

Butte County CalWORKs County Plan

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), the federal reform law, was enacted August 22, 1996. It eliminated the entitlement of individuals to the Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) program and gave states flexibility on the determination of eligibility and the establishment of benefit levels, under a time limited cash assistance program for families. The purpose of TANF is to provide assistance to families with children and to reduce dependency by promoting job preparation and work.

Governor Wilson signed Assembly Bill 1542 (AB 1542) on August 11, 1997. AB 1542 was the primary vehicle for overhauling several existing welfare programs operated under the authority of the TANF program. It eliminated AFDC and the Greater Avenues for Independence (GAIN) programs and replaced them with the California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids (CalWORKs); the new program provides assistance and services to families with needy children.

Under CalWORKs, aid is time-limited and recipients must meet hourly work requirements. Also, during the budget process, the Legislature passed other bills that created a state-only Food Stamp Program for certain individuals, denied benefits to convicted felons, and eliminated the California Alternative Assistance Program.

Within AB 1542 was a stipulation to create and submit to the state, a county specific implementation plan no later than January 1, 1998. To that end, on July 1, 1997, the Butte County Department of Employment and Social Services (DESS) created a Change Management Team, consisting of representatives from the partnership with California Employment Development Department (EDD), Butte County Private Industry Council, Inc. (PIC), the Chief Administrative Officer's Office, and members of the DESS management staff.

The existing functional partnership with EDD and PIC, which had been operational for two years, prior to CalWORKs created and established the Community Employment Center concept. Currently there are three centers in the county and changes are underway to enhance the service delivery components to coincide with the mandates included in CalWORKs.

To further comply with the requirements contained in AB 1542 in the development of a plan of action, the DESS, in partnership with EDD and PIC hosted a series of town hall

meetings during the month of October 1997. The meetings were held in four of the county's population centers namely, Chico, Gridley, Oroville, and Paradise. The meetings provided the public with an opportunity for input and to offer options in the development of the county plan. Concurrent with these town meetings, a fact sheet about welfare reform and a survey were mailed to recipients. The survey solicited information regarding knowledge of welfare reform, potential barriers to employment and education or training requirements necessary for participant success.

The Chico Chamber of Commerce, in association with EDD, DESS, and PIC established a Welfare to Work Action Team. Information was provided to the business community, concerning potential impacts of CalWORKs. Conversely, the business community reciprocated with information concerning the needs of the employers.

The Program Goals of CalWORKs in Butte County continue to be:

- Assist families to become self-reliant through employment and training opportunities;
- Provide the family with financial and other supportive services, as needed, for a temporary time period while the parent is seeking or preparing for employment; and,
- Provide protective and supportive services to children, families, and adults through linkage with community resources, including the courts, if necessary.

The Major Objectives of CalWORKs in Butte County continue to be:

- Strengthen collaboration with other county departments, school systems, private not-for-profit agencies, community service organizations, and the faith communities;
- Provide support services for families transitioning from welfare dependency.
- Develop new relationships with municipalities, chambers of commerce, and the business community to enhance training and employment opportunities for families transitioning from welfare dependency.
- Enhancing collaboration with the employment services partnership to expand the Community Employment Center service delivery approach to CalWORKs families.

The Major Elements of CalWORKs in Butte County continue to be:

- Collaboration with public and private agencies to provide training and supportive services;
- Partnership with the private sector to identify jobs;

- Local labor market needs;
- Welfare to Work activities;
- Substance abuse and mental health treatment services;
- Mental health services available after time limits have expired;
- Child care and transportation;
- Community service plan;
- Working with victims of domestic violence;
- Performance outcomes to meet locally established objectives;
- Public input to the County Plan;
- Identify source and expenditure of funds;
- Assisting families to transition off aid;
- Job creation;
- Compliance with the requirements of CalWORKs;
- Interaction with American Indian tribes.

This plan was the foundation to a very dynamic and evolutionary project. It was difficult to predict outcomes and directions in the implementation of AB 1542. Certainly, as cited by Eloise Anderson, previous Director of California Department of Social Services, “CalWORKs is designed to break the cycle of poverty by providing recipients (of aid) both the incentives and tools to move off welfare and onto self-reliance.” This statement clearly represents the Department’s mission. As noted by DESS Director, Patricia S. Cragar, “This plan will combine employment services with eligibility services to provide an up front employment focused service delivery to our customers.” To quote one DESS client, “Not everyone can do everything, but everyone can do something!”

A. COLLABORATION WITH PUBLIC AND PRIVATE AGENCIES TO PROVIDE TRAINING AND SUPPORT SERVICES

The DESS joined in partnership with the PIC and the EDD in 1996, to put in place “one stop” Community Employment Centers (CECs) to assist employers and customers seeking employment. This partnership allowed the acquisition of a facility in Chico, which houses eligibility, employment services, protective services, PIC, EDD, Regional Occupational Program (ROP), Green Thumb, District Attorney Family Support/Fraud, Veteran’s Service Office, and a Public Health Clinic. There is also limited or part-time staff from the community college, Behavioral Health, Butte Economic Development Corporation, and Valley Oak Children’s Services (VOCS). This facility serves all

CalWORKs families who live in the north county area, which make up half of the families served countywide. The facility is called the Butte Community Employment Center-Chico.

