

CCWRO Welfare News

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Counties Hurting? How about Cal- WORK recipients?

The California Budget Project published a paper in collaboration with California Welfare Directors Association (CWDA) entitled "Stretched Thin 2008" revealing that state budget cuts undermine California's human services programs. The 28 page document explains that some counties subject to budget cuts and actually felt some pain; pain that welfare recipients live with at the hands of budget cuts that result in CalWORKs recipients being paid the same amount as in 1989. There is no statement in these 28 pages that county workers are receiving the same wages that they received in 1989.

Many of these counties impose mean spirited sanctions against impoverished families for a variety of reasons. These sanctions reduce their benefits by another 25%. Maybe California Budget Project and CWDA should write a report on how poor families are irreparably harmed by budget cuts and county sanctions.

The report fails to show that counties negatively impact impoverished families by imposing sanctions or terminating benefits solely for procedural reasons.

The report fails to mention that over 40% of Welfare-to-Work participants are not paid transportation. This means impoverished families living on a 1989 fixed income use their precious benefits for transportation.

The report does not reveal how counties treat the impoverished that they have responsibility for - General Assistance recipients. Benefits are generally limited to three (3) months and each case gets a miserable \$227 a month.

The report does not reveal that in 2006, the California State Legislature

passed AB 1808 giving counties \$230 million annually to increase welfare to work engagement and reduce sanctions. To pay for it, the 2006-2007 state budget suspended the meager CalWORKs COLA that would have cost only \$143 million.

The 2007-2008 state budget again suspended the CalWORKs COLA that would have only cost \$124 million pre year. The \$230 million has been of part of county single allocation since 06-07. What did taxpayers get for \$230 million? In January, 2007, 67% of the enrollees were engaged in Welfare-to-Work. In January, 2009, 68% were engaged. In January, 2007, over 20% of the cases were sanctioned. In 2009 it is still over 20%. This report can be downloaded at: <http://www.cbp.org/pdfs/2008/StretchedThin2008FINAL.pdf>

COUNTY WELFARE DEPARTMENT VICTIM REPORT

New Born Not timely Added To Grant and no food stamps after 120 days. Ms. J.M. of Sacramento had a baby on 11-16-08. Within a couple of days she reported this to her welfare worker. Her welfare worker said she will mail her some forms to add her baby to the assistance unit. Sometime in December Ms. J.M. received form CW8A to add her baby. The baby was added to the assistance unit effective January 1, 2009. As of March 1, 2009, the baby is still not getting food stamps. The County alleges that they received the pregnancy verification on 11-21-08. When the victim filed for a state hearing, her worker called her and coerced her into dropping the hearing alleging that she has received all that was due.

NOTE: These are a fraction of the victims of county welfare department abuse in California.

Child Care taken away for doing what Sacramento Child Action said to do & violations of Due Process of Law.

Ms. G.L. of Sacramento County received a letter terminating her child care benefits from Child Action. Child Action is a non-profit organization that has a contract with the county to issue child care payments to current and former CalWORKs recipients. In this case, Ms. G.L.'s schedule for child care hours stated she will receive child care from 8:30 am to 8:55 am. She called her Child Action case manager and told the case manager that she is not using the child care services for that time period. Child Action case manager **Irina Walters** instructed Ms. G.L. to complete the time sheet based on the authorized hours.

On February 26, 2009 she received a letter stating "Effective 3-17-09, your child care services will be terminated because you falsified information on the attendance forms." The Notice of Action states that "This action is based on: CDE Regulations." The California child care program is famous for rampant violations of due process of law. The notices of action violate many due process rules.

Child Care hearings do not meet due process requirements. Hearings are not taped. Hearings are conducted by the agency taking the negative action, so there is no trier of fact.

Trustline takes months and months. Working poor not paid by Child Action. Ms. L.H. of Sacramento County cannot use the child care provider of her choice because her provider has not been registered with the "trustline registry". On 7-21-08, Ms. L.H.'s provider went to Child Action and completed the trustline registration forms. The next day she was fingerprinted. She has no criminal record. As of March 2, 2009, her chosen provider has not been registered with the trustline.

On October 25, 2008, she had to forego her chosen provider and get a new child care provider. Her provider, a low-income worker, was not paid for her labor from 7-12-08 through 10-25-08 because she has not been registered with the Trustline Program.

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