

**Senate Bill 1041 Implementation
Field Monitoring
Visit Summary**

Madera County

May 15, 2014

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES
Welfare to Work Division
Todd R. Bland, Deputy Director

Madera County
Senate Bill (SB) 1041 Implementation
Field Monitoring Visit Summary

Executive Summary

Purpose of Field Monitoring Visit

The purpose of the Senate Bill (SB) 1041 Implementation Field Monitoring Visit is to obtain information regarding the county's progress in implementing program changes enacted by SB 1041 (Chapter 47, Statutes of 2012).

Scope of Field Monitoring Visit

Specifically, the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) will review how each County Welfare Department (CWD) implemented SB 1041 program changes, including but not limited to:

- New Welfare to Work (WTW) participation requirements;
- WTW 24-Month Time Clock;
- Reengagement of the former short-term young child exempt population (Assembly Bill [AB] 4X 4 group);
- CWD staff knowledge of SB 1041 changes;
- Training provided to staff in order to implement these changes; and
- Any pertinent data related to these program changes that are available.

Goals of Field Monitoring Visit

The CDSS' goals are to ensure that SB 1041 is being implemented correctly by each CWD, to gather promising practices in regards to implementation, to share these promising practices (when able) amongst all CWDs throughout the state, and to determine whether systematic or program issues relating to the integration of SB 1041 changes into the existing California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids (CalWORKs) and WTW program exist throughout the state. If such issues exist, they will be addressed by the SB 1041 Oversight Workgroup.

County Visit General Information

The one-day field visit was performed in Madera County on Thursday May 15, 2014 at the Madera County Department of Social Services located at 700/629 E. Yosemite Ave. Madera, CA 93638. The field visit team included two managers and one analyst from the CDSS, Welfare-to-Work Division, CalWORKs Employment and Eligibility Branch along with Madera County's Agency Director, two Deputy Directors, an administrative analyst, CalWORKs Program Manager, two CalWORKs program supervisors and two Employment and Training Workers. The field visit consisted of a kick-off meeting, close-out meeting, staff interviews, and case management observations with county staff.

Implementation Strategies

On January 18, 2013, in an All WTW Staff meeting, which included the Deputy Director of Madera County, began training their CWD staff on the SB 1041 program changes described in All County Letters (ACLs) from the CDSS.

The training included managers and staff reviewing and discussing implementation methods and question & answer (Q&A) ACLs provided by the CDSS. In addition, the presentation materials the CDSS developed and released titled “Paths to Success” were utilized as a springboard for discussions involving Supervisors, lead workers and staff. Additionally, the CWD staff training was provided as more ACLs were released by the CDSS. If staff were unable to attend the training meetings, meeting summary minutes and training materials were provided to staff. Additionally, CWD Employment Services staff received training during unit meetings, discussions also took place at the conferences and case reviews to ensure the content of SB 1041 were understood by CWD staff. The general training goal was for the CWD Employment staff to become well acclimated to the new SB 1041 rules so they could easily relay them to clients.

Some Key Successes Included:

- Leadership from the Director, Deputy Director and other management staff set a good foundation for an effective SB 1041 implementation strategy administered within the county.
- Partnerships with key local agencies that include, but are not limited to, Community Action Partnership of Madera County, Madera County Workforce Development Office and State Center Community College District.
- Collaborative process with Behavioral Health Services (BHS) know within the county as the Madera Access Point (MAP) program that assist participants who have substance abuse, mental health or domestic violence (DV) barriers to self-sufficiency. The BHS services are provided in English and Spanish.
- Utilization of Pre-Employment Activity (PACT) program administered within the CWD. The PACT program is an unpaid placement for clients in a public or private non-profit organization which provide CalWORKs participants with instruction in skills related to working and retaining employment.
- Mental Health First Aid program which consist of in-person 8-hour training for any staff who want to learn about mental illnesses and addictions, including risk factors and warning signs to assist connecting individuals with appropriate care and services.

Key Recommendations

Madera County should release to its WTW clients the CalWORKs WTW 24-Month Time Clock Informing Notice form CW 2208 to notify clients of the number of months remaining on their WTW 24-Month Time Clock. If Madera County wishes to use an alternative WTW 24-Month Clock form, it must include all the required elements identified and noted in ACL 13-12 and include client’s name included in the written notice to ensure clients are properly notified as specified in ACL 13-12.