The second fully operational “one stop,” Butte Community Employment Center-Oroville (BCEC-O) was completed in March 2001. Partner agencies for the BCEC-O were expanded to include California Department of Rehabilitation, Oroville Adult School, Paradise Unified School District, and the Work Training Center.

The objective of the CECs is to better serve CalWORKs families by providing combined services in a “one stop” location with a variety of eligibility and employment services closer to their homes and work opportunities.

The mission of the CECs is to provide “one stop” linkage between the labor pool and the jobs pool. It is a coordinated workforce investment system, which stresses lifelong learning for all workers. The services provided at the CECs are customer-based and provides people with information leading to informed job and career choices. Customers can access a wide array of job preparation services, which range from immediate job referral to occupational skills enhancement and education.

A further mission of the CECs is to act as a clearinghouse for businesses to fill their employment needs, either through finding and referring skilled workers or by assisting in the training of future employees.

Welfare-to-Work Grant Program
Butte County’s Welfare-to-Work

Addendum #4 replaces this information.

Grant Program is being administered as a partnership between the DESS and the PIC.

Once the screening process for CalWORKs participants is completed the participant is assigned an ongoing case manager. DESS and the PIC have developed a screening tool to identify those individuals who meet the criteria for the Welfare-to-Work Grant Program. If potentially eligible, and appropriate in the Welfare-to-Work Plan, the participant is referred to the PIC for the WTW Grant Program. The Welfare-to-Work Grant Program is contingent upon State funding.

I. EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

- Applicants have the option to choose Diversion, once their application has been approved.
- The DESS provides employment services to all employable CalWORKs applicants (who volunteer to participate) and recipients.
- Every CalWORKs employable applicant, at their option, and recipient, is provided orientation explaining his/her work opportunity/obligation under the CalWORKs and TANF programs.

- Every employable CalWORKs applicant may to have his/her work skills and experience appraised, attend a job skills workshop and test the labor market through a supervised job search.
- All employable voluntary applicants/recipients are referred to any/all job openings, based on the client's work experience, education, and stated interest.
- If the recipient is not employed at the end of his/her initial job search, an assessment for employment is completed and a welfare-to-work plan developed and monitored.
- The range of welfare-to-work activities for Butte County are:
 - Community Service
 - Education directly related to employment
 - General Education Development (GED) and English as a Second Language (ESL)
 - Job Search and job readiness assistance
 - Job skills training directly related to employment
 - On-the-job training
 - Self employment
 - Subsidized private sector employment
 - Subsidized public sector employment
 - Supported work
 - Transitional employment
 - Unsubsidized employment
 - Vocational education and training
 - Vocational English Second Language (VESL)
 - Work study
- All employable CalWORKs recipients who are engaged in a welfare-to-work plan are assigned a case manager to assist with his/her rapid employment and to monitor his/her compliance and participation in the plan.
- The DESS utilizes the EDD Cal-Jobs, Job Match and Share System databases to match employer needs with qualified CalWORKs applicants/recipients.
- The DESS may, with its partner agencies, implement its own automated job placement and tracking system through the Northern California Employment Network (NCEC).
- Any recipient assessed to have a medical, mental health or substance abuse problem, which prevents him/her from employment, is referred to appropriate available resources. Treatment is monitored; employment remains the goal.

II. TRAINING

- The CEC staff links participants who, based upon an assessment, require training in order to obtain a job.
- The CECs utilize labor market information to target participate training in occupations with the greatest potential for employment within the county and region.
- All participants in training are supported and monitored by a case manager with supportive services provided as necessary.
- Local partner providers of training services include: PIC; ROP; Butte Community College; California State University, Chico; Oroville Adult School; and Paradise Adult School, as well as private schools and on-the-job training services by some employers.
- Community Services/Work Experience (WEX) placement either independent of or concurrent with training is an important component of the Butte County Training Plan.
- The CEC continues to work with the educational community to develop several additional open-entry, open-exit short-term training programs. This effort includes curriculum development and redesign.

III. EDUCATION

The CECs continue to provide access to adult basic education and English as a Second Language (ESL) program to participants who are assessed to have the need; employment remains the focus of service. Participants are encouraged or required (based on their required hours of participation and the availability of services) to be concurrently enrolled in education, along with other welfare-to-work activities. A Vocational English as a Second Language (VESL) program was implemented January 1998. This program couples language acquisition with work experience.

IV. CHILD CARE SERVICES

- The County provides services as stated in Section G Child Care and Transportation. The County continues to participate in all phases of local child care services by its membership in the County's Child Care Planning Council.
- The County manages "Stage I" of childcare during the first six months of welfare-to-work services or until the participant's welfare-to-work plan stabilizes. Payment is made directly to care providers.

