



CCWRO Welfare News

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2015-16 State Budget Outcome - California's Economic Child Abuse of CalWORKs Children Gets Worse

The 2015-2016 State Budget completely rejected any proposal to address the state of California's CalWORKs poor children living in deep poverty. Meanwhile, the Governor and Legislature sit leisurely on a surplus of over \$4 billion.

According to the Anne Casey Foundation, California leads the nation in child poverty. California's uncaring response to its deep child poverty problem is reflected in the new budget.

The State Budget does contain a \$350 million appropriation for a State Earned Income Tax Credit. However, very few of those dollars will reach families with children living in deep poverty who cannot find jobs. This money should have first been used to relieve the victims of the Maximum Family Grant (MFG) policy which would have cost less than \$200 million.

What is the highlight of the CalWORKs budget for 2015-2016? The State takes \$1.5 billion from poor babies and children as an alleged contribution to the State General Fund. While California leads the nation in child poverty, the Governor and Legislature commit economic child abuse.

What did Democratic legislative leaders give up during their negotiations with the Governor?

✓ **Repeal of Maximum Family Grant (MFG)**-California has over 100,000 children who are not receiving cash aid because they were born while their mothers were on welfare.

✓ **A one-year suspension of the 24-month time clock**-While the federal law allows for 60-months, California has limited CalWORKs to 24-months. 21 red states have 60-month time limits and only two other states have 24-month time limits, Arkansas and Idaho. The Administration publicly opposed the suspension of the 24-month proposal by alleging that it would impede California's ability to meet the federal work participation rates (FWPR). This is an irrational argument.

After 24 months, children would continue to receive CalWORKs benefits assuring they do not end up in foster care. California pays \$2,200 a month, per child in foster care, while CalWORKs costs \$200 a month per child. After 24-months the family would still be in the denominator used to calculate the FWPRs.

Meanwhile, the parent has no chance of meeting the federal work participation rates because he or she will not be allowed to participate in the WtW program. Thus, common sense would dictate that the 24-month time clock impedes California's ability to meet the federal work participation rates and end up in the numerator that would help California meet the FWPRs

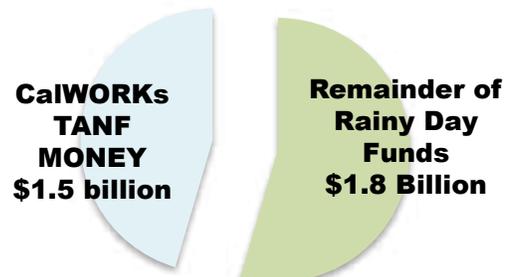
✓ **Restoration of the CalWORKs and SSI COLA, delayed until 2019 and 2020- Rejected-** Who received a COLA in 2015-2016? Table # 1 reveals a long list of programs receiving a COLA in 2015-2016. California leads the nation in child poverty with 0% COLA for CalWORKs.

✓ **A \$10 increase for SSI recipients - Rejected.**

In summary 2015 was another bad year for California's children living in deep poverty. The Governor underestimates the state's income in order to continue the failed austerity policy that hurts the poor through the State's economic child abuse of poor children.

Rainy Day Fund-\$3.5 Billion

43% of the Rainy Day Funds comes out the mouths of California's impoverished families with needy babies and children living in deep poverty.



Con't on Page 2

TABLE # 1 - 2015-2016 Budget - Programs Receiving a COLA - No CalWORKs or SSI COLA

1. 5205086-Educational Services for Foster Youth - Of the funds appropriated in this item, \$155,000 is to reflect a cost-of-living adjustment.

2. 5200131-American Indian Early Childhood Education Program - Of the funds appropriated in this item, \$6,000 is to reflect a cost-of-living adjustment.

3. 5200032-Pupil Transportation - Of the funds in this item, the Superintendent of Public Instruction shall first apportion a Home to School Transportation cost-of-living adjustment of 1.02 percent to each school district and county superintendent of schools.

3. 5200127-California American Indian Education Centers - Of the funds appropriated in this item, \$41,000 is to reflect a cost-of-living adjustment.

4. Reimbursements to 5200217-Early Education Program for Individuals with Exceptional Needs -

- Of the amount provided in Schedule (1), \$37,202,000 is to reflect a cost-of-living adjustment.

- Of the amount provided in Schedule (2), \$896,000 is to reflect a cost-of-living adjustment.

5. For local assistance, State Department of Education, for allocation by the Superintendent of Public Instruction to school districts, county offices of education, and other agencies for child care and development programs included in this item, in lieu of the amount that otherwise would be appropriated pursuant to any other statute - The maximum standard reimbursement rate shall not exceed \$39.58 per day for general child care programs. This reflects a 1.02 percent cost-of-living adjustment and a 7.5 percent rate increase to the standard reimbursement rate. The maximum standard reimbursement rate shall not exceed \$42.29 for full-day state preschool programs. Furthermore, the migrant child care program shall adhere to the maximum standard reimbursement rates as prescribed for the general child care programs. All other rates and adjustment factors shall conform.

6. 6100-196-0001—For local assistance, State Department of Education (Proposition 98) - The maximum standard reimbursement rate shall not exceed \$27.14 per day for part-day state preschool programs. This reflects a 1.02 percent cost-of-living adjustment, a 1 percent increase to reflect increased information and annual teacher training requirements pursuant to subdivisions (b) and (c) of Section 8238 of the Education Code, a 7.5 percent increase to the standard reimbursement rate, and a 10 percent increase to the part-day state preschool rate.

