

CCWRO Welfare News

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In Brief

○ On-Line Application Link on EDD Web-Page: Los Angeles DPSS called Brian Tam of DSS a few months ago asking about putting a link on the EDD web site about food stamps. DSS asked other counties what they thought of the idea. The CWDA Food Stamp Committee said that they would rather have one central location. As of September 5, 2011, Labor Day there is no link for food stamp applications on EDD's web page. DSS has a link on their web page where any person can apply for food stamps on-line. This link can also be on EDD's web page. Hopefully this will happen soon to help the unemployed get food stamp benefits.

○ State Plans Not Transparent: The Food Stamp Employment and Training Program state plan has to be submitted to the federal government by September 23, 2011. State plans are often submitted to the federal government without any public involvement. Only the Community Services Block Grant state plan has a legislative hearing every year to assure public transparency. The Brown administration asserts that it believes in transparency and simplification. The Brown Administration should take steps to make state plans submitted to the federal government transparent.

○ Mathematica Study: A few months ago DSS announced a Food Security Survey through Mathematica for newcomers to the program. Has now resurfaced and the State is moving forward with that survey. Counties selected for the survey

are Sacramento, Fresno, Tulare, Napa, Riverside, Los Angeles, Orange, San Diego, Humboldt, and Marin. Consortia will be conducted soon. Call newcomers and then will follow up with folks 6 months later – only regarding Food Security – recipients can opt out if they don't feel comfortable.

AB 6 - Fuentes

AB 6 has passed the Senate and it was sent to the on the governor's desk on September 2, 2011. It is expected that the Governor will sign the bill. For AB 6 information go to:

http://www.leginfo.ca.gov/cgi-bin/postquery?bill_number=ab_6&sess=CUR&house=B&author=fuentes

The federal Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) has been urging California to adopt a semi-annual reporting system for several years.

This bill would implement semi-annual reporting, which means CalWORKs and Food Stamp recipients would have to submit two (2) reports a year with reporting requirements in excess of what is required by federal law. It would also repeal finger-imaging for food stamp recipients and use the Low-Income Energy Assistance Outreach Funds to pay a nominal portion of all food stamp recipients utility costs to assure that they all get a standard utility deduction.

The bill was opposed by the California District Attorney's Asso-

ciation who would like to keep the current quarterly reporting system so they can charge more counts of perjury when prosecuting for welfare fraud.

The California quarterly reporting system has been operating on repeated FNS waivers that have allowed California to make the food stamp program more punitive than allowed by current federal regulations. The state has been allowed to terminate an estimated 48,000 households from food stamp benefits for not reporting an "address" which is not a condition of eligibility, but is one way of terminating food stamp benefits that result in more hunger and malnutrition in California. AB 6 continues this address reporting requirement despite the fact that it is not required. (See 7 CFR 273.12(a)(5)(iii)(E) and (v).)

The bill provides that DSS can seek federal waivers from FNS to maintain reporting requirements in excess of what the federal law requires to saddle impoverished California households with hunger and malnutrition.

AB 6 goes into effect no later than July 1, 2012.

CCWRO NUMBER OF THE WEEK

DSS DPA 482 Welfare Fraud IIEVS Management Report reveals during April-June of 2011 counties processed 173,960 reports and only 12,553 had a discrepancy. That is:

93% Waste