- VOCS provides “Stage 2” services for participants whose work activities have become stable or who are transitioning off aid. Resource and Referral services are provided by VOCS.
- “Stage 3” services are provided to participants when there is funded space available, for those who receive Diversion in lieu of assistance, or have income not more than 75% of the state median income. VOCS, under contract with the State Department of Education, provides these services.

V. TRANSPORTATION

The County assesses and identifies transportation needs for participants in CalWORKs. The County links participants in welfare-to-work activities and community service projects to available transportation services.

VI. BUTTE COUNTY BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

The DESS established a collaborative agreement with Department of Behavioral Health Service (BHS) for mental health services to participants with identified barriers to participation for mental health reasons. The agreement specifies that participants so referred are required to participate in a treatment program to meet their welfare-to-work participation requirements. CEC staff are trained in assessing barriers to participation due to mental health needs. When appropriate, joint staffings with employment services staff and mental health providers is used to establish both treatment and plans for participation in welfare-to-work activities.

VII. SUBSTANCE ABUSE TREATMENT SERVICES

The DESS refers participants claiming or identified as having a welfare-to-work barrier due to substance abuse to BHS. The participant may be required to seek treatment based upon the BHS assessment.

VIII. DOMESTIC ABUSE SERVICES

Appropriate CEC staff are trained to detect and refer participants who disclose barriers to participation due to domestic abuse. CEC staff refers identified participants to one or more agencies who provide services for victims of domestic abuse. These agencies include the Butte County District Attorney and the Victim Witness Program. Additionally, the Northern Valley Catholic Social Services and Catalyst provide counseling and/or shelter services. Referrals are made to Children’s and Adult Protective Services staff for appropriate action when indicated.

IX. REFUGEE EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

The DESS has not enacted the specific Refugee Employment Services required to receive funding for a specialized program. The DESS evaluated the potential for providing specific refugee employment services and based on the program requirements and the small number of clients to serve with refugee employment services, a decision was made not to pursue funding for this program. However, DESS does provide a full range of employment services through the CalWORKs program, such as, bi-lingual services with appropriate sensitivity to cultural diversity.

B. PARTNERSHIPS WITH PRIVATE SECTOR TO IDENTIFY JOBS

Executive managers of the CECs worked with the Chico Chamber of Commerce, members of the business community, Butte Community College, and California State University, Chico as a “Welfare-to-Work Action Team”. The Action Team identified jobs available in the county, local labor market needs, training and preparation for work desired by employers, the attraction of new businesses to the county and the barriers that discourage economic growth.

The Action Team developed a report, which included support for the revitalization of the Economic Development Corporation, to provide oversight for the County’s contract for job creation. A Job Creation Task Force was created composed of employers, local governments, economic development organizations, social services agencies, private industry councils, community-based organizations, community development corporations, community colleges, advocates for CalWORKs recipients, and the local workforce preparation community. One function of this Task Force was to identify jobs.

The Welfare-to-Work Action Team believes that an effective welfare to work plan must address seven key areas, which they recommend for inclusion in any plan the Board of Supervisors submitted to the California Department of Social Services. The seven areas were:

1. Preparation for entry level employment
2. New job creation
3. Employment opportunities/upward mobility
4. Managing risk to employers
5. Communication/coordination
6. Public awareness
7. Public policy recommendations

Representatives of the Faith community participated in the Town Hall meetings held throughout the county and submitted ideas regarding using church facilities for day care, thus creating jobs, and working with the county on community service jobs.

The Director of the DESS met with organized labor representatives regarding the impact of CalWORKs on jobs in the county.

C. LOCAL LABOR MARKET NEEDS

The DESS utilizes several tools for measuring the labor market and demographics of Butte County. One of the primary tools is the annual report completed by the CEC through the California Cooperative Information System (CCOIS). Each year there is a community team meeting, comprised of representatives from the County, Cities, Butte College, Chamber of Commerce, Employment Services (DESS), EDD, government, vocation, and business employers. This team completes a study on twenty occupations, which are projected by the EDD to be in demand. Approximately 300 employers receive a survey for the targeted occupations. Information gathered from the survey includes: skills, training, salary/wage, benefits, number of employees, number of hours, certificate/license requirements, work-related experience, career ladder for promotions, supply/demand, employee decline/stable/grow, etc. The County report often enhances the State EDD report; therefore, the State report may be modified to accurately reflect the local labor market. Other available reports include: Projections and Planning Information Study, developed by EDD for the identification of labor demands of Butte County, the regional economic/workforce development project produced by the community colleges of the north and far north regions, including Butte Community College and information from publications provided by the State of California's Bureau of Statistics and California Department of Social Services to both the County's Planning Division for demographic purposes and DESS for planning purposes.

