

# CCWRO Weekly New Welfare News

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## Child Care Providers Not Being Paid by the Welfare System

State law and regulations provide that childcare shall be paid so that CalWORKs recipients can participate in the state workfare programs and/or work.

Getting childcare has always been a struggle in California. When the Welfare-to-Work (WtW) program started in 1998, every county was required to assess the childcare needs in their county. Needs assessment showed that about 70% of the AFDC recipients would need childcare. Once the program started, less than 50% of the participants are receiving child care.

Thousands of parents participate without being paid for childcare. Reaching a welfare worker with the authority to authorize childcare has often been a major undertaking within the WtW bureaucratic maze.

During the late 90s and early 2000s thousands of welfare recipients were requesting and sometimes got retroactive childcare for the childcare promised to them by their welfare workers at WtW orientation. This upset Los Angeles County welfare officials and, with the help of the County Welfare Directors Association (CWDA), in 2002 Section 34 was inserted into the budget trailer bill known as AB 444 to stop giving retroactive childcare to WtW participants lawfully entitled to such childcare. This provision is embodied in Welfare and Institutions Code §11323.3.

The All County Letter implementing this provision is ACL-03-33.

See <http://www.cdss.ca.gov/lettersnotices/entres/getinfo/acl03/pdf/03-33.pdf>

DSS developed a Childcare request form known as CCP-7. Now, in order to be eligible for retroactive child care for more than 30 days a WtW participant had to have stated on the CCP-7 for that they need childcare at the time of application. If they mark that they do not need childcare at the time of application,

but later find a job, starts working and then ask for retroactive child care, the welfare bureaucracy will deny the request because they honestly said at the time of application that they did not need child care. Thus, DSS and CWDA created a process that literally steals millions of dollars from hard working Americans just because they completed the CCP-7 honestly. It should be noted that counties are not required to have recipients complete a CCP-7 during job search or another workfare activity, unless an amended WtW contract is signed. This does not always happen.

Today many child care providers know that providing child care to a welfare recipient can mean being ripped off by the welfare system. This certainly is effecting the ability of many welfare recipients to start jobs or keep jobs. The word is out that "welfare won't pay for childcare" in the low-income community.

## What needs to be Done?

**First**, the form should be revised to ask "if you get a job or have to participate in a WtW activity, will you need child care?"

**Secondly**, recipients should get this form at least once every three (3) months with their quarterly reports (QR-7), or monthly, if the county is asking them to submit monthly reports of their WtW activities.

This deceptive form entraps CalWORKs recipient into stating that they do not need child care and then when they need child care, they are unable to get it because they do not have a form to ask for childcare and cannot reach their welfare worker to get the form.

It should be a felony not to pay workers for their work, especially child care workers. This law - W&IC§11323.3 - that takes away hard earned money from workers should be repealed as an evil and immoral law.

