

California CalWORKs Outcomes and Accountability Review (Cal-OAR) Performance Measure Frequently Asked Questions

Contents

CalWORKs Outcomes and Accountability Review (Cal-OAR) Files 101.....	3
2. What am I supposed to do with the Cal-OAR files that I get from California Department of Social Services (CDSS) every month/quarter?	3
3. When do I get the files each month?.....	4
4. How long do files stay in the Secure Automated File Exchange (SAFE)/ Secure File Transfer (SFT) site?	4
5. How do I find out who in my county has access to the Secure Automated File Exchange (SAFE)/Secure File Transfer (SFT) site?	5
6. Can you please provide us with the files from a current or previous time period?	5
7. How can I get permission to access individual-level data files for Phase 0 performance measures?.....	6
8. What does a * mean in the files?	7
9. Where can I find the crosswalk to help manually validate Cal-OAR performance measures?.....	7
10. When manually validating the Cal-OAR 19 files and comparing them with the measure calculations in the workbooks, I keep getting a discrepancy. What should I do?	7
Cal-OAR Dashboard	8
11. How do we suppress or mask our county's performance measure data from the Cal-OAR dashboard.....	8
12. Why can't I see certain measures on the dashboard?.....	8
13. If our data is de-identified on the dashboard, how are we supposed to validate our data for the County Self-Assessment (CSA)?	9
14. The Americans with Disability Act (ADA) dashboard posted to the website is not comprehensive for our county or is missing data.	9
15. How the data is recorded when a client marks two (2) ethnicities, which ethnicity appears on the dashboard?	10
County Self-Assessment (CSA) Data.....	10
16. Which months of data were used for the first cycle Cal-CSA reports?	10
17. Which months of data will be used for the second cycle Cal-CSA reports?.....	11
Consortia-Related	13
18. I'm having a problem with California Statewide Automated Welfare System (CalSAWS) data. Can you help?	13

19. Does California Statewide Automated Welfare System (CalSAWS) have a feature that allows us to view our data before it is submitted to CDSS?	13
20. What is the difference between the CalSAWS County Preview reports and the Cal-OAR 19 reports that CDSS provides to counties via the SAFE site every month?	13
Online CalWORKs Appraisal Tool (OCAT) Data.....	14
21. How can I access my county's OCAT data?	14
Performance Measure Populations	14
22. Are RCA (Refugee Cash Assistance) populations included in the performance measure calculations?	14
23. Are Trafficking and Crime Victims Assistance Program (TCVAP)	15
Phase 0 Performance Measure Specifics	15
24. Does the Cal-OAR measure "Rate of Program Reentries" track if a client re-enters CalWORKs in another county?	15
Phase 1 Performance Measure Specifics	15
25. Is the sanction rate calculated based on newly sanctioned cases each month?	15
26. How can we distinguish between long-term sanction and regular sanction cases in the Cal-OAR 19 files?	16
27. When manually validating sanction resolution rate utilizing the Cal-OAR 19 files, I could not exactly replicate the results in the workbook. Why is this?.....	16
28. Why are clients in Good Cause status included in the denominator of Engagement Rate and OCAT/Appraisal Completion Timeliness Rate measures?	17
29. Why does there appear to be a difference between the Cal-OAR sanction rate and the sanction data derived from WTW 25/25A?.....	17
Phase 2 Performance Measure Specifics	19
30. When will the Phase 2 measures be produced?	19
31. Where should counties enter in their Home Visiting Program (HVP) data in the California Statewide Automated Welfare System (CalSAWS) screens?	19
Recent changes to the California Statewide Automated Welfare System (CalSAWS) logic of Cal-OAR variables	20
32. Engagement Rate Programming Changes	20
33. OCAT/Appraisal Completion Timeliness Rate Programming Changes	20
34. OCAT/Appraisal to Next Activity Timeliness Rate Changes	21
Term Definitions	23

CalWORKs Outcomes and Accountability Review (Cal-OAR) Files 101

1. Can you provide us with a comprehensive data dictionary or reporting guide?

[ACL 19-40](#) is the data dictionary detailing how each metric is calculated. Additionally, the [crosswalks](#) walk you through each step so that you can manually filter the Cal-OAR 19 files in a way that mimics the CDSS code-generated workbooks.

2. What am I supposed to do with the Cal-OAR files that I get from California Department of Social Services (CDSS) every month/quarter?

Phase 0

For Phase 0 performance measures, you are sent a quarterly workbook transmittal via email, which contains all of the calculated Phase 0 measures for your counties. This is a De-identified (DI) Workbook, which means that data has been de-identified according to our data security guidelines. Please utilize [CHHS Data De-Identification Guidelines v1.0](#) for further details on de-identification. When you receive your workbook, you may review the measure calculations. However, counties are not required to do so.

Phase 1

For Phase 1 performance measures, you are sent a monthly workbook transmittal via email, which contains all of the calculated Phase 1 measures for your counties. This is a De-identified (DI) Workbook, which means that data has been de-identified according to our data security guidelines. Please utilize [CHHS Data De-Identification Guidelines v1.0](#) for further details on de-identification. Typically, this only impacts instances where the number of participants is less than 11 for a given measure.

