



New Welfare NEWS Bulletin

Bulletin # 07-06 – May 25, 2007

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Publisher: CCWRO

Reporters: Kevin Aslanian and Grace Galligher

Contributors: Steve Goldberg and Diane Aslanian

-- In Brief --

✓ **Fabian Nunez, Speaker of the Assembly, promises to stop the Governor's CalWORKs COLA cut** – On March 9, 2007, a group of organizations concerned with the plight of impoverished families meet with **Fabian Nunez** regarding the plight of welfare families in California. During that meeting the Speaker expressly stated that the Democratic Caucus voted to reject the Governor's CalWORKs cuts, and the COLA cut was one of the cuts that they voted too reject. Present at the meeting were **Cynthia Anderson** of the Lawyers Guild, **Nancy Berlin** of California partnership, **Saira Soto** of SEIU, **Frank Tamborello** of Los Angeles Hunger Action, **Ms. Villela** of CHIRLA and **Kevin Aslanian** of CCWRO.

✓ **Senate and Assembly approve no COLA for CalWORKs** – On May 21, 2007, the Assembly and Senate Budget Subcommittees accepted the Governor's proposed trailer bill language suspending the CalWORKs COLA for the third straight year. The Democrats refuse to give a COLA for poor CalWORKs families living on a fixed income of 1989 that would only cost \$124 million. On May 21, 2007, they approved \$40 million for county performance bonuses, \$200 million of PORK for Los Angeles County to build their own computer system rather than using a perfectly good computer system already in use and \$140 million as a "reserve". Finally the budget makes a \$1.9 billion CalWORKs money contribution to

the General Fund. Yes, money for computers and no money for CalWORKs COLA is the actions of the California State Legislature

✓ **Counties have more people in sanctions and non-compliance after getting \$230 million to reduce these numbers** – Counties just can't help themselves. They are punitive and there is no two ways about it. Last year while Democrats in the State legislature denied the statutory COLA to welfare families that would have cost little over \$100 million and gave \$230 million to counties to increase Welfare-to-Work participation rates and reduce the number of families in sanctions and non-compliance.

The new money started to flow in late 2006. With welfare families suffering and counties swimming in new money one would assume that the number of sanctions and non-compliance is going down. The facts show that sanction rates and noncompliance rates are on the rise.

	October, 2006	March, 2007
Sanction Rate	35%	37%
Noncompliance Rate	22%	24%

Has the increased funding has yielded desired results? The result is more people in sanctions and more people being sanctioned. Did the Democrats do anything about this? No. The 2007-2008 budget rewards counties by giving them another \$40 million on top of the \$230 million entitled "Pay for Performance". That is money that could have given CalWORKs recipients a COLA. But no children go hungry so welfare bureaucrats can flourish in pork.

✓ **Of 112,748 WtW participants 57,075 persons did not get transportation in March of 2007** – The gross violation of welfare recipients basic rights are clearly illustrated in the number of persons not getting transportation assistance for participating in welfare-to-work activities. ***The law is clear – the county shall issue advance transportation money to participants in need thereof to assure that they do not use their welfare check money to cover welfare-to-work related transportation expenses.*** Who does not have transportation expenses in California? With the gasoline prices getting close for \$4 a gallon one would assume that this would be a big cost item. Yes, theoretically it would be. But then that would mean money that the county could use for their own salaries, benefits, travel to Sacramento and Washington would

have to be given to welfare recipients. That is not fair as far as county welfare departments are concerned. Thus, about 50% of the welfare-to-work participants do not get transportation. Some ignorant people say that welfare recipients living on a fixed income of 1989 level simply do not need the money. That is not true reveals how out of touch some may be from reality. The fact is that the state and county welfare bureaucrats have created a system where WtW participants do not even have a form to ask for transportation. On the other hand the state and county welfare bureaucrats have a travel claim form for their Sacramento/Washington escapades and they get much more than welfare recipients.