The DESS has several data collection tools available for the purpose of measuring participant demographics. There are numerous reports generated by the Interim Statewide Automated Welfare System (ISAWS) and the GAIN 31, a quarterly report of Employment Services registrant demographics generated by the GAIN Employment Management System (GEMS) and the new Welfare-to-Work data management system, which replaced GEMS. Labor market and demographic tools continue to be utilized in measuring overall participant readiness for employment, training and education needs, and family issues which may be barriers to successful placement in and retention of employment. The CECs have developed a data base system, which tracks individuals coming in to the CECs for services. The CECs continue to work on developing a computerized case management system, which will track the outcome of individual(s), when services have been rendered or diversion has been authorized.

D. WELFARE-TO-WORK ACTIVITIES

Submitted to CDSS in 1999 as Addendum #1

The County offers a full range of welfare-to-work components or activities, which are designed to utilize existing services when appropriate, and develop or enhance components or activities. The County certifies it does not require job search and work experience of participants to the exclusion of a range of activities to be offered to recipients. A list of these activities is detailed below.

- Adult Basic Education (General Education Development [GED] and English as a Second Language [ESL])
- Community Service
- Domestic Violence Services
- Education Related to Employment
- Job Search & Job Readiness Assistance

Job Skills Related to Employment
Mental Health & Substance Abuse Services Tied to Welfare-to-Work Activities
On-the-job Training
Self Employment
Subsidized private sector employment
Subsidized public sector employment
Supported Work
Transitional Employment
Unsubsidized employment
Vocational Education & Training
Vocational English Second Language (VESL)
Work Experience
Work Study

E. SUBSTANCE ABUSE AND MENTAL HEALTH TREATMENT SERVICES

Mental health and substance abuse treatment and services in Butte County have been integrated into a single service delivery model under the BHS for a number of years. The DESS and BHS have a history of collaboration and support for Butte County families needing services.

Through a Memorandum of Understanding between the DESS and the BHS, both agencies collaborate and utilize funds available to ensure effective delivery of substance abuse and mental health services. Maximization of Federal financial participation is utilized through Supplemental Security Income (SSI) advocacy and Medi-Cal billing as appropriate. Collaborative efforts are conducted as follows:

I. TRAINING

Training is provided to all appropriate staff and BHS staff, who work with CalWORKs participants having employment barriers due to substance abuse and/or mental health issues.

II. ASSESSMENT

DESS staff assess CalWORKs participants in coordination with BHS for substance abuse and/or mental health issues that are barriers to employability or job readiness. This assessment determines one of the following:

- There appears to be no barrier to employability or job readiness. Participant is referred back to CalWORKs.
- When there is a barrier and participant needs treatment, a continuum of treatment is available based on the following:
 - When barriers are a minor obstacle the participants work with short-term treatment.

- When barriers are a major obstacle the participants work with case management and treatment services.
- When barriers are severe the participant may receive long-term treatment and is assisted by the CEC staff and the BHS staff in applying for SSI benefits.

III. TREATMENT

Treatment consists of a continuum of care based on an individual's treatment plan developed through the assessment process.

- Short-term substance abuse and/or mental health treatment is provided by designated treatment teams.
- Case management is coordinated between BH and the appropriate CEC staff, with case managers working together, but focusing on their respective areas.
- When available and appropriate, treatment includes:
 - Substance abuse treatment groups including: basic awareness, initial recovery, and relapse prevention. These groups are also available for the dually diagnosed population (persons with concurrent mental health and substance issues).
 - Residential treatment services through local and regional recovery centers.
 - The 24-hour crisis phone line and the Psychiatric Health Facility are available for crisis services.
 - Contracts with private providers afford specialty mental health services for participants that do not present a medical necessity, as implemented through Managed Care.
 - Referral and linkage (including contracts) to community substance abuse programs provide treatment services including 12-step groups, drug court, victim witness, perinatal treatment centers, sober living environments, and social model groups focused on behavioral change through recovery skills, life skills and relapse prevention.

IV. EMPLOYMENT COUNSELING

BHS collaborate with DESS case managers in the development of a work plan, in conjunction with an individual's treatment plan, focusing on mental health

and/or substance abuse factors that may hinder employment or welfare-to-work activities.

- Pre-employment services are offered.
- Vocational rehabilitation may be included in the treatment plan, encompassing employment counseling.

V. COMMUNITY SERVICE JOB SITES

Representatives from the BHS consumer drop-in center, vocational rehabilitation program, and day treatment program will be available at selected community service job sites.

VI. CERTIFICATION OF SERVICES

- The DESS certifies BHS substance abuse treatment services include at least the following: evaluation, case management, substance abuse treatment and employment counseling and the provision of community service jobs.
- The DESS certifies BHS provides at least the following services: assessment, case management, treatment, rehabilitation services, identification of substance abuse problems and a process for identifying individuals with severe mental disabilities.

F. MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES AVAILABLE AFTER TIME LIMITS

The DESS recognizes that participants may continue to require mental health services after the expiration of their eligibility to CalWORKs. BHS is notified of changes in eligibility status and to insure that clients in need of service continue to have access through ongoing medical assistance as available, provided these services are covered as a reimbursable cost to Medi-Cal or the County Medical Services Program (CMSP).