A few days after emailing the Phase 1 workbooks, the Cal-OAR 19 individual-level files are uploaded to your individual county Secure Automated File Exchange (SAFE) site. Please allow up to one week after you receive the workbooks for the Cal-OAR 19 files to be uploaded. CDSS provides the individual-level data to support performance measure calculation review for counties that are reviewing the Phase 1 performance measures. However, there is no requirement for counties to do manual validation. Files are automatically removed after the 30-day period has passed.

Phase 2A

For Phase 2A performance measures, you are sent a monthly and quarterly workbook transmittal via email, which contains all of the calculated Phase 2 measures for your counties. This is a De-Identified (DI) Workbook, which means that data has been de-identified according to our data security guidelines. Please utilize [CHHS Data De-](#)

[Identification Guidelines v1.0](#) for further details on de-identification. This should only impact some of your data.

A few days after emailing the Phase 2 workbooks, the Cal-OAR 19 individual-level files are uploaded to your individual county Secure Automated File Exchange (SAFE) site. Please allow up to one week after you receive the workbooks for the Cal-OAR 19 files to be uploaded. CDSS provides the individual-level data to support performance measure calculation review for counties that are reviewing the Phase 2 performance measures. However, there is no requirement for counties to do manual validation. Files are automatically removed after the 30-day period has passed.

Phase 2B

Phase 2B performance measures are still under development. Counties will be informed when these measures are forthcoming.

3. [When do I get the files each month?](#)

Your performance measure workbook will be emailed to you towards the end of the month, or the first week of the following month. The email will notify you which transmittal month the workbook corresponds to. For instance, a Phase 1 performance measure workbook for the month of January will be emailed to you around January 31st or the first week of February. A performance measure workbook for the month of March will be emailed to you around March 31st or the first week of April.

The Cal-OAR 19 individual-level data files will be uploaded to your respective Secure Automated File Exchange (SAFE)/Secure File Transfer (SFT) Sites within one week following the day that the workbooks are emailed to you. The email with the performance measure workbook will specify the date until which you can review the workbook and Cal-OAR 19 individual-level data files before the review period ends and the data will be prepared to be uploaded to the Cal-OAR dashboard.

4. [How long do files stay in the Secure Automated File Exchange \(SAFE\)/ Secure File Transfer \(SFT\) site?](#)

The Cal-OAR 19 files containing individual-level data for Phase 1 performance measures are uploaded to the SFT/SAFE Site monthly. The SAFE Site retention period is 30 days. Following that, they will automatically be removed. Please ensure that your county downloads the necessary files in a timely manner so that you do not lose access to the files.

5. How do I find out who in my county has access to the Secure Automated File Exchange (SAFE)/Secure File Transfer (SFT) site?

Each county can have two users registered to access the SAFE/SFT Site. If you are unsure who has an account for your county, please reach out to your Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) specialist. If you would like more information on how to register or change the registered users for your SAFE/SFT Site, please ask your CQI specialist.

6. Can you please provide us with the files from a current or previous time period?

CDSS highly recommends that counties get in the habit of saving the supporting documentation and data resources that are sent via encrypted email or uploaded to the Secure File Transfer (SFT) every month. We recommend these be saved in a shared drive. Due to workload constraints, it is difficult for CDSS to process one-off requests for counties to pull their missing historical files. We will add your request to the queue.

File requested	Do counties get these?	Delivery mechanism	Can the files be re-sent to counties?
Phase 0 DI workbooks	These are emailed directly to the county every quarter. Search email inbox.	Email on quarterly basis	Yes, email CQI specialist.
Phase 0 Non-DI workbooks	CDSS cannot share these unless the county has an EDD MOU.	No regular delivery mechanism. May be sent as an encrypted email or upload to SFT if needed.	No. Not unless the county has an EDD MOU on file. Email CQI specialist.
Phase 0 individual-level data files	CDSS cannot share these unless the county has an EDD MOU. Please see question directly related to this for more details.	No regular delivery mechanism. May be sent as an encrypted email or upload to SFT if needed.	No. Not unless the county has an EDD MOU on file. Email CQI Specialist.
Phase 1 DI workbooks	These get emailed directly to the county every month. Search email inbox.	Email on monthly basis	Yes, email CQI specialist.
Phase 1 Non-DI workbooks	These are not routinely sent out but CDSS can send to counties upon request.	No regular delivery mechanism. May be sent as an encrypted email or	Yes. Counties are allowed access to these workbooks without special

File requested	Do counties get these?	Delivery mechanism	Can the files be re-sent to counties?
		upload to SFT if needed.	permission. Email CQI specialist.
Phase 1 individual-level data files	These are the Cal-OAR 19 files. Counties receive these through their SFT/SAFE site every month, a few days after the Phase 1 transmittal is emailed to them.	SFT/SAFE site on monthly basis	Yes, email CQI specialist.
Phase 2A DI workbooks	These get emailed directly to the county every month. Search email inbox.	SFT/SAFE site on monthly basis	Yes, email CQI specialist.
Phase 2A Non-DI workbooks	These are not routinely sent out but CDSS can send to counties upon request.	No regular delivery mechanism. May be sent as an encrypted email or upload to SFT if needed.	Yes. Counties are allowed access to these workbooks without special permission. Email CQI specialist.
Phase 2A individual-level data files	These are the Cal-OAR 19 files. Counties receive these through their SFT/SAFE site every month, a few days after the Phase 1 transmittal is emailed to them.	SFT/SAFE site on monthly basis.	Yes, email CQI specialist.