At the time of the one day visit, case managers relied on consortium C-IV (C-IV) data for tracking the number of hours used and remaining on the 24-Month Time Clock and the county planned to reconcile the time clock numbers they calculated manually with C-IV data for accuracy prior to sending clients the WTW 24-Month Time Clock informing notice.

Acknowledgments

The CDSS thanks Madera County Social Services Agency for hosting the field monitoring visit. The CDSS appreciates the open collaboration with the CWD staff to ensure the continued success of the CalWORKs program.

Field Monitoring Visit Summary

Introduction

Purpose of Field Monitoring Visit

The purpose of the Senate Bill (SB) 1041 Implementation Field Monitoring Visit is to obtain information regarding the county's progress in implementing program changes enacted by SB 1041 (Chapter 47, Statutes of 2012).

Scope of Field Monitoring Visit

Specifically, the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) will review how each County Welfare Department (CWD) implemented SB 1041 program changes, including but not limited to:

- New Welfare to Work (WTW) participation requirements;
- WTW 24-Month Time Clock;
- Reengagement of the former short-term young child exempt population (Assembly Bill [AB] 4X 4 group);
- CWD staff knowledge of SB 1041 changes;
- Training provided to staff in order to implement these changes; and
- Any pertinent data related to these program changes that are available.

Goals of Field Monitoring Visit

The CDSS' goals are to ensure that SB 1041 is being implemented correctly by each of the CWD, to gather promising practices in regards to implementation, to share these promising practices (when able) amongst all the CWDs throughout the state, and to determine whether systematic or program issues relating to the integration of SB 1041 changes into the existing California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids (CalWORKs) and WTW program exist throughout the state. If such issues exist, they will be addressed by the SB 1041 Oversight Workgroup.

County Visit General Information

The one-day field visit was performed in Madera County on Thursday, May 15, 2014 at Madera County Department of Social Services in Madera, CA. The field visit team included two managers and an Analyst from the CDSS, Welfare-to-Work Division, CalWORKs Employment and Eligibility Branch along with Madera County's Agency Director, two Deputy Directors, Program Manager, two Employment Program Supervisors and two Employment and Training Workers. The field visit consisted on a kick-off meeting, close-out meeting, staff interviews, and case management observations with county staff.

Background and Data

Madera At-a-glance

Total Caseload.....	3,457
<small>(Source: CalWORKs Cash Grant Caseload Movement Report CA 237 CW Line Item 8a-April 2014)</small>	
WTW Enrollees.....	820
<small>(Source: CalWORKs Welfare-to-Work Monthly Activity Report WTW 25/25A Line Item 1-April 2014)</small>	
Mandatory Participants (enrollees + sanctioned + non-compliance).....	1,268
<small>(Source: CalWORKs Welfare-to-Work Monthly Activity Report WTW 25/25A Line Items 1, 3A, and 31-April 2014)</small>	
Reengagement Plan Received.....	Yes
Beginning Date of Reengagement.....	March 26, 2013
Consortium System.....	C-IV

Data/Statistics:

- Clients who had more than 24 months left on their CalWORKs 48-month time limit as of January 1, 2013, that have had their comprehensive discussion: 95
- Clients who had less than or equal to 24 months left on their CalWORKs 48-month time limit as of January 1, 2013, that have had their comprehensive discussion: 39
- Sanctions that were cured as a result of SB 1041: 3
- Former short-term young child exempt clients (Assembly Bill [AB] X4 4) that have been reengaged: 353
- WTW plans that have changed as a result of SB 1041 implementation: Madera County indicates they are unable determine this figure
- Clients that have used the new once in a lifetime young child exemption: 364.
- Other statistics that the county is keeping related to SB 1041 implementation:
 - ❖ The CW 2205 was sent by C-IV to 3360 CalWORKs families in November 2012
 - ❖ The CW 2206 was sent to 353 AB X4 4 short-term exempt individuals by January 26, 2013.

