A
Call Out
For a 2016 CalWORKs & SSI Cost-of-living Adjustment (COLA)

Coalition of California Welfare Rights Organization
Kevin M. Aslanian, Executive Director
kevin.aslanian@ccwro.org

1111 Howe Ave. Suite 150, Sacramento, CA 95825-8551
Tel. (916) 736-0616 Fax (916) 736-2645 Cell (916) 712-0071
ccwro.org

SSI/SSP and AFDC/CalWORKs Benefit Levels, Individual Recipient 1974 to 2014

Year	SSI Payment for one-person	% of the Poverty LEVEL	AFDC-CalWORKs Payment for one-person	% of the Poverty LEVEL	SSI/SSP COLA History
1975	$ 235.00	109%	$ 144.00	67%	8.0%
1976	$ 259.00	111%	$ 157.00	67%	6.4%
1977	$ 276.00	112%	$ 166.00	67%	5.9%
1978	$ 296.00	113%	$ 175.00	67%	6.5%
1979	$ 308.00	109%	$ 201.00	71%	9.9%
1980	$ 356.00	113%	$ 232.00	73%	14.3%
1981	$ 402.00	112%	$ 227.00	63%	11.2%
1982	$ 439.00	113%	$ 248.00	64%	11.2%
1983	$ 451.00	111%	$ 258.00	64%	7.0%
1984	$ 477.00	115%	$ 272.00	66%	3.5%
1985	$ 504.00	115%	$ 288.00	66%	3.5%
1986	$ 533.00	119%	$ 303.00	68%	3.1%
1987	$ 560.00	122%	$ 311.00	68%	1.3%
1988	$ 575.00	120%	$ 326.00	68%	4.2%
1989	$ 602.00	121%	$ 341.00	68%	4.0%
1990	$ 630.00	120%	$ 326.00	62%	4.7%
1991	$ 630.00	114%	$ 311.00	56%	5.4%
1992	$ 645.00	114%	$ 307.00	54%	3.7%
1993	$ 620.00	107%	$ 307.00	53%	3.0%
1994	$ 603.00	98%	$ 299.00	49%	2.6%
1995	$ 614.00	99%	$ 293.00	47%	2.8%
1996	$ 626.00	97%	$ 293.00	45%	2.6%
1997	$ 640.00	97%	$ 266.00	40%	2.9%
1998	$ 650.00	97%	$ 287.00	43%	2.1%
1999	$ 676.00	98%	$ 294.00	43%	1.3%
2000	$ 692.00	99%	$ 303.00	44%	2.5%
2001	$ 712.00	99%	$ 319.00	45%	3.5%
2002	$ 712.00	96%	$ 319.00	43%	2.6%
2003	$ 757.00	101%	$ 331.00	44%	1.4%
2004	$ 790.00	102%	$ 331.00	43%	2.1%
2005	$ 805.00	101%	$ 340.00	43%	2.7%
2006	$ 836.00	102%	$ 340.00	42%	4.1%
2007	$ 856.00	101%	$ 340.00	40%	3.3%
2008	$ 870.00	100%	$ 340.00	39%	2.3%
2009	$ 907.00	100%	$ 326.00	36%	5.8%
2010	$ 845.00	94%	$ 326.00	36%	0.0%
2011	$ 830.00	91%	$ 300.00	33%	0.0%
2012	$ 854.00	92%	$ 300.00	32%	3.6%
2013	$ 866.00	90%	$ 300.00	31%	1.7%
2014	$ 877.00	90%	$ 315.00	32%	

SSI/SSP and AFDC/CalWORKs Benefit Levels Couple SSI and 2 person CalWORKs Assistance Units from 1974 to 2014

Year	SSI Payment for two (2)-person	% of the Poverty LEVEL	AFDC - CalWORKs for two (2) - person	% of the Poverty LEVEL	CalWORKs COLA History
1975	$ 440.00	155%	$ 237.00	83%	9%
1976	$ 488.00	158%	$ 258.00	84%	6%
1977	$ 522.00	159%	$ 273.00	83%	6%
1978	$ 557.00	161%	$ 287.00	83%	%
1979	$ 574.00	153%	$ 331.00	88%	15%
1980	$ 660.00	158%	$ 382.00	91%	15%
1981	$ 746.00	157%	$ 374.00	79%	-2%
1982	$ 815.00	157%	$ 408.00	79%	9%
1983	$ 838.00	154%	$ 424.00	78%	0%
1984	$ 886.00	158%	$ 448.00	80%	4%
1985	$ 936.00	159%	$ 474.00	81%	6%
1986	$ 989.00	164%	$ 498.00	83%	6%
1987	$ 1,039.00	168%	$ 511.00	83%	5%
1988	$ 1,066.00	165%	$ 535.00	83%	4%
1989	$ 1,116.00	167%	$ 560.00	84%	5%
1990	$ 1,167.00	166%	$ 535.00	76%	5%
1991	$ 1,167.00	158%	$ 535.00	72%	0%
1992	$ 1,190.00	155%	$ 511.00	67%	-6%
1993	$ 1,140.00	145%	$ 504.00	64%	-3%
1994	$ 1,109.00	135%	$ 490.00	60%	0%
1995	$ 1,102.00	132%	$ 490.00	59%	-9%
1996	$ 1,101.00	128%	$ 479.00	55%	0%
1997	$ 1,122.00	127%	$ 434.00	49%	-3%
1998	$ 1,156.00	128%	$ 469.00	52%	2%
1999	$ 1,201.00	130%	$ 481.00	52%	3%
2000	$ 1,229.00	131%	$ 495.00	53%	5%
2001	$ 1,265.00	131%	$ 521.00	54%	4%
2002	$ 1,265.00	127%	$ 521.00	52%	0%
2003	$ 1,344.00	133%	$ 540.00	53%	3%
2004	$ 1,399.00	134%	$ 540.00	52%	0%
2005	$ 1,422.00	133%	$ 555.00	52%	0%
2006	$ 1,472.00	134%	$ 555.00	50%	0%
2007	$ 1,502.00	132%	$ 555.00	49%	0%
2008	$ 1,524.00	131%	$ 555.00	48%	0%
2009	$ 1,579.00	130%	$ 533.00	44%	0%
2010	$ 1,407.00	116%	$ 533.00	44%	-8%
2011	$ 1,407.00	115%	$ 490.00	40%	0%
2012	$ 1,444.00	115%	$ 490.00	39%	0%
2013	$ 1,462.00	113%	$ 490.00	38%	0%
2014	$ 1,478.00	113%	$ 515.00	39%	0%