G. CHILD CARE AND TRANSPORTATION

I. CHILD CARE SERVICES

Child care must be provided to all welfare-to-work participants when necessary. Child care services are divided into three stages. Stage 1 is administered by the DESS and Stage 2 and 3 are administered by the Department of Education.

- The DESS manages “Stage 1” of childcare during the first six months of welfare-to-work services or until the participant’s welfare-to-work plan stabilizes. Child care payments are made directly to care providers.

- VOCS provides “Stage 2” services for participants whose work activities have become stable or who are transitioning off aid. A Memorandum of Understanding exists between the DESS and Valley Oaks Children’s Services to facilitate transition of childcare services between Stages 1 and 2.
- Resource and Referral services are provided by VOCS and are available to parents needing child care through either co-location of services in the CECs or by other means of rapid communication.
- “Stage 3” services are provided to participants when there is funded space available, for those who receive diversion in lieu of assistance, or have income not more than 75% of the state median income. VOCS, under contract with the State Department of Education provides these services.
- The CEC may consider applying as an Alternate Payment Provider (APP) at a later date.
- **Infant Exemption:** All recipients will be exempt for six months following the birth or adoption of a child. Exceptions to this policy will be made on a case-by-case review, and the time period may be adjusted to twelve weeks or may be extended to twelve months, which is consistent with CalWORKs Regulations MPP Section 42-712.47.
- As part of the assessment of the pregnant woman and / or parent or other relative who has primary care-taking responsibility, the case manager will determine:
 1. The pregnant woman and / or primary caretaker’s work history and an inventory of his/her employment skills, knowledge and abilities.
 2. The pregnant woman and / or primary caretaker’s educational history and present educational competency level.
 3. The pregnant woman and / or primary caretaker’s chance to employment given the current skills of the participant and the local market conditions.
 4. Physical or mental conditions that may limit the pregnant woman and / or caretaker’s ability to become employed and / or effectively provide care to their child(ren) and engage in Welfare-to-Work activities.
 5. Documented special needs of the family that impair the ability of the primary caretaker to be regularly employed or to participate in Welfare-to-Work activities.
 6. Availability of reliable and accessible transportation.
 7. Availability of infant care where the parent lives or works as substantiated by information provided by the parent and includes:
 - a. Referrals from VOCS and outcome of those referrals;
 - b. Exploration of the presence or absence of appropriate exempt childcare as determined by the parent.

8. Upon completion of the assessment, it will be determined whether or not to extend the exemption period for the care of a child. The exemption period may be extended for a maximum of one year.
- If additional children are born to a participant who has previously utilized the infant exemption, the participant receives the 12-week exemption, consistent with CalWORKs Regulations MPP Section 42-712.47. Decisions to extend the length of the exemption to a maximum of six months is made on a case-by-case basis following an assessment by the case manager to determine the availability of childcare, local labor market conditions, special needs of the family, and/or other factors determined by the county.

Exemptions based upon the care of a child does not stop the 60-month time clock.

II. TRANSPORTATION

The DESS continues to link CalWORKs participants to existing local transportation resources through Butte County Public Works.

There are seven transit systems operating throughout Butte County. Three of the services operate in designated fixed routes and are open to the general public. The remaining four systems provide door-to-door “dial-a-ride” service for seniors and disabled. Butte County provides administrative support for four of the systems including Butte County Transit (BCT), Paradise Express and the two transit services provided within the City of Oroville. The City of Chico administers the Chico Area Transit Systems (CATS) and the complimentary para-transit service known as the Clipper. The City of Gridley oversees the Gridley Golden Feather Flyer, a dial-a-ride system that operates predominately within the city limits. Although transit services in the county are considered separate systems, nearly all are cooperatively funded. The only exception is the Paradise Express, which is exclusively funded by the Town of Paradise.

Transportation Development Act (TDA) funds provide the major source of revenue for transit services in Butte County. Butte County Association of Governments (BCAG) is responsible for allocating TDA funds and holds yearly public meetings to solicit “unmet transit needs” within the area. All TDA funds are intended to fund transit projects to the extent that such projects are meeting “transit needs that are reasonable to meet”. BCAG developed a series of criteria for determining if unmet needs are reasonable to meet. The criteria address cost effectiveness, system impact, and financial feasibility among other criteria. It is through the unmet needs process that Butte County endeavors to enhance transit service for Welfare-to-Work purposes.

Butte County Public Works, in coordination with the DESS, provides information on available transit services. Information includes bus schedules, description of services, and information regarding upcoming hearings. Other coordinated efforts allow agencies to purchase passes in bulk and distribute them to transit dependent clients. Ongoing tasks include assisting clients in using public transportation where available and to promote vanpools and carpooling to enhance the client's independence in the welfare-to-work process.