7. How can I get permission to access individual-level data files for Phase 0 performance measures?

These measures are calculated using data that come to CDSS from partner state agencies, such as Employment Development Department (EDD). CDSS receives the data for calculations but cannot independently verify the source data.

Counties have the option of receiving individual-level data for Phase 0 measures. To do this, your county must sign a confidentiality agreement with EDD. For more information about this process, please reference the All County Information Notice [ACIN I-78-22](#). The agreement takes a minimum of 4-5 months to process.

Once the agreement is in place, your county will begin receiving individual-level data files for Phase 0 measures, which will be uploaded to your county Secure File Transfer (SFT) after each transmittal is sent out. You will also receive a non-De-identified version of your Phase 0 workbook. Please be advised that CDSS cannot assist with validating data used for Phase 0 measures. For more information about how those measures are calculated, please refer to [ACL 19-40](#).

8. What does a * mean in the files?

If you see a * in the data, it means that the data has been de-identified according to the de-identification guidelines. Any value representing aggregated or summarized records which are derived from less than 11 individuals (clients) are de-identified. There is an additional layer of complexity to de-identification. CDSS ensures that it is impossible to back-calculate to figure out what the masked numbers represent. This means that we have to mask other sub-categories so that the de-identified category cannot be back-calculated.

Please see the [CHHS Data De-Identification Guidelines v1.0](#) for more information regarding the de-identification process.

9. Where can I find the crosswalk to help manually validate Cal-OAR performance measures?

Here is a link to the crosswalks page on the CDSS website: [Crosswalks](#)

If you have any questions about how to utilize this crosswalk, feel free to reach out to your CQI specialist.

10. When manually validating the Cal-OAR 19 files and comparing them with the measure calculations in the workbooks, I keep getting a discrepancy. What should I do?

Start by referring to the timeline calculator for the particular measure that you are reviewing. They can be found on the following page: [Cal-OAR County Toolkit](#). Scroll down to the section titled “Data Toolkit.” Ensure that you are comparing the transmittal month with the correct measurement month.

Once you have done that, follow the steps in the performance measure [crosswalks](#) If you have not already done so.

If there is still a discrepancy, this could be due to multiple reasons. The consortia generated files can have idiosyncrasies that the CDSS code adjusts for, such as duplicate Client Index Numbers (CINS), invalid program entry dates, invalid date of

birth, etc. across statewide data. While we have adjusted the CDSS code to accommodate these idiosyncrasies over time, they cannot always be readily replicated during manual validation. Moreover, there are differences in the way that the Statistical Analysis System (SAS) code and Excel perform de-duplication.

If the observed error rate is less than 1.5%, this is a reasonable error rate given the above listed idiosyncrasies. Absent other extenuating factors (e.g., cross-county trends, resulting in a change in the prevailing trends, etc.), this error generally will not result in an in-depth data mine to identify the root cause. If the discrepancy between the code-generated workbook rate and the Cal-OAR 19 files is greater than 1.5%, you are welcome to reach out to CDSS. We will review the question and determine whether it warrants a root cause analysis.

Overall, we would like to reiterate that the purpose of data validation is for counties to establish a baseline of confidence that the calculations are reasonably accurate and are reasonably aligned with the prevailing county trends, absent any policy change to explain the inflection point.

Cal-OAR Dashboard

11. [How do we suppress or mask our county's performance measure data from the Cal-OAR dashboard.](#)

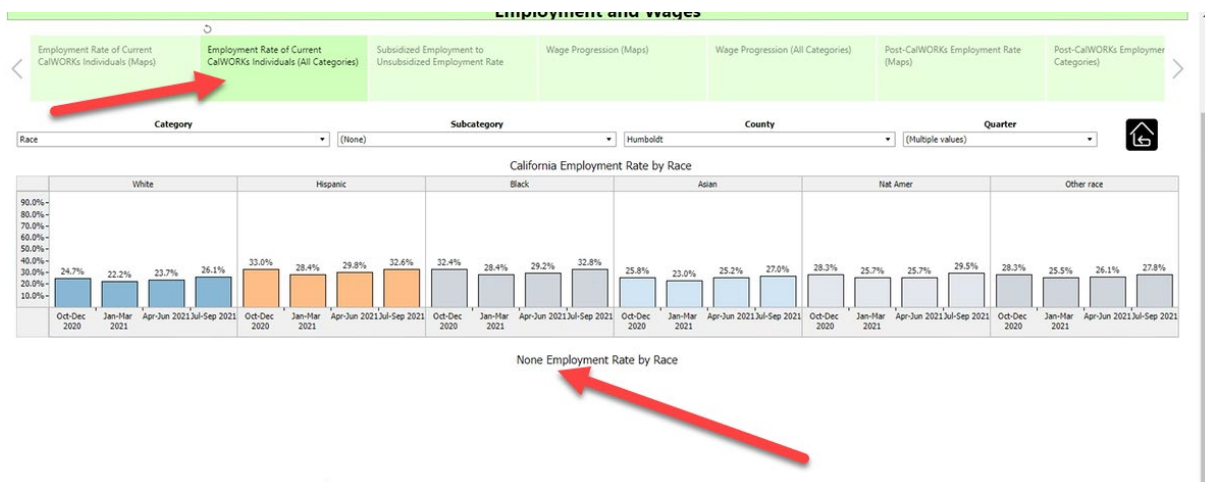
Email your CQI specialist your request. Please specify which measure and measurement months the county would like to suppress.

