signed By:***

TODD R. BLAND  
Deputy Director  
Welfare to Work Division

Attachments

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

**Hourly Participation Requirements:**

1. Q. When one parent in a two-parent assistance unit becomes eligible for a WTW disability exemption, must the CWD change the basis for deprivation for eligibility purposes to incapacity before reducing the hourly requirement from a 35-hour to a 20- or 30- hour per week minimum requirement, as described in ACL 14-16 question and answer number one?
  - A. No. When one parent becomes eligible for a WTW disability exemption, the CWD must change the WTW hourly participation requirement, effective in the month in which the disability is granted. Please note that the reduction in required hours must apply for the entire month in which the exemption is effective for any length of time. Although the CWD may formally review the basis for deprivation at a later time, it is appropriate to reduce the hours immediately. For example, counties that review deprivation only at the transition between Semi-Annual Reporting (SAR) periods may change the hourly requirement mid-SAR period.

**Vocational Education**

2. Q. Does the 12-month lifetime limit for counting vocational education as a core activity for CalWORKs federal standards apply to clients who are utilizing the WTW 24-Month Time Clock?
  - A. No. Clients who have months remaining on their federal 12-month time limit for vocational education, but choose to use the WTW 24-Month Time Clock while participating in vocational education hours will not have months count toward the 12-month limit on vocational education, unless the client's participation meets CalWORKs federal standards, and the core hourly requirement is met with vocational education.

Clients scheduled to use the WTW 24-Month Time Clock will have months retroactively restored to their 24-month time clock if the county determines, based on work verification documentation, that CalWORKs federal standards were met in a previous month, as described in question number two in ACL 13-59. Months retroactively restored due to meeting CalWORKs federal standards, when the core hourly requirement is met with an activity(ies) other than vocational education, do not count toward the 12-month vocational education time limit. Any vocational education hours must be counted as job skills training or education directly related to employment (federal non-core

activities) when the core hourly requirement is met through other activities. However, months retroactively restored due to meeting CalWORKs federal standards, when vocational education hours are counted to meet the core hourly requirement, count toward the 12-month time limit.

Example #1: Ben is a single father with a child under six. He is scheduled to use the WTW 24-Month Time Clock. Ben still has time remaining on his 12-month vocational education limit. His WTW plan includes 10 hours of employment and 10 hours of vocational education. However, Ben turns in his participation verification for the month of June on July 7 showing that he worked 20 hours per week and attended college for 4 hours a day on every Monday and Wednesday. Since Ben is meeting CalWORKs federal standards by working 20 hours per week, Ben's 12-month vocational limit will not get counted and his hours in class would be counted as non-core job skills training. The month of June will be restored on Ben's WTW 24-Month Time Clock and the month will not count toward the CalWORKs federal standards 12-month vocational education limit.

3. Q. Does the 12-month lifetime limit for counting vocational education as a core activity for CalWORKs federal standards apply for clients who are exempt or excused clients who are volunteering?
  - A. No. Clients who participate in vocational education as an exempt or excused volunteer will not have months count toward the CalWORKs federal standards 12-month limit.
  
4. Q. Can clients use vocational education as a core activity, even when the client has used months countable toward or exhausted his or her TANF 12-month lifetime limit prior to January 1, 2013?
  - A. The 12 months of education countable under CalWORKs federal standards is aligned to the TANF 12-month lifetime limit on vocational education as a core activity. Clients who have already used some of the 12 months countable toward the federal vocational education limit prior to January 1, 2013, will have only the number of months remaining on the federal 12-month limit to count under CalWORKs federal standards. Clients who have used all 12 federally-countable months of vocational education are also considered to have exhausted the 12 months of countable core vocational education for CalWORKs federal standards. When the client is scheduled to meet CalWORKs federal standards after reaching the 12-month vocational education limit, vocational education hours will be counted as non-core job skills training or education directly related to employment only. In this situation, the core hourly requirement for CalWORKs federal standards must be met through other, non-educational activities.

## Reengagement

5. Q. If a client in the reengagement population is sanctioned for failing to participate in the reengagement process, how should the CWD proceed? When the client enters the process of curing his or her sanction, does the client have to complete the reengagement process?

A. Clients exempt as of December 2012 under the Assembly Bill (AB) X4 4 short-term young child exemptions were required to be reengaged back into the WTW program by January 1, 2015. A CWD may have begun the reengagement process with a client between January 1, 2013 and January 1, 2015, though was unable to complete reengagement due to the client being non-compliant with the reengagement process. As a result, the client would have been sanctioned.

If a client in this particular situation opted to cure his or her sanction prior to January 1, 2015, the CWD was required to meet all remaining components of the reengagement process which were not completed when the CWD had originally attempted to reengage this client, prior to considering the client reengaged and counting time towards the WTW 24-Month Time Clock or CalWORKs 48-month time limit.

If a client in this situation opts to cure his or her sanction any time after January 1, 2015, he or she would cure a sanction according to the existing policies found in MPP Section 42-721.43, in order to become a participant in the WTW program.

As of January 1, 2015, all CWDs are instructed to move clients who were sanctioned due to not complying with the reengagement process and are still in sanction status from Welfare Data Tracking Implementation Project (WDTIP) Code 317 into the appropriate WDTIP code for sanctioned clients.

## WTW 38

6. Q. What is the required notification period for the WTW 24-Month Time Clock Notice (WTW 38)?

A. Once the CWD receives verification and otherwise determines that a client, who is in a WTW plan designed to meet CalWORKs federal standards, is not meeting CalWORKs federal standards, the CWD should send the WTW 38 to the client as soon as administratively feasible. As a best practice, CWDs should send the notice no later than 30 days from the date they receive verification and otherwise determine the client is not meeting CalWORKs federal standards. The issuance of the notice does not control whether time counts toward his or her WTW

24-Month Time Clock. This is a courtesy notice to the client and more information is contained in ACL 13-59, question number three.