



CCWRO Welfare News

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April 20, 2015
Issue #2015-04

In Brief

• The Department of Health Care Services is planning to visit 5 counties this year to talk with eligibility workers and supervisors about CalHEERS problems. They will be visiting Los Angeles County, 2 CalWIN counties and 2 C-IV counties.

• Child care providers are still being paid with 20th century checks, not by direct deposit or utilizing efficient 21st century payments methods. The claiming of the payments is also limited to paper submission in lieu of electronic submissions. This is one of the reasons for the unnecessary administrative expenditures that could be used to provide child care services.

• According to the 2/5/15 California Welfare Directors Association (CWDA) childcare committee minutes: "TrustLine Automated Registration Process (TARP) contract expires 6/30/15 – CDSS is looking for a replacement solution. CDSS has used the same contractor since 1998 without competitive bidding. The Request for Proposal (RFP) went out about two years ago. CDSS only received one proposal. The bidder withdrew because they wanted the state to commit to a certain annual volume and the state couldn't commit. Now there are no interested parties. This impacts all stages of Child Care. TrustLine Web-based Application (TWA) is the other TrustLine process available to counties. The Child Care Provider completes fingerprinting at an approved Live Scan site and the R&R agency enters the Provider's application information into TWA; whereas, TARP Live Scan and data entry are done at the same location. CCLD asked the group who currently pays the rolling fee/Department of Justice (DOJ)/Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) portion of the fee? (Those fees are not charged to providers who complete Live Scan at a TARP location.)"

Figure # 1 - Percentage of total participants not receiving child care

County	%
Stanislaus	11%
Sacramento	12%
Contra Costa	13%
San Diego	15%
Merced	15%
Orange	17%
Tulare	17%
Fresno	19%
Los Angeles	22%
Santa Clara	23%
Alameda	24%
Solano	24%
San Bernardino	31%
Monterey	31%
Ventura	33%
Kern	37%
San Francisco	39%
Riverside	42%
San Joaquin	45%
Statewide	24%

CalWORKs Child Care Not Getting to Entitled Families

During fiscal year 2013-2014 counties refused to spend \$140 million child care dollars allocated for WtW Stage 1 and 2 participants. Meanwhile, less than 30% of the participants in California are receiving childcare. Families & children face immense barriers to childcare. The most fundamental way of assuring that child care is available to those required to participate in a WtW activity is to verify that adequate and safe childcare is actually available before forcing a parent to participate in a WtW activity.

While the welfare department verifies everything under the sun before benefits are granted or continued, they never verify if the child actually has childcare before forcing a CalWORKs parent to participate in a WtW activity. Parents have been known to leave their children home alone to avoid enduring the horrific WtW sanctions. Families with a WtW sanction are forced to live on a fixed income of 21% of the federal poverty level.

To demonstrate the inconsistencies of child care services in California we looked at the percentage of unduplicated one-parent families participating a WtW activity and receiving child care. In January of 2015 there were 87,958 participants. 43,609 participants were being sanctioned and only 20,691 received childcare. **Figure # 1** reveals the number of unduplicated participants receiving child care during January of 2015 in the 19 largest counties of California.

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Congress Attacks the Poor

Congressional Republicans have launched the 2015 attack on the poor. The plan, repackaged for 2015, block grants major anti-poverty programs like SNAP (Cal-Fresh in California), Medicaid (Medi-Cal in California) and Housing Assistance programs similar to the TANF block grant. They also complain that the SNAP, Section 8 and Medicaid Programs do not require job search and workfare as a condition of receiving benefits like the TANF program. The enactment of these proposed changes would mean less assistance to the poor and more financial aid for the state and county bureaucracies.

The idea that “those who work shall eat” was the foundation of the Soviet Union and its leader Vladimir Lenin. Now many in Congress have embraced the Soviet mentality, even after seeing the disastrous results of the philosophy.

What does history reveal about block grants? The TANF program, signed into law by Bill Clinton, abolished the AFDC program that paid 70% of the money to families. Today, TANF only pays 30% of the available funds to direct payments to families. If the Republican Congress gets their way, the major anti-poverty programs would be diluted into a welfare program for state welfare bureaucrats.

Family Stabilization Program

In 2012, the Brown Administration decided to join Arkansas and Idaho to limit CalWORKs to 24 months. The 24-month time clock could be extended at the “county option” if the family is afforded one of the limited extension and only if they can prove that (1) they can get a job in 6 months;(2) has encountered unique labor market barriers; (3) they have applied for SSI and a hearing is scheduled. It would be rare for any person to have verification that he or she can get a job in six-months. California Democrats objected saying that many of the CalWORKs families are unstable and

need services before the 24-month clock starts. In response, the Brown Administration and the Democrats agreed to establish a “Family Stabilization Program (FSP)” which is limited to six months.

Operated entirely by the individual counties, the purpose of FSP is to stabilize the families before the 24-month clock starts. Each county will decide the methods, type of services and timeframes for FSP. Counties submit quarterly reports on the number of participants receiving FSP services. So far, the counties with no FSP participants for October, November and December 2014 are Fresno, San Joaquin, Marin, Mariposa, Merced, Placer, San Joaquin, San Luis Obispo, San Mateo and Sutter.

In 2013, DSS issued an All County Letter stating that persons having domestic violence problems, mental health issues and suffering from homelessness must be sanctioned for failure to participate in the FSP. Last year, the Budget Trailer Bill included language that prohibited DSS from sanctioning participants who fail to participate in the FSP. In lieu of the sanction, the participant would be scheduled for regular participation, unless otherwise exempt from the WtW program. Family stabilization sounds nice and so did “communism”. But the inherent flaw of FSP is that families living on an income of 31% of the federal poverty level cannot be stabilized in six months. But after 24 months, 80% of the families would have to endure life at 21% of the federal poverty level according to the estimates presented to the State Legislature by DSS.

February 2015 WtW Fatcs

Annual Cost of WtW \$2,266,360.000
(**\$2.2 billion**)

Unduplicated Participate
117,932

Sanctions
59,351

Jobs that Resulted in Termination of CalWORKs
3,951

Avarage Cost Per Job
\$47,801