12. [Why can't I see certain measures on the dashboard?](#)

This could be due to multiple reasons:

- There could have been a prior request to mask performance measures, or
- Data has been de-identified according to the department's de-identification guidelines for data privacy. Below are some of the most common conditions that trigger data de-identification.
 - Any value representing aggregated or summarized records which are derived from less than 11 individuals (clients) are de-identified
 - There is an additional layer of complexity. We have to make sure it is impossible back-calculate to figure out what the masked numbers represent. This means that we have to mask other sub-categories so that the de-identified category cannot be back-calculated. Please see the [CHHS Data De-Identification Guidelines v1.0](#) for more information regarding the de-identification process.

- **Functionality Issues**
 - Regardless of whether a county has data or not (say they have 0 or they have too few, <11) and they are still having trouble with viewing their data on the dashboard, it will still show *something*. As in, if it is true 0, it will show a 0; and if the pool is too small, it will show a (*).
 - The example below shows functionality issues, and are easy fixes for CDSS. Send the an email to your CQI specialist that you see a functionality issue, and CDSS will work to have it fixed.
 - **Please note, most often a functionality fix will not be instituted until the next dashboard posting cycle. For additional information please see the [Cal-OAR Phase 1 Timelines Calculator](#) – Make sure you download a copy. The web version does not allow for formulas to function correctly.**



- There could be other issues, and if so, please send the request to your CQI Specialist and we will prioritize as needed.

13. If our data is de-identified on the dashboard, how are we supposed to validate our data for the County Self-Assessment (CSA)?

You can utilize your Cal-OAR 19 files to manually calculate your performance measure data. This will allow you to see all of the individual records included in a calculation, even when the numerator is lower than 11.

14. The Americans with Disability Act (ADA) dashboard posted to the website is not comprehensive for our county or is missing data.

Please reach out to your CQI specialist.

15. How the data is recorded when a client marks two (2) ethnicities, which ethnicity appears on the dashboard?

Cal-OAR performance measures only use the primary race/ethnicity field.

County Self-Assessment (CSA) Data

16. Which months of data were used for the first cycle Cal-CSA reports?

Monthly Measures Table

NOTE: The top row is the TRANSMITTAL month.

The following months in subsequent rows are the MEASUREMENT months.

	November 2021	December 2021	January 2022	February 2022	March 2022	April 2022
Sanction Rate	July 2021	August 2021	September 2021	October 2021	November 2021	December 2021
Sanction Resolution Rate	July 2021	August 2021	September 2021	October 2021	November 2021	December 2021
Orientation Attendance Rate	July 2021	August 2021	September 2021	October 2021	November 2021	December 2021
OCAT Completion Timeliness Rate	July 2021	August 2021	September 2021	October 2021	November 2021	December 2021
Engagement Rate	April 2021	May 2021	June 2021	July 2021	August 2021	September 2021
First Activity Attendance Rate	April 2021	May 2021	June 2021	July 2021	August 2021	September 2021

Quarterly Measures Table

NOTE: The top row is the month the TRANSMITTAL is sent.

The quarters (Q1, Q2, Q3 and Q4) in subsequent rows are the MEASUREMENT QUARTER.

	July 2021	October 2021	January 2022	April 2022
Employment Rate	2020 Q4	2021 Q1	2021 Q2	2021 Q3
Wage Progression: Cohort 1	2019 Q4	2020 Q1	2020 Q2	2020 Q3
Wage Progression: Cohort 2	2020 Q2	2020 Q3	2020 Q4	2021 Q1
Post CalWORKs Employment Rate: Cohort 1	2019 Q4	2020 Q1	2020 Q2	2020 Q3
Post CalWORKs Employment Rate: Cohort 2	2020 Q2	2020 Q3	2020 Q4	2021 Q1
Exits with Earnings	2020 Q4	2021 Q1	2021 Q2	2021 Q3
Rate of Program Reentries w/in 12 Months of Exit	2019 Q4	2020 Q1	2020 Q2	2020 Q3
Reentries After Exits with Earnings	2019 Q4	2020 Q1	2020 Q2	2020 Q4

17. Which months of data will be used for the second cycle Cal-CSA reports?

Important: The top row for the first cycle of the Monthly Measures Table in Question #15 was the transmittal month, however, for the second cycle of the Monthly Measures Table below is the measurement month.

Monthly Measures Table

NOTE: The top row is the MEASUREMENT month.
The subsequent months are the TRANSMITTAL month.

	July 2025	August 2025	September 2025	October 2025	November 2025	December 2025
Sanction Rate	November 2025	December 2025	January 2026	February 2026	March 2026	April 2026
Sanction Resolution Rate	November 2025	December 2025	January 2026	February 2026	March 2026	April 2026
Orientation Attendance Rate	November 2025	December 2025	January 2026	February 2026	March 2026	April 2026
OCAT Completion Timeliness Rate	November 2025	December 2025	January 2026	February 2026	March 2026	April 2026
Engagement Rate	February 2026	March 2026	April 2026	February 2026	June 2026	July 2026
First Activity Attendance Rate	February 2026	March 2026	April 2026	February 2026	June 2026	July 2026
Ancillary Services Access Rate	November 2025	December 2025	January 2026	February 2026	March 2026	April 2026
Family Stabilization Transitions to WTW	February 2026	March 2026	April 2026	May 2026	June 2026	July 2026
OCAT to Next Activity Timeliness	November 2025	December 2025	January 2026	February 2026	March 2026	April 2026

Quarterly Measures Table

NOTE: The top row is the MEASUREMENT quarter.