✓ **Orange CWD unhappy that WtW participants have a support system**

— On March 13, 2007, Nancy McBride of Orange County Welfare Department (CWD) e-mailed a request for policy interpretation to DSS. A welfare-to-work (WtW) participant has a friend who is accompanying her when she has appointment with the CWD WtW workers. Orange County is requiring the WtW participant to complete a release form before every meeting. This person also happens to be working for an agency that provides educational services to WtW participants. "This provider employee is disrupting the day to day operations, consults with the Western Center on Law & Poverty on every issues and gets involved in issues not related to the services being provided. This provider has consulted the legal department and states that the AR form is good for one year and it shouldn't have to be signed prior to every meeting, in addition, the provider employee is stating that since the client and AR are both at the meeting, a verbal consent is all that is required for the provider to attend the meeting."

The proposed answer of Orange CWD to this question was: "Restrict the ART to information related to the services that are provided by the provider"

On March 29, 2007 this issue was referred from the CalWORKs eligibility bureau to the DSS Employment Bureau. As to what the answer was is unclear. The answer is in the state regulations. An authorized representative form is good for one year.

.2 Authorizations

For purposes of this section, an authorized representative is a person or group who has authorization from the applicant/recipient to act for him/her.

.21 Written Authorizations

Except, as otherwise provided, all authorizations are to be written. Written authorizations shall be dated and shall expire one year from the date on which they are given unless they

are expressly limited to a shorter period or revoked...”

Moreover, this is still a free country and any resident of the United States of America, even those involuntarily participating in the WtW program have not given up their minimal basic human rights afforded to them by the U.S. constitution to the chagrin of county welfare bureaucrats in Orange County.

✓ **Maximum Family Grant (MFG) Child Defined** – On March 6, 2007, Fina Perez of Orange County asked DSS what circumstances does MFG rule apply. The March 20, 2007 e-mail answer from DSS was: “***Legal has concurred that we need the CW 2102 signed at application and the most recent re-determination that is at least 11 months prior to the birth of the child.***” The CW 2101 is the MFG notification notice.

County Welfare Department Client Abuse Report

A parent living in Riverside County applied for IHSS benefits in early 2007. She has three severely disabled children.

Initially the applications was denied because they did not have evidence that there were disabled even though they had Medi-Cal, which made them eligible for the IHSS-Plus program.

The second time applications were denied by Riverside County because according to the notice of action mailed by Riverside County “You have not provided sufficient information to establish eligibility or need for services.”

The notice fails to show what information the applicant was asked to provide. The applicant provided all of the county requested verification. This notice is either a fraudulent statement or an intentional county denial of benefits to an eli-

gible person. It is not a crime for the county to fraudulently deny benefits to an eligible person, but it is a crime if the person fraudulently receive IHSS benefits – a felony if the benefits received exceeds \$400, but nothing if the benefits denied exceeded \$400, \$4,000 or \$40,000. Conspiracy to fraudulently deny aid is common behavior in many of the California County welfare departments. It appears that Riverside County does not want to authorize IHSS, thus, has decided to employ unlawful means to deny benefits that applicants are eligible for. The applicant does plead guilty for not reading the minds of Riverside County bureaucrats who maybe needed information from her than she did not provide to them because they never asked for such information.

Mr. L. from San Bernardino County called to say that he wants to apply for CAPI on March 1, 2007. The county mailed out an application packet and gave him until March 12 to turn in the application packet. On March 16, 2007 San Bernardino County issued a notice of action denying Mr. L. CAPI application that they never received. On March 19, 2009, San Bernardino County receives the application but refuses to process it because it was denied. The notice of action was mailed to a wrong address. As of May 25, 2007, San Bernardino County has unlawfully been sitting on Mr. “L.” application and refusing to process the application. San Bernardino County – a place where applications are denied even if not received. And poor people suffer immensely given the County’s indifference to human being in need.

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