



# Transforming CalWORKs Year One in Review

As we near the one-year anniversary of the passage of Senate Bill (SB) 119 and the launch of the Transforming CalWORKs initiative, the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) celebrates significant milestones leading to meaningful, family-centered reforms within the California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids (CalWORKs) program.

## Community Input

CDSS, in partnership with Mathematica and the Child and Family Policy Institute of California, hosts ongoing engagement sessions with key partners.

The Transforming CalWORKs Advisory Committee (TCAC), consisting of current and past CalWORKs parents, county staff, education, workforce, tribal partners, and advocates, meets biweekly to guide the implementation of major reforms.

Over 30 CalWORKs Implementation Collaborative meetings occurred for county frontline staff and leadership to discuss how the TCAC's recommendations can be implemented locally.

Parent and county focus groups have informed various new resources under development.

## Supporting County Implementation

Six All County Letters (ACLs) were published to inform counties of the changes occurring through Transforming CalWORKs and provide instructions on the policy changes taking effect. Corresponding webinars were also held to assist with local implementation.

- [ACL 25-78](#): Overview of Reforms
- [ACL 25-77](#): Elimination of the Research and Development Enterprise Project and Enterprise II Lite County Case Sampling Workload (effective July 1, 2025)
- [ACL 25-74](#): Elimination of the Work Participation Rate Penalty Pass-Through (effective October 1, 2025)

- [ACL 26-28](#): Changes to Welfare to Work (WTW) Noncompliance Sanctions and Curing (multiple effective dates)
- [ACL 26-31](#): Advanced Transportation Payments (effective July 1, 2026)
- [ACL 26-32](#): Job Search as a WTW Choice (effective July 1, 2026)

## Looking Ahead

Updated resources are in development for the new participant-centered WTW flow, including the statewide orientation, appraisal, and WTW plan. This includes a new WTW plan form, revisions to the participant WTW handbook, online orientation videos, and a shortened appraisal tool to replace the Online CalWORKs Appraisal Tool (OCAT). The tools will be piloted with counties and participants in late 2026.

The University of California, Davis will provide training and coaching for county workers to promote consistent, family-focused engagement and service delivery statewide.

Rescue Agency will support a statewide communication campaign to generate excitement and shared understanding among county workers.

An evaluation plan has been developed to measure our success. The plan highlights key CalWORKs Outcomes and Accountability Review metrics and increases participant feedback through the Client Satisfaction Survey.

The California Statewide Automated Welfare System is gearing up to automate many of the SB 119 changes.



The CDSS extends heartfelt thanks to all our internal and external partners engaged in Transforming CalWORKs. We look forward to the milestones we'll continue to achieve together.



For updates regarding the CDSS' Transforming CalWORKs efforts, please sign up for our newsletter via the QR Code. For questions, please email [TransformingCalWORKs@dss.ca.gov](mailto:TransformingCalWORKs@dss.ca.gov).