The months in the subsequent rows are the TRANSMITTAL months.

	January 2025 – March 2025	April 2025 – June 2025	July 2025 – September 2025	October 2025 – December 2025
Employment Rate	September 2025	December 2025	March 2026	June 2026
Wage Progression: Cohort 1	September 2026	December 2026	March 2027	June 2027
Wage Progression: Cohort 2	March 2026	June 2026	September 2026	December 2026
Post CalWORKs Employment Rate: Cohort 1	September 2026	December 2026	March 2027	June 2027
Post CalWORKs Employment Rate: Cohort 2	March 2026	June 2026	September 2026	December 2026
Exits with Earnings	September 2025	December 2025	March 2026	June 2026
Rate of Program Reentries w/in 12 Months of Exit	September 2026	December 2026	March 2027	June 2027
Reentries After Exits with Earnings	September 2026	December 2026	March 2027	June 2027
Education and Skill Development Utilization	June 2025	September 2025	December 2025	March 2026

Semi-annual Measures Table

NOTE: The top row identifies the MEASUREMENT months.

The month in the subsequent rows are the TRANSMITTAL month.

	July 2025 – December 2025
Home Visiting to Welfare-to-Work Engagement Rate	March 2026
Child Care Access Rate	March 2026
Educational Completion Rate	March 2026

Annual Measures Table

NOTE: The top row is the MEASUREMENT months.
The months in subsequent rows are the TRANSMITTAL month.

	August 2025 – July 2026
Improved Literacy, Basic Skills, and English Language Acquisition Rate	October 2026
Community College Progress Rate	October 2026

Consortia-Related

18. I'm having a problem with California Statewide Automated Welfare System (CalSAWS) data. Can you help?

Counties should reach out to CDSS with any questions related to Cal-OAR data in CalSAWS. CDSS will review the question to determine whether it needs to be forwarded to CalSAWS. If forwarded to CalSAWS, the county will be copied on the email.

19. Does California Statewide Automated Welfare System (CalSAWS) have a feature that allows us to view our data before it is submitted to CDSS?

The Cal-OAR County Preview reports allow counties a preview of the Cal-OAR data and the opportunity to update the data as needed before the data file due date. The preview reports use the query used in the files submitted to CDSS. This was deployed in January 2025. These reports cannot pull data from previous reporting periods. Please direct questions regarding the functionality of these reports to CalSAWS.

20. What is the difference between the CalSAWS County Preview reports and the Cal-OAR 19 reports that CDSS provides to counties via the SAFE site every month?

The CalSAWS County Preview reports enable counties to review their Cal-OAR data *before* it is submitted to CDSS. This provides them an opportunity to correct any errors during the data lag period and adjust in “real-time.”

CDSS provides Cal-OAR 19 reports to each county through their individual SAFE Site *after* using them to generate the Cal-OAR performance measure workbooks on a monthly, quarterly, semi-annual, or annual basis. These Cal-OAR 19 reports enable counties to validate individual-level data that is derived from CalSAWS. However, these reports are provided *after* they have been utilized to calculate the measures, and the

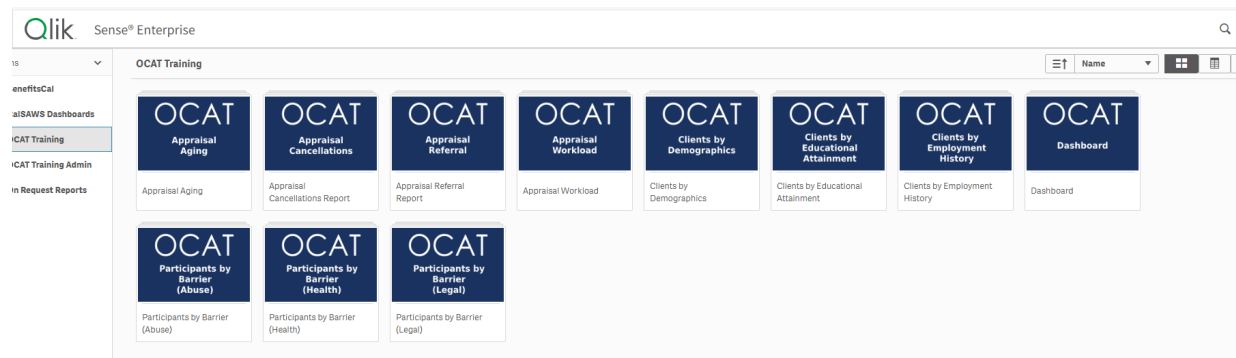
data can no longer be adjusted. They allow counties an opportunity to adjust for future measurement periods, but not to make “real-time” changes.

Online CalWORKs Appraisal Tool (OCAT) Data

21. How can I access my county's OCAT data?

The OCAT application provides reports to users with the appropriate security profile. County Delegated Administrators can create or add OCAT access to a user's profile. If the desired data is not available in the existing report templates, counties can submit an ad-hoc request form to Service Now.

