

CCWRO Weekly New Welfare News Bulletin #2003-20 July, 2003

In This Issue

- **In Brief**
- **DSS News**
- **Statistic of the Week**
- **Recipient Impact Statement 2003-2004 Canciamilla-Richman & Republican Budget Cuts**

In Brief

Ellen Judith Tabachnick of Bay Area Legal Services has informed us that HUD has released a new Spanish webpage. For more information go to <http://www.hud.gov:80/news/release/cmf?content=pr03-074.cfm>. Bush cuts housing programs to the bone and then establishes a Spanish web page. Now that is the Bush version of compassion. How many poor have access to the web anyhow?

DSS News

ANOTHER HOMELESS FAMILY SCREWED BY DSS. On 3/20/03 @ 4.21 P.M., DSS was asked by Tuolumne County whether the county had to pay a deposit that was more than twice the amount of the rent. The rent was less than 80% of the grant, thus the family was eligible to have a home in America, but the landlord was charging a large deposit. The CWD asked DSS for guidance. While homeless, the family also waited for guidance .

On 3/24/03 @ 3:09 P.M., DSS responded that the “security deposit cannot exceed twice the amount of the obligated rent in order for the AU to be eligible to receive the permanent housing payment.”

This is not correct.

MPP 44-211.532 does not state in any way, shape or form that if the deposit exceeds twice the amount of the rent, the family is not eligible for permanent homeless assistance. 44-211.532 merely states, the deposit and the rent that's paid out cannot exceed twice the amount of the rent.

Often, homeless families use their own money to make up the difference just to get their kids off the streets and into a safe place so they can live like human beings.

44-211.531 defines who is eligible for permanent homeless assistance and it states: “A nonrecurring special need payment for permanent housing assistance shall be made only to AUs presenting evidence that the AU has found permanent housing which does not rent for more than 80 percent of the AU’s MAP, without special needs, for an AU of that size.”

To determine how much permanent homeless assistance is available, 44.211.532 states: “An amount not to exceed two months of an AU’s rent, as described in MPP Section 44-211.531, is available to pay for the reasonable costs of security deposits when the deposits are a condition of securing a permanent residence.

What is sad about this case is that a homeless family had to be homeless Thursday, Friday, Saturday, Sunday and then on Monday they got the incorrect sentence of continued homelessness in America.

Child Support Referral for A Woman with a Child Conceived with a Donor Insemination - Sacramento County asked DSS on 3/5/03 .."whether a child was conceived through donor insemination and the father is unknown and the birth certificate is blank for the father, does the case have to be referred to child support enforcement?"

On 3/5/03, DSS responded .."that in accordance with Family Code Section 7613 such cases do not have to be referred to child support for enforcement."

Statistic of the Week

The purpose of the Welfare to Work program is to make families self-sufficient. That being the case, we reviewed the DSS statistical information on how many families became ineligible for CalWORKs due to employment. We also compared that statistic with the number of families that were sanctioned because they allegedly failed to cooperate with the county's efforts to make them self-sufficient. Well, the facts show that for the month of March 2003 the counties were very successful in achieving the real goal of the CalWORKs WtW program - sanction poor families. During March 2003, 38% of the unduplicated participants were punished by the county welfare bureaucrats for allegedly failing to participate in the "welfare to nowhere" program, also known as WtW. During the same month, a measly 4% of the participants had their benefits terminated due to em-

ployment. Some of the classics are in the south, Los Angeles County, with a 55% sanction rate and a 3.6% getting jobs that resulted in termination of employment rate. Up north, Alameda County has a 51% sanction rate while only 3% of its participants found employment that resulted in termination of CalWORKs.

Below is a county-by-county listing of the percentage of families whose benefits were terminated **due to employment**.

Statewide	4.43%	Plumas	2.17%
Alameda	2.96%	Riverside	5.74%
Alpine	0.00%	Sacramento	11.42%
Amador	18.92%	San Benito	1.03%
Butte	2.24%	San Bernardino	0.00%
Calaveras	3.33%	San Diego	10.08%
Colusa	0.00%	San Francisco	3.67%
Contra Costa	4.86%	San Joaquin	2.44%
Del Norte	4.31%	San Luis Obispo	11.01%
EI Dorado	6.09%	San Mateo	5.23%
Fresno	6.14%	Santa Barbara	19.39%
Glenn	2.94%	Santa Clara	3.59%
Humboldt	0.14%	Santa Cruz	12.37%
Imperial	1.24%	Shasta	1.65%
Inyo	2.94%	Sierra	0.00%
Kern	1.53%	Siskiyou	7.58%
Kings	2.35%	Solano	15.38%
Lake	1.20%	Sonoma	11.35%
Lassen	1.51%	Stanislaus	1.49%
Los Angeles	3.68%	Sutter	1.61%
Madera	0.81%	Tehama	1.35%
Marin	4.58%	Trinity	3.85%
Mariposa	1.27%	Tulare	13.41%
Mendocino	1.64%	Tuolumne	0.36%
Merced	2.23%	Ventura	12.28%
Modoc	6.12%	Yolo	10.35%
Mono	0.00%	Yuba	1.50%
Monterey	1.71%		
Napa	3.70%		
Nevada	2.25%		
Orange	1.95%		
Placer	13.52%		

Recipient Impact Statement

2003-2004 Canciamilla-Richman & Republican Budget Cuts

We recognize that the 2003-2004 budget crisis is severe and calls for drastic action, however, drastic action does not have to result in cutting programs for California's impoverished families with children to make more money available to the welfare bureaucracy. The proposed cuts do not save general fund money and are mean-spirited. Often in these political fights, some feel obligated to launch an assault on the most vulnerable groups who have the greatest need for government assistance, even when those assaults are not necessary.