Summary of Documents provided by Madera County:

- Instructional announcements provided to county staff relevant to SB 1041 implementation.
- Madera WTW Handbook. (Revised August 15, 2013)
- Informing notices and flyers provided to clients relevant to SB 1041 implementation.
- SB 1041 related training materials (formal and informal), including but not limited to, a list of training strategies, materials available on-line, and materials distributed at the staff meetings.
- Madera County's Reengagement Sequencing Plan.

County Administrator and Caseworker Interviews

The CDSS Field Monitoring Team used the county administrator and caseworker interview tools released in All County Information Notice (ACIN) I-42-13 to interview the county administrator and case workers in-person regarding SB 1041 implementation. The tool was provided to the CWD administrator and caseworkers in advance of the visit. The administrator interview panel consisted of three CDSS staff with two county administrators. The caseworker interviews were conducted by two CDSS staff members with one caseworker and one CDSS staff with a second caseworker.

Summary of Observations

WTW 24-Month Time Clock Implementation and New WTW Participation Requirements

For clients with Less than 24 months left on their CalWORKs 48-month time limit

The WTW 24-Month Time Clock General Informing Notice (CW 2205) was sent out to clients by the C-IV Consortium's mass mailing in November 2012. Madera County's comprehensive discussion with clients with less than or equal to 24 months left on their CalWORKs time limit as of January 1, 2013 began on February 1, 2013 with the target completion date of June 30, 2013 and the county completed all discussions for 39 cases.

Beyond the general informing notice (CW 2205), the CWD reached out in person and by phone to make contact with clients. Case managers received monthly list of clients with whom they are to make contact, primarily for the comprehensive discussion. The contact was also the time when general information on the new time clock was provided to clients. The client names on the monthly list constitute one-third of their caseload, so at a minimum the case manager had one contact with each client quarterly.

For clients with more than 24 months left on their CalWORKs 48-month time limit

Madera County started SB 1041 transition for clients with more than 24 months left on their CalWORKs 48-month time limit on February 1, 2013 with the target completion date of June 30, 2013 and the CWD completed all discussions for 95 cases.

Clients who failed to attend SB 1041 appointments:

For clients who were unresponsive to the CWD attempt at completing the comprehensive discussion, the primary practice is case managers made an unannounced visit to client's homes. In addition the CWD sent out letters and attempted phone contact.

General Comments

At the time of the one day visit, it was not consistently required for clients to come and have a face-to-face meeting. The WTW caseworkers maintain approximately 45 to 50 ongoing cases and the selection of cases for the comprehensive discussion comes from the regular Enterprise II Lite (E2L) case listing.

New Young Child Exemption

At the one day visit, existing and new clients in the county were opting to take the New Young Child Exemption and the CWD encourages clients to judiciously take the exemption. Some clients chose to decline the exemption and 364 clients opted to take the exemption.

The new WTW Activity Plan/Form (WTW) 2

The CWD illustrated and shared that they had been using the new WTW 2. Prior to the WTW 2 form being available through the consortium, the CWD used the form from the CDSS website and added the new 24-month time clock language.

General Comments

At the time of the county visit, the Caseworkers interviewed felt that the WTW 2 is effective as a guide at a client's SB 1041 discussion. The new WTW 2 allows the participant to have a visual on the different options they can select from. However, Caseworks also noted that some clients were confused when they saw the same activities listed on both sides of the form under CalWORKs and Federal Work Activities. In some cases, clients are unable to choose and ask that the caseworker make the choice(s) for them.

Reengagement Process

The CWD reengagement process officially began on March 26, 2013. The CW 2206 mass mailer was sent by January 26, 2013 to all AB X4 4 short-term exempt individuals. Appointment letters were distributed at least 30 days prior to Reengagement evaluation appointments. The CWD target completion date for all reengagement cases was June 30, 2013 and after that a reassessment was completed to look for cases that need reengagement and were overlooked.

Madera County's Sequencing Plan is as follows:

- **March 26, 2013**-AB X4 4 Exempt Volunteers and Vocational Education Students; Short Term Exemptions with other possible exemptions.
- **June 26, 2013**- Clients with less than 24 months left on their 48 month CalWORKs clock.
- **January 1, 2014**-Clients with more than 24 months left on their 48 months CalWORKs clock.

