

CCWRO Weekly New Welfare News - #2002-11

March 18, 2002

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• EDITORIAL

In a press release dated 3/6/02, Tommy Thompson, Secretary of HHS states: "President Bush and I will insist that welfare recipients receive at least minimum wages for the hours that they work, including community service jobs."

Welfare recipients who provide vital child care services for TANF participants, must also be paid minimum wages with TANF funding. Without this inclusion, we cannot accept Tommy Thompson's statement to be credible.

IN BRIEF

At the latest National Governors Association meeting, South Dakota Governor, Bill Janklow suggested using welfare reform as a model for homeland security. By this, he means giving the states billions of dollars and letting them do whatever they want to do with the money, short of putting it in their own bank accounts. It appears that some Governors, after fleecing the TANF program funds since 1996, would like to get their itchy fingers on Homeland Security money so they can fleece that money also. Fat chance.

• USDA FOOD STAMP NEWS

USDA has released a new policy, dated 3/12/02- Administrative Notice (AN) 02-25 relative to request for contact (RFC).

The problem is that many states and counties schedule food stamp recipients for frivolous appointments, hoping they will fail to appear. This "set up" results in the termination of food stamp benefits, which ultimately subjects the children to undue suffering.

This AN -02-25 clarifies that the regulations prevent State agencies from terminating recipients who fail to appear for an in-office interview during the certification period.

The AN further states that if the food stamp office needs clarification, they can mail a RFC (request for contact) asking the recipients to call or write the answer to the food stamp worker's questions. This same policy also applies to Intentional Program Violation interviews in the middle of the certification period.

DSS NEWS

-- ACL 02-27 (March 8, 2002) - CalWORKs Homeless Assistance Program Monthly Statistical Report [CA 237 HA (2/02)]

In this ACL DSS proposes to modify the monthly homeless assistance reports.

--ACIN I-17-02 (March 14, 2002) -Vehicle Valuation Questions and Answers

Highlights:

- When does the car have to be evaluated? Only at certification or annual recertification. The county cannot evaluate the value of the car just because the worker has a gut feeling that the value has increased.
- Is a leased car counted as a resource? No, per MPP 63-501.3(I) a leased car is not a resource. Also see Cal Vehicle Code Section 4453.5.
- Does the encumbrance on the vehicle include the principal and the interest? "The encumbrance would be the amount it would take to "pay-off" the vehicle."
- When does a personal loan to buy the car count as an encumbrance? "If a personal loan agreement does not specify the lender's lien or claim to be a vehicle, it cannot be considered an encumbrance against the vehicle." CCWRO COMMENT: The reverse will be "if the personal loan specifies the lender's claim to the vehicle, then the loan would be considered an encumbrance on the car?"

--ACIN I-20-02 (March 15, 2002) New Assignments For Food Stamp (FS) Policy Implementation Unit - Effective March 1,2002

• TANF UPDATE

HHS has published a notice of collecting data conduct a multi-site evaluation entitled employment retention and advancement (ERA) evaluation 12 month survey that studies the net impact and cost-benefits of programs designed to help Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) recipients, former TANF recipients, or families at-risk of need-

ing TANF benefits retain and advance in employment." \2\ The ERA Evaluation involves up to 15 random assignment experiments in 9 states, testing a diverse set of strategies designed to promote stable employment and/or career advancement for current and former welfare recipients and other low-income parents. HHS will release several reports based on this survey. http://frwebgate.access.gpo.gov/cgi-bin/getdoc.cgi?dbname=2002_register&docid=02-6121-filed

Bush's TANF Reauthorization Proposal

- Define only cash aid as assistance. All other forms of assistance programs will be defined as "non-assistance programs"
- Allows states to place some or all of their unspent money on what is called "Rainy Day Funds". Meanwhile, States are reducing benefits and not giving TANF recipients annual COLAs, which should be done before the States save money for a rainy day.
- Currently states can only use the carry-over money for cash assistance. Bush proposes to allow States to use carry-over and the proposed "rainy day funds" for any other purpose, which is a blank check to fleece the program.
- Bush proposes to require 70% of all TANF recipients to meet the participation rates by 2007.
- Bush proposes to require all TANF recipients to participate 40 hours a week. This includes mothers with babies over 12 weeks old. 24 hours of the 40 hours has to be performing unpaid labor (also known as workfare/community service) or working at a job.
- The 40-hour rule would apply to a teen mom school, with a less than one-year-old baby, who has finished school.
- Bush will stop all of the Clintonian Waivers and allow more waivers that will allow States to align programs to the lowest common denominator.
- Require States to describe efforts they will make to promote marriage as a part of the State plan. Will States have honeymoon allowances? How about bar stamps?
- Provide federal matching for child support pass-through payment to families that currently receive TANF. This proposal will provide federal matching to States who pass through up to \$100 or \$50 over the current stated pass through starting 2003.

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- STATISTICS OF THE WEEK - CalWORKs applications denied

Today we look at which counties deny applications. Many counties have devised innovative ways of denying benefits to impoverished families with children, who are entitled to such benefits. The leading county in denying applications for November, 2001 is San Mateo County with 6 cases out of every 10 being denied. San Mateo is followed by Riverside County at 55%, Stanislaus at 53%, and Santa Cruz at 52%, and Contra Costa at 50%.

San Mateo County's neighbor, Santa Clara County, denied 24% of the applications. The population is about the same in these neighboring counties.

Santa Cruz county denied 50%, while its neighbor, San Benito County denied 15%. Stanislaus County denied 53%, while Sacramento County denied 12%.

Riverside County denied 55% and San Diego denied 49%, while their neighboring San Bernardino County denied 38%, which is one percent below the State average. The discrepancies can be found in the way the county handles applications given the fact that the populations are similar in the compared counties.

The table #1 rates the percentages of denials of CalWORKs applications county-by-county.

TABLE #1

1 San Mateo	60%	21 Humboldt	37%	41 Santa Clara	24%
2 Riverside	55%	22 Monterey	36%	42 Glenn	24%
3 Stanislaus	53%	23 Kings	36%	43 Lassen	24%
4 Santa Cruz	52%	24 Fresno	35%	44 Shasta	24%
5 Santa Barbara	51%	25 Marin	35%	45 Madera	24%
6 Contra Costa	50%	26 El Dorado	33%	46 Kern	23%
7 Solano	49%	27 Colusa	32%	47 Del Norte	22%
8 San Diego	49%	28 San Joaquin	31%	48 Mendocino	21%
9 Yolo	43%	29 Tuolumne	31%	49 Sutter	21%
10 Alameda	43%	30 Tulare	30%	50 Siskiyou	19%
11 San Francisco	42%	31 Amador	30%	51 Nevada	16%
12 Los Angeles	42%	32 Modoc	29%	52 Napa	15%
13 Ventura	42%	33 Yuba	29%	53 San Benito	15%
14 San Luis Obispo	42%	34 Calaveras	29%	54 Sacramento	12%
15 Placer	41%	35 Mono	29%	55 Inyo	10%
16 Orange	39%	36 Plumas	29%	56 Lake	7%
17 Sonoma	39%	37 Imperial	28%	57 Alpine	0%
18 San Bernardino	38%	38 Merced	28%	58 Sierra	0%
19 Tehama	38%	39 Mariposa	27%		
20 Trinity	38%	40 Butte	26%	Statewide	39%

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