

ALPINE COUNTY CalWORKs COMMUNITY SERVICE PLAN ADDENDUM

INTRODUCTION

Alpine County's CalWORKs Plan was submitted to and approved by the California Department of Social Services in December of 1997. As the plan did not include the Community Service Component, this addendum describes the plan that Alpine County Social Services Department has developed for this activity as required by California Assembly Bill 1542. AB 1542 established CalWORKs, an assistance program that was designed within the parameters of TANF (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families).

The Community Service Plan supports the vision of the Alpine County CalWORKs Program as follows:

- ◆ To assist families in Alpine County who are receiving CalWORKs benefits to become self-sufficient, contributing members of the community.
- ◆ To support these families by providing a comprehensive system of services dedicated to promoting the self-worth of each adult and child in Alpine County.

The purpose of Community Service is to provide participants with basic job skills and job related training that can lead to employment while meeting a community need. In addition, participants will be assisted in the development of appropriate work habits and attitudes as well as upgrading existing skills and/or learning new skills. Community Service activities are to be performed in public or private non-profit agencies. Alpine County has named their community service activity the **Job Connection**.

PLAN DEVELOPMENT

To determine the community's unmet needs, Alpine County conducted a survey of the needs of the public and private non-profit agencies in the area. The staff of the department contacted other county agencies, private employers, community-based organizations, and others to develop a summary of unmet needs. The information gathered will be utilized in the development of community service work sites. The unmet needs in Alpine County include:

- ◆ Clerical support, custodial assistance, cashiering, grounds keeping, food service, child-care, driving, Cal-Trans road crew, camp ground maintenance, elder care, housekeeping, civic improvement, and certified nursing assistance, community recreation, and recycling.
- ◆ Participants will also be allowed and encouraged to develop their own sites, with the assistance of the department.

WHO WILL BE SERVED

The target population to be served consists of CalWORKs recipients who have completed their 18 to 24-month welfare-to-work time period, as applicable, and have not found unsubsidized employment sufficient to meet the minimum required hours of participation and for whom:

- ◆ The county has certified that no job is available to fulfill the minimum required hours of participation and;
- ◆ The recipient continues to meet CalWORKs eligibility criteria.

This population will consist of individuals who may or may not have complied with the requirement of their welfare-to-work plan, yet have not attained the goal of full-time unsubsidized employment. The 18-month time limit may be extended up to six months if it is expected that the extension will lead to a job. Participants may have several significant barriers to securing employment including, but not limited to, issues of behavioral/physical health, language/culture, education/aptitude, and social compatibility. Additionally, individuals may find that full-time, unsubsidized employment in this area is highly competitive, and may not be immediately obtainable. Therefore, intensive, ongoing support to successfully participant in community service activities will be required.

In addition to the above group of participants referred to community service, program participants who are working part-time and who have not reached the 18/24 month time limit may be referred for a community service activity to meet their required hours of participation. Also, if community service is part of a participant's welfare-to-work plan, community service may be offered prior to reaching his/her time limit. An intensive assessment will be completed prior to a participant being placed in community service so that the job skill(s) to be developed or enhanced can be identified. Assessments will be completed by our Welfare to Work grant partner, Golden Sierra Job Training Agency.

TERMS OF COMMUNITY SERVICE ACTIVITIES

Participants in Community Service are required to perform activities for a maximum of 32 hours for single parent households and 35 hours for two parent households. If the client is employed, or they are participating in services for substance abuse, mental health, and/or domestic violence, those hours will be counted and included in the maximum number of required hours.

