

# CCWRO Welfare News

Coalition of California Welfare Rights Organizations, Inc.  
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## In Brief

- The New Governor has been in Sacramento for the whole month of December. The “transition” is happening. Unlike other transitions, this time the Governor-elect’s transition team has not contacted the various departments. Most of the information that the Governor is getting is coming directly from the Department of Finance and not DSS. This is good in part because of DSS staff loss and is ill equipped to take on a “transition”.

- Ana Matosantos, Director of the State Department of Finance resigned and was appointed to head up the transition team for the Jerry Brown Administration. She went to school in Stanford and was a consultant for the California State Senate Budget Committee Health and Human Services Subcommittee.

Schwarzenegger appointed Cynthia Bryant as Director of Finance, but Ana has not even left her office and plans to remain at Finance until the new Governor takes over.

- On September 22, 2010 CalWIN held its 4th Annual Strategic Planning Meeting and was touted by CalWIN a success. The meeting was attended by County Directors and their associates. Absent from the meeting were the representatives and the people that CalWIN actually affect – welfare recipients and their representatives.

Benefits CalWIN, which is the CalWIN on-line application process is going live all over the state. Its design is completely “anti-homeless”. This is what happens when middle class and upper class members of our society having very little knowledge of the homeless and recipient community they allegedly serve develop systems in the vacuum.

- C-IV received another \$1 million from FNS to upgrade the C4Yourself in addition to the millions they get from the State and federal government. The C4Yourself system design requires that the applicants lie under penalty of perjury in order to file their application if a necessary field is not applicable to an applicant. The system demands exact information and refuses to process the application with an answer “unknown” as most other civilized systems are designed. Thus, this system forces applicants to lie under penalty of perjury

that should be a crime, but it is not.

- Folks from Marshalls Islands, Micronesia and Republic of Palau are eligible for CAPI. Margarita Castro of Sacramento County asked DSS if an individual with an I-94, annotated “CFA/MIS” or “CFA/PAL” should be a prucol under the provisions of the Compact of Free Association Act of 1985. Ms. Cynthia Yates from DSS responded the same day stating that those who entered after to 8/22/96 would be time limited, but eligible for CAPI benefits.

- Christine Webb-Curtis is retiring at the end of the year as Chief of the food Stamp Branch of DSS. Venus Garth, who is the Chief of the DSS Child Care and Refugee Services Branch, is also retiring. They will be sorely missed.

## New Welfare Bills Introduced for 2011-2012 California Legislative Sessions.

AB 1- Speaker Perez – This bill would restore funding for Stage 3 childcare.

AB 6 – Assembly member Fuentes – This bill would require California to have a semi-annual reporting system in lieu of the current quarterly reporting system. It would also repeal the fingerprint requirement for CalWORKs and Food Stamps that would yield savings of 8 million dollars annually. Finally the bill would establish a process whereby all Food Stamp recipients would be entitled to the Standard Utility Deduction.

SB 12- Steinberg - This bill would restore funding for Stage 3 childcare.

SB 48 - Liu - This bill would make changes in the food stamp employment and training program to make it more efficient and more user friendly.

## San Bernardino County Imposes Sanction on a Full Time Employed Family with a Bad Notice Who Had Good Cause

Ms. L. H - 1380652 is a mandatory participant. The county assigned her to a “job readiness” activity for 8/9/10. She did not attend. She was scheduled for a concilia-

tion appointment on 8/20/10. The County appeals representative Alma Banuelos testified under oath that during the 8/20/10 interview the county determined that Ms. L.H. did not have a good reason to participate, thus was asked to sign a “compliance plan”, which she did. The worker, Julie Buenrostro testified under oath that Ms. LH signed the compliance plan. Ms. L.H. testified that she went to the office for her 8/20/10 meeting with Ms. Julie Buenrostro. Ms. Julie Buenrostro came out to the lobby and gave Ms. LH the compliance plan and instructed her to sign the compliance plan. She did. The county refused to make a good cause determination as most counties generally do during conciliation appointments.

The County issued a NOA dated September 15 imposing the sanction on October 1, 2010. This is not a 30-day legal sanction notice of action as mandated by MPP §42-721.23, but San Bernardino County did not see anything wrong with the county breaking state law.

At the December 15, 2010 hearing, Ms. LH stated that it takes her more than 3 hours each way to go from her house to the “job readiness” activity location. When the claimant’s representative stated that this is good cause, Ms. Alma Banuelos stated that under oath that remoteness does not apply to workfare/CWEX. It appeared that the county representative was either confusing job search with CWEX or was hoping to confuse the judge by misleading the judge to think that CWEX and job readiness is the same thing. Finally, the San Bernardino County Representative Alma Banuelos insisted that the sanction should be sustained for there is no good cause for remoteness. The county insisted that Ms. LH could have used somebody else’s car rather than taking the bus. The evidence showed that Ms. LH, like 75% of families on welfare did not have a car.

The ALJ Jack Wright was so overwhelmed with the dogmatic insistence of San Bernardino County to sanction a family even after it was revealed that the county had already terminated the benefits of the family effective January 1, 2011 because the husband is working full time and making \$20 a hour. He told the county that he is finding the claimant had good cause and implied that this was a big waste of time on the part of San Bernardino County.

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