Most of these budget cuts would make more money available to the welfare bureaucracy by taking away from California's impoverished families.

The 2003 Canciamilla-Richman/Republican proposed budget cuts threaten to make several changes that will impact impoverished families living in deep poverty. Most of these proposed cuts will not save the general fund money; they are:

- 1. Increase CalWORKs Sanctions.**
- 2. Suspend the CalWORKs COLA for three years.**
- 3. Eliminate the CAPI program.**
- 4. Eliminate the CFAP program.**

The CalWORKs program is funded with federal TANF funds. The State must match those funds in order to be eligible for the TANF money. The total amount of TANF money available to serve impoverished CalWORKs families is about \$6.7 billion for 2003-2004. About one billion is being used for other bureaucratic purposes having nothing to do with providing aid to families and children.

Before the 1996 alleged welfare reform, about 80% of the CalWORKs money was used to provide payments to impoverished families. Today these families receive about 50% of CalWORKs money.

The remaining amount is used for administration and funding the welfare bureaucracy. **Taking from the poor and giving to the bureaucrats should be OPPOSED by all reasonable and compassionate persons.**

1. INCREASE CalWORKs SANCTIONS

PROPOSAL: This proposal is designed to save \$20 million annually by enhancing the negative sanctions imposed by the CalWORKs programs. Full sanctions will be imposed on entire families, babies and innocent children.

CURRENT PROGRAM: Currently, over 37% of the unduplicated participants in the CalWORKs Welfare to Work (WtW) program are being sanctioned by stopping the benefits of the participant who, allegedly has not cooperated with the WtW program. Most sanctioned persons are sanctioned because of lack of child care and/or transportation.

ANALYSIS: Former republican Governor, Pete Wilson rejected, as inhumane, the issue of sanctioning the whole family.

Imposing negative consequences generally produces negative results. There was a time when society thought positive results could be achieved through negative reinforcement, however, this type of antiquated thinking has been proven unsuccessful. Businesses give bonuses to achieve better performances from their employees in lieu of wage reductions. The Legislature gives counties bonuses and incentives to do what the Legislature pays the county welfare departments to do in the first place. Positive reinforcements work and they should apply to the impoverished families with children of California. For example families that meet the federal hours of participation rates should receive a cash benefit at the same level that is given to disabled families.

CCWRO Weekly New Welfare News Bulletin #2003-20- 7/03-Page 4

FISCAL ANALYSIS: Although this change will save millions annually, the savings will be used to fund a larger bureaucracy. California must spend \$6.7 billion on CalWORKs. The issue is, does Canciamilla-Richman and the Republicans want to use that money for impoverished families of California or to fund a larger bureaucracy?

2. SUSPENDING THE CalWORKs COLA FOR THREE YEARS

PROPOSAL: This provision suspends the CalWORKs COLA for three years. There is no suspension of any other COLAs in the budget except for the COLA to protect the impoverished families of California.

CURRENT PROGRAM: The annual cost-of-living statute was signed into law by Governor Ronald Reagan in 1971 as a part of the 1971 Welfare Reform Act. While Governor, he honored his commitment to pay decent benefits to impoverished families. Since Reagan's departure, the AFDC COLA has been a vulnerable target for politicians of both parties.

ANALYSIS: Since 1970, the CalWORKs/AFDC COLA has been attacked. Amazingly, California's poor families are still living on the same fixed incomes levels as they were in 1989.

FISCAL ANALYSIS: Although this change will save millions annually, the savings will be used to fund a larger bureaucracy. California must spend \$6.7 billion on CalWORKs. The issue is, does Canciamilla-Richman and the Republicans want to use that money for impoverished families of California or to fund a larger bureaucracy?

3. ELIMINATION OF THE CFAP PROGRAM

PROPOSAL: This proposal would eliminate the California Food Assistance Program.

CURRENT PROGRAM: This program is designed to provide food for legal aliens who are not eligible for Food Stamp benefits because of 1996 Welfare Reform Act passed by Congress. The program is

funded with TANF dollars for most part.

ANALYSIS: The recent changes in federal law has reversed most of the food stamp cuts for legal aliens. The cost of this program is minimal for 2003-2004 and on going. Most costs are picked up by the TANF program.

FISCAL ANALYSIS: Although this change will save millions annually, the savings will be used to fund a larger bureaucracy.. California must spend \$6.7 billion on CalWORKs.

The issue is, does Canciamilla-Richman and the Republicans want to use that money for impoverished families of California or to fund a larger bureaucracy?

4. ELIMINATION OF THE CAPI PROGRAM

PROPOSAL: This proposal would eliminate the Californian Assistance Program for Immigrants (CAPI).

CURRENT PROGRAM: This program is designed to provide cash aid to legal aliens who are aged, blind and disabled, and are not eligible for federal SSI benefits because of 1996 Welfare Reform Act passed by Congress.

ANALYSIS: This change would transfer the burden of assisting the legal alien aged, blind and disabled cases from the State to the counties. This was a federal anti-immigrant cut. When this program was enacted, the State legislature decided to assist disabled legal aliens to provide some fiscal relief to the counties, but mostly to be compassionate towards the aged, blind and disabled, who are legally in the United States and were able not pass their naturalization tests to become citizens. Any civilized society is judged upon the amount of compassion they show to their fellow human beings. This proposal is simply inhumane.

FISCAL ANALYSIS: This cut would save general fund money, but it would transfer some of the cost to the county budgets and would have an enormous negative impact upon the impoverished aged, blind and disabled legal aliens.