Community Service activities are focused to be temporary, transitional and not permanent. Participants will be placed in community service for up to a year in length. A review of the placement will be made every 3 months, or at any time it is in the best interest of the participant, to ensure that the participant is moving towards the goal of self-sufficiency. It is the intent of the Alpine County CalWORKs program to enable participants to transition into unsubsidized employment prior to reaching their maximum life time limit of 60 months. However, if

necessary to remain eligible an individual may take part in community service until he or she has received aid for a total of 60 months.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Welfare to Work Case Manager's responsibilities include:

- ◆ Determining eligibility for the Welfare to Work program
- ◆ Development of the welfare-to-work plan and activities
- ◆ Development of the Individual Service Plan
- ◆ Monitoring and encouraging compliance with the participant's plan
- ◆ Initiating cause and compliance process
- ◆ Implementing sanctions if appropriate
- ◆ Providing supportive service payments
- ◆ Mentoring the participant in good work habits.
- ◆ Assisting with the development of work sites

The CalWORKs Community Service Coordinator's responsibilities include:

- ◆ Placement of the participant in community service assignment
- ◆ Assist in the development of work sites
- ◆ Mentoring the participant in good work habits.
- ◆ Mediating problems between the participant and the work site
- ◆ Gathering evaluations and time sheets on participants and reporting problems to the CalWORKs case manager
- ◆ Initiating the incident report for the CalWORKs case manager if participant is not participating
- ◆ Monitoring work site/s for compliance with the Non-displacement Protection provisions of the CalWORKs program
- ◆ Approve or deny work sites developed by participants.

PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION

The Alpine County Social Services Department, Employment Services Division, will administer the Community Service Program and is responsible for program development, fiscal administration, and case management.

SUPPORTIVE SERVICES

CalWORKs participants involved in community service activities are eligible to supportive services including child-care, transportation, and ancillary services. For those participants who are eligible for the Welfare to Work program, transportation and ancillary payments will be coordinated with the case manager for this program. Arrangement and payment for child-care will be facilitated by the staff of Choices for Children, the county's Resource and Referral. Supportive services will also be provided to those individuals who have met their hours of participation in community service, and are also participating in a education or training activity, or job search, as long as it is consistent with their welfare to work plan.

RURAL COMMUNITY SERVICE

Community service shall be provided to participants who live in remote areas, do not have transportation, and do not work in unsubsidized employment for the minimum hours of participation. Every effort will be made to find a community service placement within two miles of the individual's home. Transportation to the work site may be a service provided to the participant.

SUMMARY OF ASSIGNMENT TO COMMUNITY SERVICE

CalWORKs participants in Alpine County's program are assigned to the community service activity in the following two ways:

- 1) If a CalWORKs participant has not completed the 18 or 24-month period and is employed in unsubsidized employment but the work hours are not sufficient to meet his or her minimum hours of participation, community service activities will be accepted to meet the required hours. However, prior to placement in a community service activity, an assessment must be completed so that the job skill(s) to be developed or enhanced can be identified.
- 2) For CalWORKs participants who have completed the 18 or 24-month time limit period, who cannot find unsubsidized employment with enough hours to meet their required participant hours, and the county has certified that no job is currently available to fulfill the minimum hours, community service activities will be provided. The participant must continue to be eligible for cash aid. The term "no job is currently available" means that a recipient has taken and continues to take all steps to apply for appropriate positions and has not refused an offer of employment without good cause. The CalWORKs Employment Services Division staff will review the case to insure that this is the correct situation before a referral to community service is made.

PROGRAM FLOW

The flow of activities will be as follows:

1. The participant applies for assistance. If cash aid for TANF is the chosen path, the participant is scheduled for orientation and appraisal. The first contract is signed and the first activity is four weeks of job search activities. Assessment is the next activity if unsubsidized employment is not found during the job search period. Assessment may be the next activity if the Welfare to Work case manager determines that participation in job search will not be beneficial or will not likely to lead to employment for the participant. Job search activities may be shortened whenever it is determined that one of the above situations exists.
 - ◆ The assessment could include testing to assist in this determination. Based on the assessment, the Welfare to Work case manager and the participant develop a welfare-