CECs work with other community agencies in developing and accessing alternate transportation resources. The PIC provides transportation for participants who live in remote areas to job sites, work experience sites, or community service projects. Butte College provides extensive bus services throughout Butte County for student participants to all Butte College campus sites.

If there is no public transportation available participants may use their own vehicles and are reimbursed at the rate used to reimburse county employees for the use of privately owned vehicles.

H. COMMUNITY SERVICE PLAN

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| Submitted Community Service Plan to CDSS as Addendum #5 |
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The DESS in coordination with the PIC will operate community service activities for participants who reach the 18/24 month time limit on aid. Specific projects have been identified and are included in the Community Service Plan. Community service will be considered a viable component during the 18/24-month period. To maximize fiscal resources, the development of projects will be coordinated through the CECs. The DESS has drafted a Community Service Plan and upon the approval of The Butte County Board of Supervisors, the Plan will be submitted as an addendum.

I. WORKING WITH VICTIMS OF DOMESTIC ABUSE

The DESS has collaborated with public and private groups and agencies, to provide support and intervention for victims of domestic abuse in our community. There are three main groups involved in training department staff and in serving as a resource for referrals. These three groups are:

- Catalyst/Women's Advocates
- The Butte/Glenn Family Violence Prevention Council
- Northern Valley Catholic Social Services (NVCSS)

Protocols, referral procedures and Memoranda of Understanding are in place between the DESS and these three entities. In collaboration with these three groups, the DESS developed a training program for Eligibility and Employment Services staff. The training enables staff to identify and supportively assist participants who self-disclose domestic abuse in their lives. This training includes not only education about the issues of domestic abuse, but the connection with child abuse often inherent in such family situations and how to identify, report and work with these families.

The DESS has addressed the Family Violence Option of TANF by:

- Educating applicants and recipients about family violence;
- Universal notification of rights, responsibilities and the options of receipt of public assistance;
- Universal screening to identify survivors of domestic abuse;
- Maintaining confidentiality;
- Providing training for personnel, as appropriate, on domestic abuse and its effect on victims and survivors;
- A clear and efficient waiver process;
- Flexibility in developing individual employability plans.

Good Cause Domestic Abuse Waiver means a waiver of one or more program requirements granted by the county to a victim of domestic abuse under the Family Violence Option. Good cause is granted based on the needs and safety of the individual as determined through individualized assessment by the Case Manager or Employment & Eligibility Technician.

The Domestic Abuse Waiver is temporary, for a period not to exceed six months. Exemptions to extend this time limit is permitted based on an individualized assessment of the participant's readiness to work or participate in work activities based on the criteria for Good Cause as referenced above.

The DESS utilizes a "Rights and Responsibilities" presentation, which includes information about the domestic abuse waiver as a way of educating the CalWORKs applicants about how domestic abuse is being handled under the new law. In addition, a universal screening approach is in use to identify issues of domestic abuse, which are referred to a local service provider and the related CalWORKs exception criteria is discussed with the individual.

The Domestic Abuse Waiver has been developed and will accompany an appropriate service plan designed to provide safety and lead to work. The employability plan is a fluid document for victims of domestic abuse and takes the safety of the individual and child(ren) in the family into account in all goals and objectives established. The plan outlines individualized strategies, which uses realistic short and long-term goals to put the participant on the path to economic self-reliance. It establishes appropriate benchmarks to measure progress and incorporate any waivers granted pursuant to the Family Violence Option. Alternative work activities could include counseling and/or participation in support and treatment groups for victims of family abuse. Waivers function like a court order for protection; issued for a specific time period with extensions allowed as appropriate. Victim Witness Services may provide funding for counseling services to persons who have been the victim of a crime, including domestic abuse. A victim's statement of abuse is sufficient to substantiate the request for a waiver or good cause claim unless there is an independent, reasonable basis to doubt. In that case, a victim is required to present documentation, such as a statement from a friend, relative, counselor or shelter worker who has knowledge of the person's history.

Additionally, should the client identify a need for law enforcement assistance and/or the need for help in preparing a restraining order, he or she is referred to the Office of the Butte County District Attorney.

J. PERFORMANCE OUTCOMES TO MEET LOCALLY ESTABLISHED OBJECTIVES

Submitted to CDSS as Addendum #3

The DESS and interested stakeholders developed the following list to track performance outcomes for CalWORKs participants. In the future we hope to develop a system to track specific performance outcomes.

