

CCWRO Welfare News

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2012-2013 Budget for CalWORKs and Child Care in Brief

CalWORKs Cuts – This year, CalWORKs endured cuts totaling \$467 million while contributing over \$1 billion dollars to balance the state budget. How do CalWORKs recipients contribute to the State Budget? The CalWORKs budget is funded with \$3.6 billion from the federal government. The state had to spend \$2.9 billion to access that \$3.6 billion (\$2.9 billion + \$3.7 billion= \$6.5 billion total CalWORKs budget). California budget-writers and the Governor were able to manipulate the budget to take over \$1 billion of the \$6.5 billion and use it for nonCalWORKs items such as foster care and CalGrants. This year the time limit on CalWORKs was reduced from 48 months to 24 months. We wonder if any of the writers of this budget would be willing to limit their pensions or social security benefits to 24 months? Doubt it. There are certain exceptions to the 24-month time limit. DSS will be inviting advocates to participate in the formulation of the policies to implement these exceptions that may ameliorate the immense negative impact that the 24-month limit would have upon CalWORKs families in California. There will be more information coming soon. The Governor's web page, touting "Governor Brown signs 2012-2013 Budget", explains that the budget "reforms welfare" by building a "reserve of nearly \$1 billion." The web page goes on to explain that the budget has a reserve of \$948 million to protect the state against unforeseen costs that, unfortunately, come out of the mouths of California's impoverished families.

CHILD CARE CUTS – The Governor's budget proposed to transfer childcare Stage 2 and 3 to Department Social Services (DSS). The State Legislature rejected this proposal. CalWORKs recipients will continue to get their childcare from a fractured system that has a hundred and one different rules depending on what county one lives in, and in many cases, what part of the county one lives in. Stage 1 is administered by DSS. California Department of Education (CDE) administers stage 2 and 3. DSS has regulations that provide a meaningful process and real due process for Stage 1 recipients. By contrast, Stage 2 and 3 do not have specific rules to guarantee due process. CDE has had a couple of meetings with providers and advocates to address these issues, but the process is very slow, meanwhile stage 2 and 3 CalWORKs recipients are losing their child care often without a fair process to challenge the allegations made against them. Once they lose their child care, they may also lose their job and will not be able to meet the federal work participation rates.

The budget cuts about \$160 million from child care.

Los Angeles County Client Abuse Report

Ms. UADCBF6 has a child who was born at home. The child, a son whose name is January, is now 12-years old. For some reason, a computer changed his name to January. The county is trying to pursue child support. The child has been on CalWORKs for several years. He is in school and the county has been verifying his school attendance for several years. Now, the Exposition Park Office is DEMANDING that she provide a copy of January's birth certificate. Her son's name is Jamaury, not January. She does not have a copy of Jamaury's birth certificate. On June 2, 2012, Ms. UADCBF6 received a notice of action terminating her benefits for failing to provide proof of age for January. The notice of action fails to provide the regulation MPP Section 42-411 that outlines what is acceptable verification. Moreover, the county insisted that she apply for a birth certificate and never offered to pay the \$20 fee. She is only receiving aid for one person as she has timed out. This family is living on a fixed income equal to 25% of the poverty level.

Her advocate contacted Ms. Andrea Flowers, a CalWORKs deputy for DPSS's Exposition Park office. Ms. Flower's promised that this victim's aid would be on the card on the first of the month. This was another promise that was not kept by DPSS. On July 1, 2012, her benefits were not on the card. Now her only means of communication – her cell phone will be disconnected for failure to make payment on the 1st of the month. DPSS has also asked her to bring her 12-year old child to the welfare office on July 9, 2012 so they can eyeball the child. Why? Because the social security office has erroneously stated that Jamaury is a female and not a male. This has been labeled as an inconsistency. Who committed the inconsistency? The Social Security Office.

Program violations by DPSS in this case:

COUNT 1. – Failure to issue a notice of action that contains the correct regulation outlining the various options this victim has in verifying her child's age. MPP § 22-001(a)(1):

"Adequate Notice- A written notice informing the claimant of the action the county intends to take, the reasons for the intended action, the specific regulations supporting such action..."

COUNT 2. Failure to inform the victim of her options

for verifying her child’s identity as mandated by MPP § 40-126.32

“Notice of Required Evidence - Within ten calendar days of application, the county shall provide written notice to the applicant of the required evidence and examples of alternative evidence, if any, to determine eligibility.”

COUNT 3. Refusal to pay third party fees as mandatory fees as mandated by MPP § 40-126.332 when the county requested the birth certificate. MPP 40-126.332:

“Third Party Fees - If necessary, the county shall pay a third party fee to obtain existing evidence of eligibility on behalf of the applicant.”

COUNT 4. Requesting additional verification that is already in the county’s possession. The county has had school verification of the child’s age for several years. MPP § 40-126.35

“Retrieve Case File - The county shall retrieve and examine those existing case files which are in the possession of the county or its agents, in a timely manner, to determine if needed evidence of eligibility is already in the possession of the county when: ... (b) There is a cost associated with obtaining the evidence.”

COUNT 5. Soliciting verification when the county already had in their possession. MPP § 40-126.31.

“Require Only Evidence of Eligibility - The county shall require only evidence necessary to determine past or present eligibility for the amount or delivery of aid.”

COMMENT: This could have very likely been avoided had the county used the CW 2200 form that was designed by counties and advocates in 2008. To date counties refuse to use the form they helped developed, thus, counties are willfully and grossly violating state laws and regulations on verification daily in full acquiescence of the Staet Department of Social Services.

**April 2012 California Welfare-to-Work Program OutcomesReport
How Much Do We Spend and What Do We Get?**

2010-2011 Welfare-to-Work Services Appropriation
\$943,381 million

2010-2011 Welfare-to-Work Child Appropriation
\$1,071,362.569 million

Number of Unduplicated Participants During April 2012	120,078
Gross Number of Unduplicated Participants Being Sanctioned During April 2012	48,227
Number of Participants Sanctioned During April 2012	22,567
Percentage of Gross Unduplicated Participants Sanctioned During April 2012	51%
Dollar Loss to CalWORKs Families Due to Sanctions this Month Estimates at \$125 Per Sanction for During April 2012	\$7.6 million
Number of Unduplicated Participants Who Entered Employment That Resulted In Termination of CalWORKs During April 2012	3,249
Percentage of Unduplicated Participants Who Entered Employment That Resulted In Termination of CalWORKs During April 2012	3%
Taxpayer Cost Per Unduplicated Participants Who Entered Employment That Resulted In Termination of CalWORKs During April 2012	\$51,675.98
Number of Participants NOT Being Paid Transportation by the County During April 2012	56,100
Percentage of Number of Participants NOT Being Paid Transportation by the County During April 2012	46%
Estimated Dollar Amount Poor Families Defrauded by Counties Not Receiving Transportation at an Estimated \$100 Per Participant During April 2012	\$6.5 million

Source:
State Department of Social Services WtW 25 reports
<http://www.cdss.ca.gov/research/PG276.htm>