

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

744 P Street, Sacramento, California 95814



November 10, 2003

ALL COUNTY LETTER NO. 03-57

TO: ALL COUNTY WELFARE DIRECTORS
ALL CalWORKs PROGRAM SPECIALISTS
ALL REFUGEE COORDINATORS
ALL FOOD STAMP COORDINATORS
ALL 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: QUARTERLY REPORTING INCOME REPORTING THRESHOLD (IRT)
CHART AND INFORMING REQUIREMENTS FOR CALIFORNIA WORK
OPPORTUNITY AND RESPONSIBILITY TO KIDS (CalWORKs)

REFERENCE: ACL 03-18, ACIN I-53-03, WELFARE AND INSTITUTIONS CODE
SECTION 11453

The purpose of this letter is to transmit the 2003 IRT chart and informing requirements necessary for the implementation of the Quarterly Reporting/Prospective Budgeting (QR/PB) system in the CalWORKs and Food Stamp Programs (FSP.) The California Department of Social Services (CDSS) has developed the attached IRT chart to provide the county welfare departments (CWDs) clarifying information regarding this new reporting change.

Defining the IRT

The IRT is the greater of 130 percent of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL) for the number of people who are included in the Family Maximum Aid Payment (MAP) or the income amount that would render the assistance unit (AU) ineligible to CalWORKs. Income that must be reported for IRT purposes is the same as income that is required to be reported for determining cash eligibility and grant amount. This includes income of sanctioned, penalized, excluded, and timed out individuals. The income to the AU includes the income and/or needs of persons not in the AU who were included in the determination of income eligibility and grant amounts in the Family MAP. A CalWORKs recipient will be expected to report when the total combined income, earned and unearned, of the AU exceeds the IRT. (Note: AUs that have no income or have unearned income only will be required to report if they receive new earnings that, once combined with other household income, exceeds the IRT in mid-quarter. AUs with unearned income only are not required to report when that income by itself exceeds the IRT in mid-quarter.)

Example:

Mom, dad, and two children are living in the home. Mom is an undocumented noncitizen and is not aided. Dad is not aided due to being sanctioned for failing to comply with Welfare-to-Work requirements. The two children are aided. In this case, we have an AU of two (the children) and a Family MAP of three (mom's needs are included in the Family MAP.) If Dad is working or has other income, his income counts, but his needs are not considered, because he is sanctioned and he is not included in the Family MAP. The IRT size for this family will be three, but the family must report income from all four household members. If Dad's income combined with all other income, exceeds the IRT standards for a family of three, the family must report it. The family becomes ineligible when the total income is high enough to take a family of three off aid.

(Note: An AU is not mandatorily required to report mid-quarter when a new AU/household member has income in excess of the IRT if that person was not required to report income that was used for determining cash eligibility and grant amount. Even if the AU/household inadvertently makes a voluntary report to add the new person and his/her income would exceed the IRT for the current AU, the CWD shall not discontinue the AU/household in mid-quarter because of financial ineligibility due to income of persons not required to report.)

Informing Recipients of their IRT

The informing notice that provides the IRT limits must be individualized for each CalWORKs case. The CWD shall inform each household of their IRT at the following times: 1) at least once a quarter; 2) at redetermination/recertification; 3) anytime there are changes in the CalWORKs AU or Family MAP size; 4) when there is a change of persons who are required to report income; and 5) upon recipient request. Additionally, the AU must be informed of the new IRT amount anytime the IRT chart is updated. CWDs are to use current IRT levels for recipients when determining eligibility. Therefore, the IRT level the recipient was last notified of will be used for reporting purposes until the CWD has had an opportunity to update the recipient of any applicable IRT change.

Due to differences in automation and other county practices, CWDs may inform recipients of the IRT requirements on the QR 7, on the Notice of Action used to add or remove AU members, or on a separate informing notice. In addition, CWDs may provide general IRT information during the initial three-month informing period during QR county implementation. Once the county has established quarterly reporting, the CWD shall follow notification rules regarding individualized IRT levels as instructed in ACL 03-18.

IRT Chart

The figures on the attached IRT chart (Attachment I) are based on the June 2003 CalWORKs MAP levels and the October 2003 Food Stamp FPL. The MAP levels will not change at this time due to the suspension of the MAP COLA in October 2003. IRT charts will be updated thereafter when MAP amounts change and Food Stamp FPL are released. CDSS will notify counties of any changes to the IRT chart.

Refugee Cash Assistance

Since aid payment for Refugee Cash Assistance (RCA) cases is based on CalWORKs regulations, the above shall apply to the RCA Program.

Forms/Notices

The mass informing notice, Quarterly Reporting Information, TEMP QR 1 has been modified to provide recipients with information regarding their reporting requirements. The TEMP QR 1 informs recipients to report income over the IRT amount for their AU/Household. The reference to the AU/Household was changed to family. The new TEMP QR 1 is included as an attachment. Counties will provide the TEMP QR 1 to recipients prior to their county's implementation of the QR/PB system. The TEMP QR 1 will not substitute for counties informing recipients of their individualized IRT size and income level. Counties can refer to ACL 03-18 for more a detailed description of additional QR forms and notices.

Please direct any questions regarding the CalWORKs IRT chart to Vince Toolan of the CalWORKs Eligibility Bureau (CEB) at (916) 654-1808. For questions regarding the CalWORKs AU and QR forms/notices, you may contact Shawn Bradley of CEB at (916) 653-8675. For any questions regarding the Food Stamp FPL, you may contact Varaniece Hall of the Food Stamp Branch at (916) 657-3500. For questions regarding the Refugee Program, please contact Kathy Noble at (916) 654-4356.

Sincerely,
Original signed on 11/10/03
BRUCE WAGSTAFF
Deputy Director
Welfare to Work Division

Attachments

c: CWDA
CSAC