1. Supply, Demand, and Utilization of Support Services
 - a. Increase supply and utilization of child care
 - b. Decrease unemployment
 - c. Improve screening methodology to identify CalWORKs participants with behavioral health issues
 - d. Improve screening methodology to identify participants with substance abuse problems
 - e. Improve screening methodology to identify number of families suffering from domestic abuse
 - f. Identify and eliminate transportation barriers for CalWORKs participants
2. Child Well Being
 - a. Decrease, or do not increase, the number of entries into Foster Care
 - b. Decrease, or do not increase, the rate of births to teen mothers
3. Decrease demand for General Assistance
4. Welfare to Work
 - a. Increase individual's rate of movement to employment
 - b. Increase earnings of CalWORKs participants
 - c. Increase the number of CalWORKs participants who leave the program due to employment
 - d. Increase job retention rates among CalWORKs participants
5. Child Support Payment and Collection
 - a. Increase active cases in child support among CalWORKs participants
 - b. Increase collection in child support cases among CalWORKs participants
6. Fraud
 - a. Decrease the amount of benefits paid due to fraudulent applications
 - b. Increase the identification of fraud overpayments
 - c. Increase collection of fraud overpayments

K. PUBLIC INPUT TO THE COUNTY PLAN

The Director of the DESS and management staff worked for two years prior to CalWORKs to develop a functional partnership with the PIC and the EDD. This partnership resulted in the creation of the CECs.

During 1997 the DESS Director, and other staff assigned by the Director, presented information on the pending welfare reform to develop buy-in and enhance the knowledge of welfare reform in a variety of forums, including the Board of Supervisors, the Children's Coordinating Council, school administrations and both private and nonprofit agencies, which provide human services.

The position of Welfare Reform Program Manager was established in July 1997, to provide a leadership position for the process of change management of department staff, other agencies and the community. In this role, the Welfare Reform Program Manager was the lead person addressing inquiries regarding welfare reform by the community and media.

The DESS, in partnership with PIC and EDD, held Town Hall Meetings in four communities in the county throughout the month of October 1997. The meetings were held in Gridley on October 8, Oroville on October 20, Paradise on October 22 and Chico on October 23. These meetings were advertised with local newspapers, radio, and television stations. The public attended the meetings and input was received for consideration in the development of this county plan.

There was regular coverage of development of the welfare reform planning process in the local newspapers, as well as media coverage of the Town Hall Meetings.

The Chico Chamber of Commerce worked with PIC, EDD and the DESS in a series of six meetings called the "Welfare to Work Action Team". These meetings resulted in several positive outcomes. Information was provided to the business community about the nature and extent of the issues of welfare reform and the business community informed the agency representatives of their needs. Input from this taskforce was used in the development of this plan.

In October 1997, a special client mailing was sent to 10,092 AFDC, Food Stamps or Medi-Cal clients in the county. The mailing included a fact sheet about welfare reform, a questionnaire requesting input about likes and dislikes of the changes and potential barriers to employment or education/training which existed. Approximately 2,263 questionnaires were returned and the information they contained was considered as this plan was developed.

Included in the client mailing was a flyer announcing a community meeting for all families on aid regarding welfare reform and the new CalWORKs program. Co-sponsoring the meeting were the DESS, the PIC and the EDD, in conjunction with Alternative 4 Developing Change (A4DC), a local welfare advocacy group. The community meeting was held on November 8, 1997, and approximately 100 people attended. The speakers shared information and concerns regarding AB 1542, the CalWORKs legislation. Small focus groups provided a forum for interaction and participation in addressing barriers to employment and client concerns about the pending changes. A report regarding the outcome of the meeting was given to the DESS for consideration in the development of the county plan.

On October 29, 1997, a joint meeting was held with staff from the PIC, EDD and the DESS to officially implement the new mode of working together with the goal of “work first” for the customers we serve. This meeting was an important landmark in the change management process to emphasize that three agencies were changing past practices by combining resources, staff and work sites in the CECs.

L. SOURCE AND EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS

Attachment 2 provides the County’s estimated expenditures and source of funds for the CalWORKs program. The budget meets the requirement of Welfare and Institutions Code Section 15204.4, which specifies that each county shall expend an amount for these programs (administration and services) that, when combined with funds expended for the administration of food stamps, equals or exceeds the amount spent for corresponding activities in FY 1996/97.

M. ASSISTING FAMILIES TRANSITIONING OFF AID

The DESS works with families transitioning from aid for both entering employment and for time limit reasons. The services offered to families may include:

- Linking child care services for families discontinued from aid for employment.
- DESS Employment Services staff provides ongoing job retention services. These services include employment counseling, exploration and resolution of barriers to continued employment, contacts with employers and decreasing linkage to an employment services worker to facilitate the self-reliance required by state and federal legislation. Job retention services begin at the point an individual is enrolled into the Welfare-to-Work Program. The participant and social worker develop a transitional Welfare-to-Work Plan for the entire family that includes, but is not limited to information and training about budgeting, how work pays, life skills, conflict resolution, employer expectations, managing home and family.
- DESS expects to provide supportive services after the 60-month time limit when the individual is participating in community service and the individual requests welfare-to-work services. The funding for these services will be contingent upon the availability of State funds and other non-TANF funds.

N. JOB CREATION

The DESS supported the recommendations of the Welfare-to-Work Action Team, see Section B of this plan. The Action Team developed a report, which included support for the revitalization of the Economic Development Corporation, which is providing oversight for the County’s contract for job creation through the collaboration of the following:

- Community Employment Centers

- Butte Community College
- California State University – Chico
- Business leaders
- The job creation contractor
- Various economic development entities
- Municipalities
- Chambers of Commerce

The DESS is utilizing the Trade & Commerce Job Creation funds made available through CalWORKs to contract for job creation services.

