



Coalition of California Welfare Rights Organizations, Inc.
1111 Howe Ave • Suite 635 • Sacramento • CA 95825-8551
Telephone (916) 736-0616 • Fax (916) 736-2645

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County Client Abuse Report

• **A San Diego County senior believes San Diego HHS is committing elder abuse.** Mr. 2052867 is a disabled IHSS beneficiary. Effective 9-1-23 his IHSS services were stopped by San Diego County because he allegedly failed to cooperate with the county. The unlawful notice of action failed to meet the legal requirements of a due process notice of action because it failed to specify what the act of noncooperation was. The victim told us that the social worker made an unannounced visit while he was at the social security office. The social worker told him that she would reschedule the appointment but then issued a notice of action, dated 8-18-23, stopping his IHSS services on 9-1-23. Mr. 2052867 asked the advocate if this was elderly abuse. We believe it is.

• **Kern County denied IHSS application.** Ms. 1979325's IHSS application was denied because she failed to return her SOC 873 (IHSS Needs Medical Necessity form). Ms. 1979325 said she never received a SOC 873 to return to Kern County.

• **Sacramento County CF-ES Victim** - On 9-30-23, Ms. D.A., fleeing from the Ukrainian genocide, applied for CalFresh and RCA. She responded "yes" to the first two (2) questions about CalFresh Expedited services saying that her household's gross income was less than \$150 and cash on hand, checking and saving accounts were less than \$100. She also said that her combined gross income and liquid resources were less than the combined rent/mortgage and utilities. Three working days passed and no CalFresh benefits. As of 11-2-23, she still have not been aided.

CalSAWS NEWS

• **CalSAWS BenefitsCal Has Bad Information-** When a person goes on BenefitsCal to apply for benefits and clicks "Apply for benefits -Learn more about food, cash aid, and health coverage programs", rather than CalSAWS taking the person to "apply", it takes the person to either "apply for benefits" or "See if I qualify". In the "See if I qualify" section the income levels are for 2021 in lieu of the current income levels for 2023. Thus, folks who chose the "see if I qualify" option instead of applying, may decide not to apply because BenefitsCal incorrectly tells them that they have income that exceeds the 2021 levels, but it may be less than the 2023 income levels. This is a major flaw that meaningful public involvement could have prevented.

• **CalSAWS Excludes Public Input for Public Facing Elements of CalSAWS** - CalSAWS has agreed to include advocates in "public facing" actions of CalSAWS in response to advocate concerns over public exclusion of CalSAWS governance. The inclusion is limited to BenefitsCal application portal of CalSAWS

However, this is not the only element of CalSAWS which is public facing. Public facing includes the CalSAWS Self-Service kiosks that are used by public benefits applicants and beneficiaries to access services

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at county welfare offices; Reception Logs monitoring the lobby traffic of CWD customers; visit purposes for the Visit Purposes and Detail options in the Reception Management Dashboard; and forms used by beneficiaries and applicants.

- **CA-229573: DDID 2284 to build the CalSAWS “Scheduled Callback” feature** used 1,600 hours of time to build this system that is clearly public facing, but the public was excluded, except for the “county public”. How many counties are using this system? When do they return calls? How long does the person have to be on hold before they can use the call back feature; minutes, hours, how long? What is the minimum wait time before the call back feature comes on? Public benefit beneficiaries have reported that they wait for hours and then the call drops. They try again the next day.

- **CalSAWS Contributes Unlawful Immunization CalWORKs Penalties for Families - W&IC §11265.8 (3)** A statement that the applicant or recipient may file an affidavit claiming that the immunizations are contrary to the applicant’s or recipient’s beliefs.

[ACL 14-98](#) provides that CW 2209 form must be sent with notice of action (NOA) messages pertaining to grant changes due to the failure to meet immunization requirements. Currently, most CalWORKs beneficiaries who have their CalWORKs benefits (which is on the average less than 50% of the federal poverty level) lowered with a Notice of Action do not get a CW 2209 to claim good cause as required by state law.

The new CalSAWS system change request CA-55378 which would “Impose CW MAP Reduction within the allotted timeframe when Immunization Page is not updated for children in AU under age 6”, will take 1,170 hours to finally program a CW 2209 (a one-page form) into CalSAWS.

The CA 55378 explains the current CalSAWS design is that “If the immunization verification is still pending from the Request Date on the Verification Detail page, a MAP grant reduction is imposed at the beginning of the benefit month”.

The CA 55378 recommendation is to, among other things, add CW 2209 to the Template Repository for CalSAWS and append the CW 2209 to the CalWORKs Immunization verification NOA when the NOA is generated.

ACL 14-26 provides - USE OF THE CW 2200 –“this form must be used to request verification for CalWORKs and CalFresh cases” .

The CA 55378 “assumptions” state that the “User is responsible for generating the CW 2200 form when the immunization is pending” for verification. CalSAWS has decided rather than having the computer automatically issue the CW 2200 when immunization verification is needed, it would be up to the worker to decide to “generate the CW 2200” or “not to generate the CW 2200” when requesting verification of immunization.

How does this harm California’s impoverished families and children living in deep poverty? The Newsom administration estimated that imposing these punitive immunization penalties on CalWORKs families results in a loss \$30 million a year to California’s impoverished families and children living in deep poverty. Many of California’s impoverished families and children living in deep poverty who are penalized have actually immunized their children. The evidence is on the California Immunization Registry, but CalSAWS would never program CalSAWS to look at the Registry before imposing the sanction – that would mean not imposing penalties on California’s impoverished families and children living in deep poverty.

