

CCWRO Welfare News

Coalition of California Welfare Rights Organizations, Inc. 1901 Alhambra Blvd. Sacramento, CA 95816
 • Telephone (916) 736-0616 • Cell (916) 712-0071 Fax (916) 736-2645 - CCWRO.ORG

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In Brief

● The CalWIN computer system which operates in 18 counties, terminates cases automatically if the computer is not told that the county received a Social Security Number (SSN) within 60 days. State regulations do not authorize the termination of aid for failure to present a SSN within 60 days. This illegal practice was institutionalized by the people who programmed the CalWIN computer system. That this rule found its way into the CalWIN system is an evidence of the lack of proper oversight.

● CalWIN is programmed to reject an authorization for supportive services for the month that the participant has signed the contract. Thus, if a person applies and is found to be eligible on December 2, 2009 and must go to work on December 5, CalWIN will not authorize childcare or transportation until January 1st.

● On Tuesday, September 22, the US Senate approved Carmen Nazario as the new head of the Federal Administration for Children and Families (ACF). Her formal title is the Assistant Secretary for Children and Families. Next up for child welfare is the position of Commissioner on Children, Youth, and Families at ACYF is Bryan Samuels, formerly from the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services. He was nominated on July 13 to fill that post.

● Social Security Administration has implemented a new Social Security Number Verification Process. Under this process, SSA is able to identify persons with SSNs getting Medi-Cal benefits in more than one state.

Figure #1	Cases Sanctioned	Undupl. Participants	Number of Children Suffered August '09	Dollar cost to Impoverished CalWORKs Families (in thousands)
August 2009				
Statewide	47,859	148,122	95718	\$6,221,670
Alameda	1,410	5,942	2820	\$183,300
Fresno	3,156	8,728	6312	\$410,280
Kern	4,430	5,379	8860	\$575,900
Los Angeles	12,849	36,108	25698	\$1,670,370
Madera	291	725	582	\$37,830
Merced	1,085	1,822	2170	\$141,050
Riverside	4,108	7,963	8216	\$534,040
San Bernardino	6,618	12,373	13236	\$860,340
San Diego	1,303	10,191	2606	\$169,390
San Francisco	419	1,678	838	\$54,470
San Joaquin	949	4,267	1898	\$123,370
Santa Clara	1,240	4,657	2480	\$161,200
Santa Cruz	268	731	536	\$34,840
Stanislaus	1,189	2,597	2378	\$154,570

● In 2010, County Welfare Directors Association (CWDA) will have new leadership. The President will be Linda Haugan, Director of San Bernardino County Welfare Department. She has resisted advocate's proposals to set up a system to cure Welfare to Work (WtW) sanctions. San Bernardino has a high WtW sanction rate. During August 2009, in San Bernardino County, 13,236 innocent children were punished because their parents were sanctioned.

● Mark Wilson has now assumed the position of running the DSS Employment Bureau. He comes from EDD and the WIA program.

Welfare-to-Work Sanction Impact on the Family

The average sanction reduces welfare benefits by an estimated 30%. The sanctions have a devastating impact on children who are the ultimate victims of California's punitive sanction system.

Based on the DSS WtW 25 reports, which reflect information transmitted from county welfare departments to the State, during August 2009, there were 148,122 persons participating in a WtW activity and 47,859 families who were sanctioned. In August 2009, impoverished families were deprived of \$6.2 million dollars which effected an estimated 95,718 poor children. **Figure #1** is a chart of large counties and small counties with high sanction rates.

County Welfare Department Victim Report

● **Kern County** sent a Notice of Action (NOA) on February 19, 2009 imposing a sanction on a single mom for failing to participate in the WtW program. Ms. 9069157 has received cash aid since January 2009. She is Yemeni-American. Her husband is in Yemen. Her uncle provided her with a place to live. Her husband and uncle believe it is a violation of Islamic law and custom for her to work. Claimant does not agree with their interpretation, but her uncle will not allow her to live with him if she works.

● **Alameda County** has been unlawfully sanctioning Ms. 9198148's family since March 1, 2008. The Alameda County welfare worker did not want to take corrective action. Ms. 9198148 was forced to file an administrative hearing costing over \$2,500 to get a hearing decision ordering Alameda County to return the money taken away from this impoverished family living

on a fixed income below 50% of the poverty level.

● Ms. 92208184 of **San Bernardino County** received a Notice of Action dated July 21, 2009 that her benefits would be reduced. She received the letter on July 22, 2009. She filed for a state hearing on July 27, 2009 and asked for aid paid pending. On August 1, 2009 she did not get aid paid pending (APP). She also did not get aid paid pending for September of 2009. In fact San Bernardino refused to issue aid paid pending. Even at the time of the hearing San Bernardino County had not complied with the law. The County finally issued aid paid pending as required by a court order in **Blankenship v. Saenz** which can be downloaded at : http://www.ccwro.org/index.php?option=com_docman&Itemid=105 and EAS §22-073.11. 22-073.1. *Upon receipt of a request for hearing or notice from the Department that a recipient has filed a request for a state hearing,*

the county shall provide aid pending the state hearing in accordance with Section 22-072, when entitlement exists.

22-073.11 Such payment shall be either placed in the U.S. Mail or available for hand-delivery to the recipient (if agreed to by the county and recipient) within five working days of the receipt of the hearing request by the appropriate agency as specified in Section 22-004, or the date the regular scheduled aid payment would otherwise have been paid to the recipient, whichever is later.

It seems San Bernardino County believes that somewhere in the regulations there is an instruction that APP should not be issued if it would result in an overpayment. There is no such regulation. San Bernardino County must promulgate State regulations lawfully.

“Call for submissions -- CCWRO New Welfare News is accepting articles on any aspect of public benefits law and practice. Anyone interested in writing an article for the New Welfare News may submit it for review to Kevin Aslanian at kevin.aslanian@ccwro.org. If you have any questions, e-mail Kevin or call CCWRO at (916) 736-0616.”