The reengagement process for Madera County includes the following:

- Send a CW 2206 at least 60 days prior to reengagement evaluation appointment;
- Case file review; and
- Send a reengagement evaluation appointment letter at least 30 days prior to reengagement evaluation appointment attach a CW 2186A and a copy of CW 2206.

Madera County also provided additional reminders and makes a third contact, via a telephone call, prior to the reengagement evaluation that included the following reminder to the client of appointment and offer (and issuance) of necessary supportive services to attend appointment. At the time of the county visit, it was noted that caseworkers were required to document telephone calls in case comments and allow one reschedule visit for those clients that could not attend their appointment.

The telephone contact included SB 1041 discussion points for clients who were not required to attend in-person, such as exempt volunteers who are fully meeting participation requirements.

At the clients SB 1041 appointment, clients are provided with a general description of supportive services available, program requirements and flexibility under SB 1041. Caseworkers determine clients' status and needs and if another WTW exemption applies. Additionally, clients are informed of their remaining number of CalWORKs 48 months, assigned appropriate WTW activity(ies) that include the identification of barriers.

Volunteers

AB X4 4 short term exempt clients who were volunteering in the WTW program on December 31, 2013 were allowed to continue volunteering until they are reengaged and the reengagement process for this subgroup started on March 26, 2013.

AB X4 4 short term clients requesting to volunteer after January 1, 2013 were not allowed to volunteer. These clients were informed that if they chose to participate prior to reengagement sequencing plan, their CalWORKs 48-month time limit, unless meeting a clock stopper reason, would begin to tick on the first of the following month from the date a new or amended WTW 2 Plan was signed. These clients were offered the option to either reengage early or wait until their reengagement prioritization. Clients who chose to reengage earlier followed reengagement process steps. Clients were allowed to waive the 60 day informing period.

For clients who request to reengage ahead of the sequencing schedule they have been informed that if they chose to participate prior to reengagement sequencing plan, their CalWORKs 48-month time limit, unless meeting a clock stopper reason, would begin to tick on the first of the following month from the date a new or amended WTW 2 Plan was signed. These clients are offered the option to either reengage early or wait until their reengagement prioritization. Clients who choose to reengage earlier followed the reengagement process. Clients are allowed to waive the 60 day informing period.

Implementation Strategies

At the month of December 2013, Madera County developed a detailed SB 1041 training calendar that included Community Colleges partners, Managers and Employment Staff. An SB 1041 overview was presented to each of these groups. The presentations included the program, planning and support staff. The following trainings were completed:

- December 2012-SB 1041 Overview Presentation to Managers and Community Colleges Partners;
- January 2013-SB 1041 Overview Presentation to Employment Staff;
- February 2013-Techniques and Strategies for conduction a Successful SB 1041 Interview for Employment Staff (UC Davis);
- March 2013-How to Amend or Develop a SB 1041 WTW 2 Plan Workshops for Employment Staff; and

- April 2013-SB 1041 Clinics for Employment Staff.

The Madera County released an extensive list of newsletters and other written documents regarding the implementation of SB1041 on their county website:

- Newsletter 12-02-Summary of SB 1041 CalWORKs WTW Program Changes effective January 1, 2013;
- WTW Handbook 42-7.2-Exemptions and Good Cause/Deferral Reason in the WTW Program;
- Newsletter 13-01-Transitioning WTW Participants to Senate Bill 1041 WTW Program Rule Changes;
- Newsletter 13-02-Reengagement of ABX 4 4 Short Term Exempt Individuals Who Are Pulled for WPR Review to Request to Participate in WTW Program Prior to July 1, 2013;
- Newsletter 13-03-WTW 24-Month Time Clock and Participation Requirements Questions & Answers; and
- Newsletter 13-06-Reengagement Process for AB X4 4 Short Term Exempt.

General Comments

The CWD developed their own training material prior to the release of CDSS's Training Aid. There is a need for further development of the plans including specific benchmarks on how to achieve their goals within the projected 48 months or less. In addition, Madera County updated the WtW Handbook provided to clients at the orientation to include SB 1041 information.

