

CCWRO Welfare News

Coalition of California Welfare Rights Organizations, Inc.
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In Brief

◆ **COUNTIES MAY NOT CAP CAR REPAIR SERVICES**-Jennie Angell and Karen Thrillkill of Mendocino County, asked DSS whether “counties can impose a monetary ‘cap’ on supportive services, including car repairs.” Geoffrey Miller, of CDSS responded on 10/12/11 that the “... Counties cannot impose a monetary ‘cap’ on supportive services, including car repairs. However, the county can establish a process for determining a reasonable limit on such expenditures for each case. This process must be in the county’s written policies. Please review ACL 04-04 (attachment page 1) and ACL 0054 (page 2) for additional guidance on this topic.”

◆ **COUNTIES CAUSE OVERPAYMENT-CHARGE WELFARE RECIPIENTS WITH FELONY FRAUD**-DSS has been working on revising their IEVS regulations for years. The current regulations are left over from the previous century. The last report of statewide IEVS reports known as DPA 482 reveals that statewide, during the quarter of April through June of 2011, counties received 493,695 IEVS hits. During those same three months they only processed 173,960 hits. This means that there were 319,735 potential overpayment cases piling up without county action. When counties get around to dealing with these overpayments, they charge the recipients with felony fraud when in reality many of the overpayments were caused by the counties not doing their job – checking out the potential overpayments.

◆ **EMPLOYERS OBJECT TO UNFUNDED COUNTY DEMANDS FOR REPORTS**-Donna Cobb of San Joaquin County informed DSS that an “...employer called us stating that he wants to be reimbursed by us for the time and his copies of the information we have asked him to provide for us.” I explained that this is a preliminary step to the DA investigation for the state. He is a lobbyist and not very happy with anything the state/all governments are doing right now. My thought is to turn it all over to the DA and let them go talk to him.” DSS responded, “We agree that handing this issue to the DA is the best way.”

This could also be one reason why employers are reluctant to hire welfare recipients in some cases.

◆ **YOLO COUNTY UNAWARE OF IEVS PROCESSING TIMELINES** – During the DSS review of Yolo County’s IEVS processing system, the county asked DSS for documentation regarding the 45 and 90-day IEVS processing requirements. DSS informed Yolo County in an email that for active cases the processing timelines are 45 days and for closed cases is 90 days. For years Yolo County has been submitting claims to be paid for processing IEVS reports when they have no idea what the processing timelines are.

◆ **AB 98 OVERPAYMENTS**- On 7/6/11 Jenny Hart of San Luis Obispo County asked DSS “How are overpayments to be handled for AB 98 subsidies? If the county were to made aware immediately within that month? If the county did not find out until 6 months later?” On 11/23/11, DSS responded that “The incorrect amount paid to the employer and claimed by the county to the state under AB 98 is not an overpayment as defined in MPP because it is not an aid payment to the AU.”

CHILD CARE NOT PAID TO WELFARE-TO-WORK PARTICIPANTS

Ms. A.M. has been participating in a welfare-to-work (WtW) activity in Sacramento County during all of 2011. Her brother has been babysitting for her and her welfare worker told her “we would pay for child care.” I never thought they would lie to me” said Ms. A.M.

“I turn in the forms and then Child Action says my brother had some trouble

with the law, therefore they cannot pay him. He wants his money. He worked hard. I said I would pay him and now I look like a liar in front of my brother.”

Her brother is a monolingual Armenian speaker but all of the forms he received were in English. He did not

The truth is the people who voted for this wanted to deny child care to welfare recipients. How are children protected if the county has no idea who is watching the child when they force welfare recipients to participate in the WtW program? Did the law require that childcare be verified before a welfare recipient is ordered to participate in an WtW activity? No way.

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understand all of the requirements for a so-called "trustline waiver." He went to the police department, but could not get copies of the police reports. He did not understand that he also had to get all of the court reports.

The rules are clear –a person who was nice enough to provide childcare to a welfare recipient thinking they would be paid but in fact need a trustline waiver gets zero help from the government. The court papers and the police report are in the computers of the police department and the courts. The welfare department simply can have the welfare computer contact the police department computer or the court computer. The welfare departments have dozens of so-called "peace officers" who can do this anytime.

The regulations and the compassionate state law limits retroactive childcare to 120 days. MPP § 47-620.32 provides that a welfare recipient living on a fixed income of 1985 "...is responsible for any childcare costs incurred until such time as the provider becomes Trustline registered."

Why does California have a Trustline process? The childcare Trustline process was allegedly enacted to protect children from being cared for by persons who have a criminal record. The propaganda was "we care about kids."

The truth is the people who voted for this wanted to deny child care to welfare recipients. How are children protected if the county has no idea who is watching the child when they force welfare recipients to participate in the WtW program? Did the law require that childcare be verified before a welfare recipient is ordered to participate in an WtW activity? No way.

The recommendation that safe childcare be verified before a WtW participants is forced to participate in a WtW activity has been rejected by those alleging to be concerned with the "safety of the child."

Now Ms. A.M. has liability of thousands of dollars because she detrimentally relied on the promise of her welfare worker that "we will pay for child care" and when the worker never said anything about Trustline and never verified that Ms. A.M. has safe and childcare that can be paid for.

◆ **SAN MATEO COUNTY REFUSES TO USE REPORTED CHILD CARE TO COMPUTE THE CORRECT AMOUNT OF FOOD STAMP BENEFITS** - Ms. RN 207089 of San Mateo County reported that she paid \$150 for childcare on her QR7. San Mateo County refused to include the \$150 childcare expense deduction in computing the food stamp benefits resulting in depriving Ms. RN 207089 of \$68 in food stamp benefits. Why did this happen? Because after spending billions on a computer system we still lack a system where the information from the QR-7 is scanned into the system and the computer determines the correct benefits. The reason that the \$150 child care was not used is because the worker did not tell the computer that it must use the \$150 child care expense that was already in the computer.

◆ **LOS ANGELES DPSS TERMINATED ALL BENEFITS FOR REPORTING INCOME ON THE QR-7** - On 7/19/11 Los Angeles County District #013 issued a notice of action terminating the benefits of Ms. RN 508035 for failure to submit a QR-7. In reality the QR-7 was submitted to the county and the county received the completed QR-7. The QR-7 showed her IHSS income and all necessary paystubs. The report was rejected by DPSS and returned to the working welfare mom. It appears that if somebody reports income in Los Angeles with paystubs the odds are your benefits will be terminated for turning in a QR7 that has information on it. Is the lesson don't report?

◆ **LOS ANGELES DPSS FAILS TO PROVIDE TRANSITIONAL FOOD STAMPS** – Ms. RN 508038 is a Public Assistance Food Stamp household. Her and her four (4) children's CalWORKs ended on 7/31/11 because she did not keep the telephone Cash Aid/ CalFresh Redetermination interview appointment scheduled for 6/24/11. It does not appear that Ms. RN 508038 was ever provided with an in-person redetermination appointment. Often DPSS clients are given phone numbers to call that are not answered. After the questionable termination of her and her four (4) children's benefits, the DPSS also improperly refused to issue transitional food stamps.