Below is a screenshot of the OCAT application and the list of available reports:



The Ad-Hoc report can be requested via ServiceNow. For more information about how to access CalSAWS ticket system (ServiceNow) reach out to your CalSAWS contact. In addition, All county Primary Point of Contacts (PPOCs) have access to all CalSAWS Information Transmittals (CITs). The requester can reach out to their county PPOC to request for the CIT 0374-21 Report Request Process and Ad-Hoc Report Request Process Document.

Performance Measure Populations

22. Are RCA (Refugee Cash Assistance) populations included in the performance measure calculations?

Each performance measure looks to a specific population. For many measures, this is a subset of the Welfare-to-Work (WTW) population. For the purposes of the Cal-OAR measures, WTW program status is determined by variable 19 (WTW_PRO) in the Cal-OAR 19 files, rather than aid code.

RCA (Refugee Cash Assistance) is a cash assistance program for refugees who are not otherwise eligible for any other cash aid. It is administered by our partners in the Refugee Programs Bureau. The program is for certain non-citizen groups who are not eligible for California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids (CalWORKs). RCA clients are not pulled into the performance measures as they are not Cal-WORKs aided individuals.

23. Are Trafficking and Crime Victims Assistance Program (TCVAP)

Trafficking and Crime Victims Assistance Program (TCVAP) are CalWORKs eligible. These clients have an R1 aid code in the Cal-OAR files. They are included in the performance measure calculations only if they have one of the appropriate WTW program status types (identified as variable 19 in the Cal-OAR 19 files, WTW_PRO) required for the measure.

Phase 0 Performance Measure Specifics

24. Does the Cal-OAR measure “Rate of Program Reentries” track if a client re-enters CalWORKs in another county?

For the measure Rate of Program Reentries, yes, it does track if a client reenters CalWORKs in another county. It also tracks if any of the clients return to the program but in another county. The program checks if children and adults received aid in another county in the 90 day exit qualification period.

The measure does not count inter-county transfers as exits, so it's not included in the denominator for the original county.

When a person exits their new county, it will be counted as an exit in the denominator for the new county.

Phase 1 Performance Measure Specifics

25. Is the sanction rate calculated based on newly sanctioned cases each month?

For a specific measurement period, the system detects all individuals that meet the denominator criteria. Then the system detects all individuals of the denominator that meet the criteria for the numerator. Thus, sanction rate captures participants who have an existing sanction record from a prior month in addition to new sanctions. A parallel stream of logic applies to the Cal-OAR Performance Measure Sanction Resolution Rate in which the participant whose sanction was resolved in a particular measurement period, may have been sanctioned some time ago.

26. How can we distinguish between long-term sanction and regular sanction cases in the Cal-OAR 19 files?

The sanction resolution rate combines both long-term sanction cases as well as sanction cases under 12 months. The performance measure workbook divides out the rate for each sanction type and you can view their respective breakouts. However, the dashboard only reflects the overall sanction resolution rate.

You can filter for long-term sanction cases versus sanction cases under 12 months in your Cal-OAR 19 file. First, follow the usual process to filter for the numerator of sanction resolution rate using the Phase 1 Crosswalk.

The long-term sanction cases will be those CINs that meet the following conditions in the numerator:

MEDS_PAC = K1 or 3F

MEDS_ACR = 02

Everyone else in the numerator will be a sanction case under 12 months. There is no special designation for those cases in the Cal-OAR 19 file, so you can assume that all other clients in the numerator that are not long-term sanction fall into this larger sub-category.

27. When manually validating sanction resolution rate utilizing the Cal-OAR 19 files, I could not exactly replicate the results in the workbook. Why is this?

The variability is likely due to the different ways that Statistical Analysis System (SAS) code (utilized to generate the performance measure workbooks) and Excel (the format of the Cal-OAR 19 files) deduplicate the data. For example, for SAS to deduplicate records, they must first be sorted. Even if we sorted the records in Excel to reproduce this deduplication, there is a possibility, due to randomness, that Excel or SAS may sort the records differently. See the following example for how this may look.

The following data is fake and not associated with a real participant.

Example of SAS Sort: The record in the first data row is the record that would be retained in the deduplication process.

SOURCE	Case Number	CIN	MEDS_PAC	WTW_PRO	IND_RESO	WTW_SRED_prev
CalSAWS	1A234567	123456789	30	01	99	02
CalSAWS	1A234567	123456789	30	99	99	99

Example of Excel Sort: The record in the first data row is the record that would be retained in the deduplication process.

SOURCE	Case Number	CIN	MEDS_PAC	WTW_PRO	IND_RESO	WTW_SRED_prev
CalSAWS	1A234567	123456789	30	99	99	99
CalSAWS	1A234567	123456789	30	01	99	02

28. Why are clients in Good Cause status included in the denominator of Engagement Rate and OCAT/Appraisal Completion Timeliness Rate measures?

In developing the performance measures, the logic was that good cause, as intended, is not a status that should remove the client from the performance measures. Good Cause represents short-term interruptions in a client's participation, such as a missed appointment, transportation issue, or sickness/injury, etc. and months where good cause is recorded are still counted toward the CalWORKs 60-month clock. Extended, emergency "blanket" good cause due to Covid-19 was discontinued with [ACIN I-21-23](#).