In addition, at the SB 1041 implementation process, online reference materials, desk reference binders were provided and utilized by staff. Informal meetings were also part of the process for staff to meet and clarify information, ACLs and/or training materials, as needed.

Case Reviews

The CDSS Field Monitoring Team reviewed five cases selected by the CWD in advance of the visit. The purpose of this component of the visit is to review how SB 1041 program changes are being integrated into case management, understand how SB 1041 policies are being operationalized by the caseworker, and better comprehend case management within the CWD.

There were five specific case types requested:

- Case One-a client with **less than or equal to** 24-months left on the CalWORKs 48-month time limit as of January 1, 2013;
- Case Two-a client with **more than** 24-months on the CalWORKs 48-month time limit as of January 1, 2013;
- Case Three-a new client (beginning date of aid January 1, 2013 or later);

- Case Four-a client who is sanctioned that has earnings and is curable based on the new participation requirements (may be a case actually cured since January 1, 2013 based on new participation requirements); and
- Case Five-a client that is part of the former short-term young child exemption (AB X4 4)/ reengagement population, and is currently in the process of or has been reengaged.

General Comments

Madera County uses the C-IV case management system. At the one day visit, the cases shared at the CWD had all received the appropriate notices and applicable benefits and supportive services. This included the issuance of the CW 2205 and CW 2208 when applicable in addition to the use of the new WTW 2.

Conclusion

Successes

Madera County developed an extensive amount of training materials for SB 1041 implementation. In December 2013, classroom trainings began for managers, employment staff, and community colleges partners. Along with the classroom training, newsletters were distributed to program staff with additional details on SB 1041 implementation. The county created eight client notices specific to SB 1041.

Key Successes Included, but not limited to:

- Leadership from the Director, Deputy Director and other management staff set a good foundation for an effective SB 1041 implementation strategy administered within the county.
- Partnerships with key local agencies that include, but are not limited to, Community Action Partnership of Madera County, Madera County Workforce Development Office and State Center Community College District.
- Collaborative process with Behavioral Health Services (BHS) know within the county as the Madera Access Point (MAP) program that assist participants who have substance abuse, mental health or domestic violence (DV) barriers to self-sufficiency. The BHS services are provided in English and Spanish.
- Utilization of Pre-Employment Activity (PACT) program administered within the CWD. The PACT program is an unpaid placement for clients in a public or private non-profit organization which provide CalWORKs participants with instruction in skills related to working and retaining employment.
- Mental Health First Aid program which consist of in-person 8-hour training for any staff who want to learn about mental illnesses and addictions, including risk factors and warning signs to assist connecting individuals with appropriate care and services.

Madera County also developed an updated orientation training entitled “Working Our Way to ‘Economic Self-Sufficiency’ Orientation” to help clients prepare for and obtain meaningful employment.

Challenges

Madera County found that their greatest challenge was the implementation of such significant changes to the program in such a short amount of time. Additionally, caseworkers acknowledge that at times it has been difficult explaining those choices to clients; specifically the new WTW 2 and difference options for clients between federal vs. CalWORKs activities requirement.

Key Recommendations

As Madera County continues its implementation strategy, the county should continue developing and implementing procedures and process to ensure clients understanding of the WTW 2 and distinction between federal and CalWORKs requirements in order to make sound decisions. Additionally, caseworkers should continue to use their resources assist clients needs and help them develop short and long-term goals.

Madera County should continue to ensure to collect data on their progress of SB 1041 implementation, specifically information related to what sort of participation options clients are opting to take advantage of (WTW 24-Month Time Clock or CalWORKs federal standards). The CDSS also recommends that Madera County pay close attention to the data which is submitted through their C-IV consortium system to the CDSS for the monthly CalWORKs Cash Grant Caseload Movement Reports (CA 237 CW), and CalWORKs WTW Monthly Activity Reports for All (Other) Families and Two Parent Families (WTW 25/25A). These sources are relied upon heavily by the CDSS to track and measure program progress.

Contact

Joseph Jackson, *FMV Summary Author*
CalWORKs Employment Bureau, Welfare to Work Division
California Department of Social Services
744 P Street, M.S. 8-8-33
Sacramento, CA 95814
Phone: (916) 651-6567
Email: joseph.jackson@dss.ca.gov