Random Notes On the Nature of The Problem

by Daphne Macklin

Finally got around to reading Monday, October 6, 2023 newspaper on Friday morning. It's been one of those weeks. And there I stumbled upon two articles that while on different pages, truly need to be read side-by-side. The first article by-lined by David Lightman and published in the Sacramento Bee on October 9, 2023, titled "How the Republican spending cuts barely make a dent." The missing clause is "barely make a dent in demands for federal spending reductions". https://www.eagletribune.com/region/why-all-these-proposed-republican-spending-cuts-barely-make-a-dent-in-the-national-debt/article_f99305d3-59d4-547c-9e7a-8fc68d195d84.html

The second article (a few pages in) by Sacramento Bee staff writer Cathie Anderson thoughtfully and in some detail follows the issue of a series of randomized studies that provide poor households with \$500, no strings attached, to spend on what is needed for the individual household. <https://www.sacbee.com/news/equity-lab/representation/article280053089.html> The concept was most recently championed by the former, very young for his job, Mayor Michael Stubbs of Stockton, California a few years ago. A leading early proponent of the concept of a "guaranteed family income" however was former Pres. Richard Nixon who proposed this as a type of welfare reform in the early 1970's.

For those of you too young to remember, "welfare reform" circa 1970 coincided with two things: First there was the growing belief that welfare assistance programs needed to be managed on a national as opposed to

an often hyper-local basis that allowed for a fair amount of picking and choosing between who was and who was not one of the "deserving poor." Second, many of those stingy hyper-local programs not only provided de minimis benefits enforced by draconian rules but did so using rules enforced in ways that highlighted racial biases, not to mention the inherent sexism of the times.

While the "guaranteed income" concept was a little too close to socialism for later mid-century American political economists to be comfortable with, there were some practical aspects of the proposal that were worthy of consideration. Many of these ideas became the foundations of the Lyndon Johnson era "Great Society" programs the legacies of which include Medi-Care, Medi-Caid, Food Stamps and Head Start. The medical programs have served as the basis for establishing and raising standards for hospital administration and quality of service delivery nationally. Look at it this way, Marcus, Welby, MD and his little black bag was the great television medical drama at the end of the 1960's. Thanks to Medi-Cal and Medi-Care we have the Seattle Grace conglomerate of Gray's Anatomy. Head Start made it fashionable, yea even necessary to have your young child in some type of educational program. Where I am going is simple: the choices to spend public funds in certain ways, have had payoffs in the creation of entire economic sectors, i.e. early childhood education or totally revamped other systems, i.e. health care access.

Think about this in terms of what the 2023 versions of Guaranteed Family Income have identified per the Anderson article. Research by Sacramento State sociology professor Ethan Evans indicated that only 9% of people who participated in a United Way sponsored survey reported that they had \$400 in cash available to meet and emergency medical or car repair expense. Of about 10,000 respondents, while 62% of this group reported that they had a "spending plan", the same numbers of people (62%)

reported that their income was not enough to meet monthly expenses. Most had paid late fees on some bills in the previous month and about half of the respondents reported that their “income varie[d] somewhat or a lot month to month.” The research based on the surveys indicated that there is significant income insecurity within the workforce, i.e. individuals in households where at least one adult was working full-time.

A report based on surveys of New Orleans area residents published by Mayors for Guaranteed Income is cited in the Anderson article. This study notes that most expenditures of GFI funds went to pay for necessities mainly food, groceries, clothing and household necessities such as cleaning and hygiene products. A little less than 10% went to transportation related expenses; less than 5% went to cover housing and utilities payments.

But as important as the question is “how do the poor spend the income that they have is this question: who are these people? The answers are easy: women and kids.

iFoster an advocacy agency for former foster care program participants reported that within four years of aging out of the foster care system (usually at age 19), 50% of former foster youth are homeless or unemployed. Per Serita Cox, co-founder of the non-profit, those former foster care youth who are working, are earning \$7500 or less per year. Only 8% will get a post-secondary degree. This information needs to be read in context with the Forbes Advisor report <https://www.forbes.com/advisor/business/average-salary-by-age/> published online in May 2023. The Forbes article, heavy on statistical data from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, provides a chilling snapshot of how some youth start troubled lives that never becomes a prosper-

ous or even comfortable adulthood especially if the youth did not complete high school or happened to be a girl. Why “a girl”? Well per the Forbes article, girls who do not finish high school will statistically always have earnings about \$10,000 less than a man with a similar level of education. And then there is this fact: 7 out of 10 girls who age out of the foster care system will become pregnant before the age of 21. These young mothers face significant barriers to attaining education or employment due the lack of support, resources, and effective early education from the foster care system.

See <https://nfyi.org/51-useful-aging-out-of-foster-care-statistics-social-race-media/>

Or in simpler terms, a poor unparented child is very likely to become a poor under educated parent themselves.

You might think that someone would want to put a halt to this sort of thing, or at least slow it down a bit. This takes me back to the Lightman article referenced in the first paragraph of this article, about how all the posturing about reducing the federal budget by certain members of the House Republican caucus is just that, posturing, or may be posing, it can be hard to tell the difference. One position taken by the House Republicans, and highlighted in the Lightman article, exemplifies the anti-family posturing and efforts; proposed cuts to the WIC program that provides targeted nutrition assistance to pregnant women, nursing mothers and their children under the age of four, sometimes six. This should be a constituency that is catered to at all costs if healthy families are your goal, but it seems House Republicans either don’t want healthy families or don’t want to appear as if they do.

This research and reading lead me to only one conclusion: one political party greatly benefits from the very idea of multi-generational poverty. Perhaps that explains why there is no commitment to resolving the issue by restoring the child tax credit, exploring guaranteed income plans or even using available federal funds to support those in need at a state or local level.