The assumption for the Engagement Rate is that Good Cause would not generally interrupt the individual's participation in WTW for an extended period, so they would not be removed from the denominator. In the Appraisal Completion Timeliness measure, the assumption is that the 90-day timeframe should generally be sufficient to allow for delays due to granting good cause, and that an appointment that is cancelled due to Good Cause would be rescheduled in a timely manner.

In both measures listed above, if the population receiving good cause is causing a significant impact on the measures, that is a finding that should be explained in the County Self Assessment (CSA) and considered for inclusion in the System Improvement Plan (SIP).

29. Why does there appear to be a difference between the Cal-OAR sanction rate and the sanction data derived from WTW 25/25A?

The Cal-OAR sanction rate and sanction information gleaned from the WTW 25/25A will differ due to the nature of the data used to inform these two reports. Cal-OAR data is standardized and can be validated and verified by counties at an individual level. The WTW 25/25A is an aggregate report which is completed by each county according to their own processes. It cannot be validated.

To elaborate: While both the Cal-OAR dashboard and WTW 25/25A include data on sanctions, there are differences in the type of data being reported. The Cal-OAR

sanction rate measures the rate of sanction in the measurement month, calculated using variables collected monthly from CalSAWS for each individual participant. The WTW 25/25A is an aggregate report that collects data on Welfare-to-Work (WTW) participants, including data on sanctions. Counties create the WTW 25 using data that they pull down from SAWS, enter into a template, edit and modify at their discretion. Counties aggregate the data before it is entered into the report and provide the aggregated report is then provided to CDSS. It cannot be validated or verified.

The denominator definition for the Cal-OAR measure was carefully determined after consultation with the Cal-OAR workgroup/advisory committee to be the most accurate representation of the full universe of the WTW population. All WTW enrollees are potentially eligible to be sanctioned for failing or refusing to comply with program requirements. Specifically, this means failing or refusing to:

- Sign a WTW plan;
- Participate in any assigned WTW program activity;
- Provide required proof of satisfactory progress in any assigned activity;
- Accept or continue employment or continue employment at the same level of earnings.

All counties report the variables in a standardized manner in accordance with the data dictionary provided in [ACL 19-40](#). It also has the benefit of being able to be validated at an individual level. Indeed, many counties have done and continue to manually validate this measure to ensure that it accurately reflects the circumstances in their counties. As a result, CDSS and counties have a historic record demonstrating the reliability, accuracy, and comprehensiveness of the Cal-OAR sanction rate.

By contrast, the 25/25A was designed to report WTW activity participation but not designed for individual-level data analysis. County reporting procedures on the WTW 25/25A vary significantly, and the report excludes many individuals in the WTW population, such as those awaiting appraisal or orientation or taking scheduled breaks from educational activities. However, these individuals are included in the Cal-OAR sanction rate measure. These differences inflate the rate of sanctions based on the WTW 25/25A data as compared to the Cal-OAR Sanction rate.

There is also potential for duplication of records in the WTW25/25A (for example, the number of individuals who are "sanctioned" includes records of those in long and short term sanctions). Additionally, there is a significant variance in the way that individual counties report "Enrollee status" in the WTW 25/25A. Collectively, these differences mean that the rate of sanctions based on the WTW 25/25A appears to be higher than the Cal-OAR sanction rate measure.

Phase 2 Performance Measure Specifics

30. When will the Phase 2 measures be produced?

As a reminder, Phase 2 measures are not being assessed in the reports for the first Cal-OAR review cycle, which ends on June 30th, 2026.

CDSS began producing some Phase 2 measures with the September 2023 transmittal. These performance measures are now posted to the Cal-OAR dashboard. They include the following:

- Ancillary Services Access Rate
- OCAT/Appraisal to Next Activity Timeliness Rate
- Education and Skills Development Utilization Rate
- Family Stabilization to Welfare-to-Work Engagement Rate

The remaining Cal-OAR performance measures are still in development. CDSS will begin validating the data for the remaining Phase 2 measures in Summer 2025. Further updates will be provided to counties as they become available. Please refer to the Phase 2B Memo for further details.

31. Where should counties enter in their Home Visiting Program (HVP) data in the California Statewide Automated Welfare System (CalSAWS) screens?

The Cal-OAR Phase 2 training materials are the most updated source for this, and applies to all counties:

- [Cal-OAR Phase 2 Measures CalSAWS Recorded Training](#)
- [Cal-OAR Phase 2 Measures CalSAWS training slide deck](#)

Effective January 1, 2022 CalSAWS counties were advised to ensure full and consistent data entry of all Phase 2 measures (including Home Visiting related variables) into the newly created Home Visiting Detail Page in the CalSAWS system. Phase 2 measures had an interim data collection solution but in 2021 the permanent data fields were created. Counties should now utilize the Home Visiting Detail Page.

Recent changes to the California Statewide Automated Welfare System (CalSAWS) logic of Cal-OAR variables

32. Engagement Rate Programming Changes

CDSS submitted a Saws Internal Request for Research and Analysis (SIRFRA) related to the Engagement Rate measure to CalSAWS in August of 2023. The associated System Change Request (SCR) number for this change was SCR 265237. This change was implemented in the Cal-OAR files with the CalSAWS release of June 2024. This change is not backdated and does not impact data prior to the point of its implementation. June 2024 was the **transmittal month** when the change went into effect. To find out which **measurement months** were impacted by this change, please refer to the Phase 1 timeline calculator and find the measurement month corresponding to the June 2024 transmittal.