- to-work plan to specify the activities to which the participant is assigned. If the participant is in the Welfare to Work program, then that case manager will be involved in the assessment.
2. The participant could be scheduled for short-term training, a work experience activity, or ABE/GED. These activities will probably be concurrent activities to insure that the required participation hours are met. After the initial four weeks of job search, job search could be included as a concurrent activity, only if an extension is likely to lead to unsubsidized employment, and therefore these hours would apply to the minimum hours of participation.
 3. Whether or not the participant has completed the activities as stated in his or her welfare-to-work plan, if they are still without employment, and have reached the 18 or 24 month time period (and exhausted any extension granted), then the limited activities are community service and/or unsubsidized employment.
 - ♦ Community service activities such as instruction or training that are required for, or relevant to, the specific community service placement may be considered part of the placement. These activities may include English as a Second Language (ESL) classes, General Education Development (GED) classes, Adult Basic Education (ABE) classes, or vocational training. Assignment in these activities will be based upon the skills of the individual, as well as the needs of the placement.
 4. If the participant has completed the activities as stated in his or her welfare to work plan, is still without employment and has not reached the 18 or 24 month time period, then a reappraisal must be conducted. The reappraisal must evaluate whether there are extenuating circumstances that prevented the participant from obtaining employment within the local labor market area.
 - ♦ Upon a determination that extenuating circumstances exist, the participant will be assigned additional activities consistent with the reappraisal.
 - ♦ If extenuating circumstances do not exist, and until the Welfare to Work case manager reverses this determination or the participant reaches the 18 or 24-month time limit, the participant is required to participate for the required minimum hours in activities that are limited to; unsubsidized employment, work experience, and/or job skills training directly related to employment.
 5. If an individual has received aid for a cumulative period of more than 18 or 24 months, and returns to aid after break in aid of at least one month, the Welfare to Work case manager will determine whether to require the individual to participate in community services or in welfare to work activities.
 6. Once the determination has been made to refer the participant to community service, the participant will sign a Welfare to Work Activity Agreement with their Welfare to Work case manager. Community service orientation will be held provided by the Community

Service Coordinator. The participant will be given an overview of the program requirements and expectations including that Community Service is expected to lead to unsubsidized employment. At this time placement options are explored. After the placement is decided, the participant will be referred for a site interview. Then he or she is scheduled to complete the necessary job requirements for placement at the chosen work assignment. A review of the placement will be made no less than every three months by the Community Service Coordinator, who will also supervise the participant and the placement activities, and submit progress reports to the W t W case manager. A new placement will be made if the work site is not meeting expectations or standards for the program.

7. Recipients who fail to comply with community service requirements, and do not have a good reason for doing so, will be sanctioned.

DISPLACEMENT PROVISIONS

E&TA will comply with the anti-displacement provisions set forth in the Welfare & Institution (W&I) Code Section 11324.6. Each service site organization will provide a written statement to the effect that a training position for a Community Service participant shall not be created as a result of, or shall not result in any of the following:

1. Displacement or partial displacement of current employees, including, but not limited to, a reduction in hours of overtime and overtime work, wages, or employment benefits.
2. The filling of positions which would otherwise be promotional opportunities for current employees, except when positions are to be filled through an open process in which participants are provided equal opportunity to compete.
3. The filling of a position, prior to compliance with applicable personnel procedures or provisions of collective bargaining agreements.
4. The filling of established unfilled public agency positions, unless the positions are unfunded in a public agency budget.
5. The filling of a position created by termination, layoff, or reduction in work force, caused by the employer's intent to fill the position with a subsidized position pursuant to this plan.
6. A strike, lockout, or other bona fide labor dispute, or violation of any existing collective bargaining agreement between employees and employers.
7. The filling of a work assignment customarily performed by a worker in a job classification customarily performed by a worker in a job classification within a recognized collective bargaining unit in that specific service site, or the filling of a work assignment in any bargaining unit in which funded positions are vacant or in which regular employees are on layoff.
8. The termination of a contract for services, prior to its expiration date, that results in the displacement or partial displacement of workers performing contracted services, caused by the employee's intent to fill the position with a subsidized position pursuant to this plan.
9. The denial to a participant of protections afforded workers on the service site by state and federal laws governing workplace health, safety, and representation.