The Job Creation Task Force developed the Job Creation Plan, which was submitted to and approved by the County Board of Supervisors December 1998. The Task Force is comprised of economic development corporations, PIC, DESS, Chamber of Commerce, Tribal Governments, and members of the community. One Economic Development Corporation was selected to oversee implementing the Job Creation Plan.

As a continuum in implementing the CalWORKs Plan, the DESS and the PIC established a Public Information Coordinator, funded by PIC. This position is an extension of the former Welfare Reform Program Manager, which was established in preparation for CalWORKs. The role of the Public Information Coordinator is to provide dedicated staff for analysis, planning, implementation, and in the release of public information.

Butte County also elected to participate in the Statewide CalWORKs Evaluation Project as one of the six focus counties. This is a three-year project evaluating the CalWORKs program for its progress and impact analysis of success or failure of county CalWORKs plans.

O. OTHER ELEMENTS

The DESS reserves the option to submit pilot proposals at a later time in the form of an addendum to the county's plan.

P. COMPLIANCE WITH THE REQUIREMENT OF CalWORKs

The DESS is meeting the federal/state participation requirements.

- It is the DESS' goal for CalWORKs single parent households to participate in welfare-to-work activities that most realistically reflect a "real world" work experience. Effective January 1, 1998, or at the time the welfare-to-work plan is signed by the participant, it is the DESS expectation of recipients to have full participation in work or work activities to a minimum of 32/35 hours per week. It is the DESS' expectation of recipients to have full participation in work or work activities to a minimum of 32 hours per week for single parents and 35 hours per week for two parents, unless exempt.

- The DESS ensures the minimum hours required for participation under CalWORKs legislation: 20 hours beginning January, 1998; 26 hours beginning July, 1998; and 32 hours beginning July 1, 1999.

Q. INTERACTION WITH AMERICAN INDIAN TRIBES

The DESS met with the tribal leaders of three federally recognized American Indian tribes in Butte County during the month of December 1997 to discuss the options of operating the TANF program. A fourth tribe participated in planning through telephone conversation. The four tribes are:

- Concow Maidu Tribe
- Estom-Yumeka Maidu Tribe
- Mechoopda Tribe
- Tyme Maidu Tribe

The options of self-operation of TANF eligibility and employment services, the county operation of CalWORKs, or a combination of services by each entity, were discussed and considered. The four Tribes do not plan to operate Tribal TANF programs. The Tribes plan to develop ongoing agreements with the DESS regarding CalWORKs supportive services provided to American Indians in Butte County.

The four Tribes have been invited to be members of the job Creation Task Force.

The four Tribes are members of the California Indian Manpower Consortium, Inc. (CIMC). The DESS has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with CIMC regarding the rights and responsibilities of each party in relation to the CIMC Native Employment Works (NEW) Program for the Tyme Maidu Tribe.

Acknowledgements

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Butte Community College
Butte County Administrative Office
Butte County Behavioral Health
Butte County Association of Governments
Butte County Department of Employment and Social Services
Butte County District Attorney
Butte County Public Health
Butte County Public Works
California State University, Chico
Employment Development Department
Northern Valley Catholic Social Services
Private Industry Council
Public Town Hall Meetings
Regional Occupational Program
Tribal Governments
Valley Oaks Children's Services
Welfare Advocacy Group – A4DC
Welfare-to-Work Action Team

- Community Employment Centers
- Butte Community College
- California State University – Chico
- Business leaders
- The job creation contractor
- Various economic development entities
- Municipalities
- Chambers of Commerce

Glossary of Terms

| | |
|----------------|--|
| A4DC | Alternative 4 Developing Change |
| AB 1542 | Assembly Bill 1542 |
| AFDC | Aid For Dependent Children |
| APP | Alternate Payment Provider |
| DBH | Butte County Department of Behavioral Health |
| BCAG | Butte County Association of Governments |
| BCT | Butte County Transit |
| CaWORKs | California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids |
| CATS | Chico Area Transit Systems |
| CCOIS | California CoOperative Information System |
| CEC | Community Employment Center |
| DESS | Department of Employment and Social Services |
| EDD | Employment Development Department |
| ESL | English as a Second Language |
| GAIN | Greater Avenues for Independence |
| GED | General Education Development |
| GEMS | GAIN Employment Management System |
| ISAWS | Interim State Automated Welfare System |
| NCEC | Northern California Employment Network |
| NVCSS | Northern Valley Catholic Social Services |
| PIC | Private Industry Council |
| ROP | Regional Occupational Program |
| SSI | Supplemental Security Income |
| TANF | Temporary Assistance for Needy Families |
| TDA | Transportation Development Act |
| VESL | Vocational English Second Language |
| WEX | Work Experience |