Summary of change:

In All County Letter (ACL) 19-40, the numerator of the Engagement Rate measure is the variable “attendance hours.” Hours towards any approved Welfare-to-Work (WTW) activity may count towards a participant’s attendance hours. The ACL notes that this variable “utilizes actual, verified attendance hours; not scheduled hours.” For the purposes of the Work Participation Rate (WPR), monthly hours of participation in subsidized and unsubsidized employment, as well as on-the-job training, may be projected for up to six months, based on the most current, documented and verified hours. Please refer to [ACL 22-22](#) for more details.

CDSS altered the variable “attendance hours” so that, if no actual, verified employment hours are entered for the participant, projected employment hours may be utilized to count towards the participant’s “attendance hours.” The projection of self-employment hours is included because there is no requirement to verify employment hours every month. Participants in self-employment are only required to report/show continuous employment every six months. Projection for self-employment should be aligned to other types of employment. The possible inclusion of projected hours is only applicable to employment activities; all other WTW activities still rely upon actual, verified hours.

The definition of “attendance hours” in ACL 19-40 will be updated to reflect this logic change.

33. OCAT/Appraisal Completion Timeliness Rate Programming Changes

CDSS submitted a Saws Internal Request for Research and Analysis (SIRFRA) related to the OCAT/Appraisal Completion Timeliness Rate measure to CalSAWS in October 2023. The associated System Change Request (SCR) number for this change was

270826. This change was implemented in the Cal-OAR files with the CalSAWS release of June 2024. This change is not backdated and does not impact data prior to the point of its implementation. June 2024 was the **transmittal month** when the change went into effect. To find out which **measurement months** were impacted by this change, please refer to the Phase 1 timeline calculator and find the measurement month corresponding to the June 2024 transmittal.

Summary of change:

The denominator of this measure looks for Welfare to Work (WTW) Active Participants and Exempt Volunteers granted aid in the measurement month who are required to complete an appraisal, and the numerator looks for those who successfully completed an appraisal within 30 days of aid being granted. Thus, the denominator is tied to the EDBC approval date, whereas the numerator is tied to **activity start date** and **activity completed status**.

The previous CalSAWS programming for COM_ADAY (the numerator for this measure) included criteria that also checked for status begin date and required that the status begin date fall within the same measurement month as the activity start date. Status begin date tells us when the caseworker updated the activity status. It is not necessary for the status begin date to fall within the same month as the activity start date. There is a 3-month data lag for this measure, so that counties have up to 3 months to update the status of this activity. For this reason, CDSS asked CalSAWS to update the logic of this variable so that the logic is only looking for the appointment start date (the scheduled start date of the customer activity), not status begin date. This change made it so that participants were not excluded from the numerator of the measure for this erroneous reason.

34. OCAT/Appraisal to Next Activity Timeliness Rate Changes

CDSS submitted a SAWS Internal Request for Research and Analysis (SIRFRA) related to the OCAT/Appraisal to Next Activity Timeliness Rate measure to CalSAWS in December 2023, which was SIRFRA 3949. The associated System Change Request (SCR) number for this change was 274147. This change was implemented in the Cal-OAR files with the California Statewide Automated Welfare System (CalSAWS) release of October 2024. This change is not backdated and does not impact data prior to the point of its implementation. October 2024 was the transmittal month when the change went into effect. To find out which measurement months were impacted by this change, please refer to the Phase 2 timeline calculator and find the measurement month corresponding to the October 2024 transmittal.

Summary of change:

For the OCAT to Next Activity Timeliness Rate measure numerator, ACL 19-40 states that **"scheduled"** refers to the date when the schedule was created, not the actual date an individual is expected to attend an activity. This is one of the few measures that is not looking at the participant experience but is looking at the timeliness of caseworker action.

The numerator for this variable is "SCH_NACT." The previous CalSAWS logic for this variable was looking for the date that the activity started, rather than the date that the activity was scheduled by the caseworker. CDSS requested CalSAWS update the logic so that the numerator variable looks for the scheduled date. In the previous iteration, the logic was looking for something called "created date," but the "created date" referenced was not the same as the date that the activity was scheduled by the caseworker. CalSAWS updated the logic to be in alignment with ACL 19-40.

Term Definitions

ACL: All County Letter

ACIN: All County Information Notice

ADA: Americans with Disabilities Act

CalSAWS: California Statewide Automated Welfare System

Cal-OAR: CalWORKs Outcomes and Accountability Review

CalWORKs: California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids

CDSS: California Department of Social Services

CIN: Client Index Number

CIT: CalSAWS Information Transmittal

CQI: Continuous Quality Improvement

CSA: County Self-Assessment

DI: De-Identification

EDD: Employment Development Department

MOU: Memorandum of Understanding

OCAT: Online CalWORKs Appraisal Tool

PPOC: Primary Point of Contact

RCA: Refuge Cash Assistance

SAFE: Secure Automated File Exchange

SAS: Statistical Analysis System

SCR: System Change Request

SIRFRA: SAWS Internal Request for Research and Analysis

SIP: System Improvement Plan

SFT: Secure File Transfer

TCVAP: Trafficking and Crime Victims Assistance Program

WPR: Work Participation Rate

WTW: Welfare to Work