

**DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES**

744 P Street, Sacramento, California 95814



February 7, 2000

ALL COUNTY LETTER NO. 00-12

**REASON FOR THIS TRANSMITTAL**

- State Law Change
- Federal Law or Regulation Change
- Court Order
- Clarification Requested by One or More Counties
- Initiated by CDSS

TO: ALL COUNTY WELFARE DIRECTORS AND ALL COUNTY WELFARE-TO-WORK COORDINATORS

SUBJECT: LIMITATIONS TO PROVIDING NECESSARY SUPPORTIVE SERVICES IN THE CALIFORNIA WORK OPPORTUNITY AND RESPONSIBILITY TO KIDS (CALWORKS) PROGRAM

REFERENCE: ALL COUNTY INFORMATION NOTICE NO. I-70-99

It has come to the Department's attention that some counties may be capping or limiting supportive services for California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids (CalWORKs) recipients. This letter is to provide clarification regarding the prohibition of capping or limiting the receipt of supportive services for the California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids (CalWORKs) Program and to ensure the statute is applied consistently throughout the state.

For the purposes of this letter, "capping" supportive services means establishing a limit on the amount the county will pay a participant, even though the services are necessary for the individual to participate in welfare-to-work activities, and the cost of the services does not exceed the regional market rate.

All County Information Notice I-70-99 provided the updated version of CalWORKs program regulations. Essentially, county welfare departments (CWDs) are required to provide supportive services that are determined necessary for recipients to participate in assigned welfare to work activities. Section 42-750.11 states:

Necessary supportive services shall be available to every participant in order to participate in the program activity to which he or she is assigned or to accept or retain employment. If necessary supportive services are not available, the individual shall have good cause for not participating under Section 42-713.21.

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Additionally, under the Crary lawsuit, which was filed against the Department in the Greater Avenues for Independence Program (GAIN), counties were prohibited from establishing caps or limits on supportive services. State statute still does not permit counties to cap any supportive services costs.

Once an individual reaches the 18 or 24- month time limit and is participating in community service, a county must provide the participant child care and has the option to provide other necessary supportive services. Those optional supportive services may be provided at an amount determined by the county and may differ from those provided to participants in pre-time limit activities. However, since community service is an assigned work activity, participants would have good cause for not participating if they are not provided the necessary supportive services.

While capping necessary supportive services is prohibited, there is no prohibition against a secondary review of proposed service costs beyond a predetermined level of expenditures. For example, a county could establish a procedure that permitted staff to authorize or pay up to a certain amount in supportive services costs. Expenditures above this amount would be subject to verification of need through a process involving a narrative explanation in the case file and a review by a supervisor.

Counties are reminded that any changes made to their CalWORKs welfare to work program must be identified in the County Plan pursuant to MPP Section 42-780. Additionally, pursuant to MPP Section 11-501.3, counties are reminded that in areas where the county has exercised discretion in the provision of CalWORKs services, written policies and procedures must be developed. Counties must also make these written standards and policies available to the public upon request, pursuant to MPP Section 11501.3 and 21-115.

Should you have questions regarding supportive services, please contact your Work Support Services analyst at (916) 654-1424.

Sincerely,

***Original Signed By  
Bruce Wagstaff on 2/7/2000***

BRUCE WAGSTAFF

Deputy Director  
Welfare to Work Division

c: CWDA  
CSAC