Published by the Coalition of Califronia Welfare Rights Organizations, 1111 Howe Ave, Sacramento, CA 95825

A Call for CalWORKs & SSI COLA for 2016

CalWORKs (formerly known as AFDC) and SSI programs are the primary means-tested programs in California for impoverished families, aged, blind and disabled persons.

Since the early seventies, under Republican Governor Ronald Reagan CalWORKs and SSI recipients were given an automatic cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) to assure that needy Californians are able to meet their basic survival needs.

Since l974, advocates for the disabled and elderly have OPPOSED separating the COLA's for AFDC/CalWORKs and SSI.

The COLA flowed automatically under the Reagan administration. During the first Jerry Brown administration COLAs were suspended for two (2) years and reduced by 2.1% in 1980-1981.

Under the Republican George Deukmejian Administration the AFDC and SSI COLA was never stopped and benefits were never reduced.

Since l974, advocates for the disabled have OPPOSED separating the COLA's for AFDC/CalWORKs, and SSI. Advocates for the disabled felt that it would be immoral to abandon the children and grandchildren of the needy disabled, aged and blind of California.

It is was under Pete Wilson's administration that AFDC and SSI grant payments came under attack. The COLAs were regularly suspended and meager benefits were reduced. See page 3, Table # 2 for the History of the AFDC/CalWORK and SSI COLA.

Table #2 also reveals the poverty level that the benefits covered for AFDC/CalWORKs and SSI recipients. The data reveal that children with families have endured much more severe poverty compared to the aged, blind and disabled in California.

Throughout these turbulent times the CalWORKs/AFDC and SSI COLA's were treated as one because they are the two primary programs supporting impoverished families with children, aged, blind and disabled.

Since l974, advocates for the disabled OPPOSED separating the AFDC and SSI COLA's. Advocates for the disabled and elderly felt that it would be immoral to abandon the children and grandkids of the needy disabled, aged and blind of California.

Current law has created a fund for CalWORKs and AFDC COLA that is not very reliable. The money for this fund comes from the redirection of 1991 realignment general growth revenues from social services and health to a new CalWORKs COLA 1991 subaccount as long as there is enough general growth funding in the new grant subaccount. The amount of future grant increases will be based on the amount of general growth funding available in the new subaccount. In any fiscal year in which there is not enough general growth funding in the subaccount, the federal TANF funds and the required state matching funds will cover the shortfall. This fund was established in the 2013-2014 state budget. See AB 85, Chapter 24, Statutes of 2013, Section 1.

Dependence on this fund for a CalWORKs COLA is very uncertain. CalWORKs COLA can only use this fund if all other recipients of the fund have been funded.
This fund was unable to cover the needed amount for a 2014-2015 CalWORKs COLA.

It is imperative that the SSI and CalWORKs COLA be restored for impoverished California families with children, aged, blind and disabled.

The COLA proposal for the upcoming legislative session is to enact legislation or trailer bill language that would restore the SSI COLA and restore the CalWORKs COLA for those years that the COLA Realignment Fund does not have enough funds for the CalWORKs COLA, then the CNI CalWORKs will be provided or make up the difference of what the CalWORKS CNI COLA amount is that the realignment would cover. For example, if the CalWORKs CNI COLA is 3% and the fund only can cover 2%, then the CalWORKs COLA for that year would be 1%.

Would the SSI/SSP COLA need General Fund money to pay for it? Yes.

Would the CalWORKs COLA need General Fund money to pay for it? No.

See Chart # 1 to illustrate that there is over $2 billion available to fund the CalWORKs COLA that is more than ten times the overestimated $100 million cost for the 2015-2016 CalWORKs. However, the SSI COLA will have to be paid with state general fund money.

CHART #1 - 2016-2017 Proposed State Budget

$2 billion was taken from CalWORKs babies, children and families and used as CalWORKs INVOLUNTARY contribution to the state general fund while grants remain at the 1988 level.

Federal Funds	**$3.7 billion**
State Match	**$3 billion**
TOTAL CalWORKs Funding	**$6.7 billion**