7. 5210058-Child Nutrition Programs - 5. Of the funds appropriated in this item, \$1,641,000 is to reflect a cost-of-living adjustment.

8. 6870-101-0001—For local assistance, Board of Governors of the California Community Colleges (Proposition 98) - (2) Of the funds appropriated in Schedule (1), \$61,022,000 shall be used to reflect a cost-of-living adjustment of 1.02 percent.

9. 6100-111-0001—For local assistance, State Department of Education (Proposition 98), Home to School Transportation - 2. Of the funds in this item, the Superintendent of Public Instruction shall first apportion a Home to School Transportation cost-of-living adjustment of 1.02 percent to each school district and county superintendent of schools.

CalFresh Immediate Need Benefits Questionable Denials

61% of CalFresh applicants who had less than \$150 in income and \$100 in assets are denied CalFresh Expedited Services.

Although the law mandates that all applications be screened for immediate need CalFresh/Food Stamp (CF-ES) benefits by counties, 24% of the applications were not screened during January, February and March of 2015 for CF-ES. That is 111,110 applications that were not screened for immediate need food stamp benefits.

Has this resulted in any corrective action by the state and federal agencies in charge of the SNAP/CalFresh/Food Stamp Program? No. But, imagine the headlines of a finding that food stamp recipients violated the law 24% of the time.

Table # 2 reveals the number of applications that had less than \$150 income and less than \$100 in resources that were denied CF-ES during the first quarter of 2015.

Under state regulations, the only verification required for CF-ES is identity of the head of the household. Identity can be verified through the MEDS system on the same day if the applicant has been on aid before. If the applicant has not been on aid then the MEDS system would verify the identity the next working day using the applicants' social security number.

See MPP 63-301.541 below:

MPP § 63-301.541 "All reasonable efforts shall be made to verify within the expedited processing standards, the household's residency, as specified in Section 63-300.515, income statement (including a statement that the household has no income), liquid resources, and all other factors required by Section 63-300.51 through collateral contacts or readily available documentary evidence. However,

benefits shall not be delayed beyond the delivery standards prescribed in 63-301.53 solely because these eligibility factors have not been verified. Verification of these eligibility factors shall be postponed if unobtainable within the expedited processing standards."

Who is eligible for CalFresh Expedited Services?

MPP§ 63-301.5 "Expedited Service

.51 Entitlement to Expedited Service

The following households, if otherwise eligible, are entitled to expedited service:

.511 Households with less than \$150 in monthly gross income as defined in Section 63-502.1 provided their liquid resources as defined in Section 63-501.11 do not exceed \$100;

.512 Migrant or seasonal farmworker households who are destitute as defined in Section 63-503.43 provided their liquid resources as defined in Section 63-501.11 do not exceed \$100; or

.513 Households whose combined monthly gross income and liquid resources are less than the household's monthly rent or mortgage, and utilities."

CONCLUSION - It is very hard to determine why the CF-ES was denied. Once a household has been determined to have less than \$150 income and \$100 in resources there are very few reasons why the household would be ineligible. If they are ineligible, it could not be over 60%. That is inconceivable. Counties still have major barriers to participation, such as requiring the hungry to come to the office at 7 a.m. for an interview when it can be done through electronic means. Often CF-ES is denied due to failure to provide verification when the verification is not needed to approve CF-ES.

WHAT CAN ADVOCATES DO? – Join your local anti-hunger advocates and food banks. Ask the county why all of these requests for expedited services were denied. What are the reasons for denials? What barriers has the county erected to prevent persons enduring hunger insecurity from receiving hunger-relieving assistance in which they are entitled? CCWRO would be glad to provide technical assistance upon request and availability of resources.

TABLE # 2

This table is based on information from the DSS DFA 296X reports. This table presents the number of CalFresh Expedited Services (CF-ES) screened to have less than \$150 income and \$100 in resources that were denied CF-ES benefits during the first quarter of 2015.

1st quarter of 2015- January-March, 2015	Applica-tions processed under ES disposed of during the report quarter	Found entitled to ES	CF-ES-Denials	Percentage of CF-ES Denials
Statewide	360,644	140,904	219,740	61%
Solano	2,591	1,420	1,171	45%
Tulare	6,698	3,388	3,310	49%
Mendocino	1,588	780	808	51%
Los Angeles	76,095	34,453	41,642	55%
San Bernardino	36,303	16,250	20,053	55%
San Francisco	4,691	2,066	2,625	56%
Fresno	11,231	4,665	6,566	58%
Stanislaus	9,844	3,844	6,000	61%
Alameda	11,722	4,470	7,252	62%
Riverside	30,636	11,611	19,025	62%
Kern	17,635	6,609	11,026	63%
Orange	15,225	5,551	9,674	64%
San Joaquin	10,232	3,700	6,532	64%
Madera	2,461	858	1,603	65%
San Diego	24,322	8,020	16,302	67%
Monterey	6,895	2,223	4,672	68%
Contra Costa	5,494	1,765	3,729	68%
Sacramento	21,942	5,476	16,466	75%
San Mateo	4,374	1,040	3,334	76%
Santa Cruz	3,134	456	2,678	85%
San Mateo	4,374	1,040	3,334	76%
Santa Cruz	3,134	456	2,678	85%