


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

October 25, 2013
 Issue #2013-14


<http://www.ccwro.org>


In Brief...


 Congress passed the Continuing Appropriation Bill Public Law 113-46 authorizing the federal government's re-opening also included an extension of the TANF funding until January 15, 2013. It provides:

"Activities authorized under Part A of Title IV and Section 1108(b) of the Social Security Act (except for activities authorized in section 403(b)) shall continue through the date specified in section 106(3) of this joint resolution in the manner authorized for fiscal year 2013, and out of any money in the Treasury of the United States not otherwise appropriated, there are hereby appropriated such sums as may be necessary for such purpose."

This known as the "Continuing Resolution" (CR). The CR came just in time because California would have had problems getting food stamp out to folks after November 1, 2013.


 DSS' evaluation of the SB 1041 implementation includes conducting visits to counties. Prior to the county visit, DSS solicits input relating to on-going implementation issues from the advocates via a conference call. However, the county controls the SB 1041 visits. The county selects the caseworkers that DSS staff will meet and the cases for review. The SB 1041 review should be conducted in the same manner as Quality Control (QC) reviews. QC staff tells the county which cases to pull for the review. Unfortunately, DSS staff does meet the actual program users.

 IHSS CMISPs II is slowly going live in California. DSS ordered this system in the previous century and CMISP II is unable to accept on-line applications. Counties question the accuracy of the data that CMISPs II is spewing out. The CWDA August 2013 Adult Services Committee Minutes noted one problem. If Medi-Cal issued a NOA in mid-June stating Medi-Cal will stop July 1st and the recipient has a share of cost, CMISPs II charges the provider. Counties look at CMISPs II as a system that is not perfect. CMISPs II already has 88 request for changes and it has not been implemented statewide yet.

 The Los Angeles County "Your Benefits Now" (YBN) is bad news for applicants. The evidence shows that impoverished families using the YBN option is twice as likely to be denied than applicants applying in-person. Our advice is don't use YBN until DPSS adopts a business practice that is on-line application friendly. CalWIN and C-IV on-line applications are worse. On-line application causes deeper poverty for persons and families in dire need of help.

 New County Welfare Directors Association officers slated for 2014 –

- President – Susan Loew**
- Riverside County
- Vice President at Large – Barry Zimmerman**
- Ventura County
- Vice President of Services – Kelly Woodard**
- Madera County
- Vice President of Administration – Trent Rhorer**
- San Francisco
- Vice President of Program – Howard Himes**
- Fresno County
- Secretary/Treasurer – Lori Cox**
- Alameda County
- Executive Officer – Charlene Reid**
- Tehama County

 DSS has sent out 600 letters pursuant to ACL 13-54 regarding alleged excessive replacement of EBT cards. DSS has advised counties that they can also send out a letter. Some county administrators wondered why should counties sent out another letter? What would be the purpose?

Counties Do Not Spent Funds Allocated for Administration of Public Social Services Programs

The 2013-2014 state budget was very kind to counties. Counties received an additional \$244 million for their single allocation block grant for CalWORKs. They also received an additional \$61 million for CalFresh administration. The Governor can be kind to counties with these single allocations because history shows that counties often do not spend the money and return it to the state while claiming that they lack resources to serve CalWORKs families in deep poverty. **Chart #1** reveals additional funds received by counties for FY 2013 and money counties did not spent last fiscal year.

CHART # 1 - County Receipt and Use of Funds For CalWORKs and CalFresh

Source: CDSS	Additional Funds Given to Counties 2013-2014	Funds Not Used in Fiscal Year 2012-2013
CalWORKs Single Allocation that includes CalWORKs Child Care	\$224 million	\$262 million including \$143 million for Child Care
CalFresh Single Allocation	\$61 million	\$77 million

Major County Barriers to Help for Families with Children In Dire need

Last year, counties received a block grant allocation of \$1.9 billion dollars to use at their discretion. Counties returned \$118 million to the state because they were not able to spend it all. **Chart # 2** below shows the denials of CalWORKS applications during July of 2013 based on the CA 237 CDSS reports. The data reveals that Counties are more likely not approve an application for CalWORKS than to approve one. Most nonapprovals are not because the family failed to meet the CalWORKS need standards but because the applicant failed to satisfy the county welfare bureaucracy's demands for unnecessary documents in the CalWORKS application process including waiting for hours and coming back next day while moms often have hungry kids with them all this time. **Chart #2** reveals large counties not approving over up to 67% of the applications.

CalFresh benefits are paid 100% by the federal government. Ignoring this, California counties still deny 39% of all CalFresh applications. Of those, over 68% of the denied applicants had less than \$100 in resources and less than \$150 in income should have been approved for expedited service CalFresh. Eligibility for expedited service CalFresh only requires that the household have less than \$100 in liquid resources and less than \$150 in income and the only verification required is "alien status".

Generally the denials are for technical reasons. Denying CalFresh applications results in it being harder to put food on the table for the children in California. Counties ignore the fact that CalFresh benefits stimulates the economy by putting money in the hands of mom and pop stores that sell the food who then make purchases from other vendors.

Our question is why do counties deny eligible CalFresh recipients the first time the family applies? It is not that counties don't have the money to run their food stamp program. Last year they got \$533 million and failed to spend \$77 million. Just imagine how many expedited service applications could have been processed with that \$77 million during 2012-2013. Los Angeles County, alone, failed to spend almost \$16 million during 2012-2013 while 68% of the expedited service applications were denied. **See Chart #3 for more details.**

July 2013 Source: CDSS CHART # 2	Denial Percentage For CalWORKS Applications
Statewide	58%
Ventura	67%
San Diego	66%
San Bernardino	65%
Riverside	65%
Stanislaus	65%
Contra Costa	64%
Kern	63%
Santa Clara	60%
San Francisco	60%
Orange	60%
San Joaquin	59%
Sacramento	59%
Solano	54%
Merced	49%
Los Angeles	48%
Alameda	47%
Fresno	47%
Tulare	38%

CHART # 3 EXPEDITE SERVICE FOR October- December, 2012 - Source: CDSS	Requested Expedited Services (FS-ES)	Denied FS-ES	% of Denials of FS-ES
Statewide	311,105	210,092	68%
Santa Clara	6,647	4,948	74%
Sacramento	15,986	11,866	74%
Contra Costa	4,834	3,340	69%
Riverside	30,536	19,811	65%
Orange	15,548	9,984	64%
Kern	14,417	8,995	62%
San Bern.	36,658	22,708	62%
Stanislaus	9,173	5,636	61%
Los Angeles	80,533	48,463	60%
San Diego	29,175	17,361	60%
San Fran.	4,942	2,887	58%
Fresno	13,552	7,811	58%
Merced	4,269	2,413	57%
Alameda	9,774	5,420	55%
Tulare	7,290	3,870	53%
Solano	2,362	1,046	44%
San Joaquin	6,414	2,809	44%
Ventura	2,756	962	35%