

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

744 P Street, Sacramento, CA 95814



August 30, 2000

ALL-COUNTY LETTER NO. 00-60

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

SUBJECT: CALIFORNIA WORK OPPORTUNITY AND RESPONSIBILITY TO KIDS
(CalWORKS) WELFARE-TO-WORK (WTW) PLAN SIGN DATE AND
THE START OF THE 18- OR 24-MONTH TIME LIMIT ON AID

REASON FOR THIS TRANSMITTAL

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

The purpose of this All County Letter (ACL) is to provide clarification to counties on issues related to the start date of a CalWORKs recipient's 18- or 24-month time limit on cash aid and receipt of WTW services.

In accordance with Manual of Policies and Procedures (MPP) Section 42-710, adult recipients who have been on CalWORKs cash aid for a period of 18 or 24 cumulative months, and for whom the county certifies that no job is currently available, must participate in community service activities, unsubsidized employment, or a combination of the two, in order to meet their weekly work requirement and remain eligible for aid. Recipients already on aid when their county implemented its CalWORKs welfare-to-work program are allowed 24 months of welfare-to-work services, whereas, those who start receiving aid after the date of implementation receive 18 months of services. The California Department of Social Services (CDSS) has established policy that the 18- or 24-month time limit begins the first full month after a recipient signs or refuses to sign a WTW plan. For instance, if an individual signs the WTW plan anytime during the month, including the first day of the month, then the 18- or 24-month time limit begins on the first day of the following month.

Example: If an individual signs his or her WTW plan on July 5, 2000, his or her 18-month time limit begins August 1, 2000.

In making this policy decision, CDSS considered the needs of both county welfare departments (CWDs) and CalWORKs recipients. The Department believes that it will be easier for CWD staff to calculate and track time limits for full months, rather than

partial months. In addition, this policy will ensure that WTW participants receive, as appropriate, a full 18 or 24 months of WTW program services before required participation in community service.

Current policy requires that once an individual has agreed or refused to sign a WTW plan and the WTW sign date is established, counties may not change the date except in the following circumstances:

- county error;
- lawsuit mandate; and
- new CDSS policy.

By "county error," the Department means situations such as, or similar to, a case like the following:

A recipient transfers from one county to another. The new county has the individual sign a WTW plan, unaware that the recipient had signed one in the prior county, and uses the new sign date as the start date of the 18- or 24-month time limit. The new county subsequently receives information from the prior county regarding the correct WTW plan sign date. The new county must adopt the prior county's WTW sign date, and determine the number of months remaining in the recipient's 18- or 24-month time limit based on that date.

In order to avoid errors in calculating the 18- and 24-month time limits, a county must confirm that an individual who has transferred from another county, or is applying or reapplying for aid, has not previously signed or refused to sign a WTW plan. When it is verified that the client has not previously signed or refused to sign a WTW plan, then the date on which the client signs or refuses to sign a WTW plan in the current county is the correct start date of the 18- or 24-month time limit. If it is known that the client has signed or refused to sign a WTW plan before, the county must verify the accuracy of the existing sign date before determining the appropriate start date.

The 18 or 24 months on aid is a cumulative total of time on aid in the State, not within each county. (It should be noted that any month, in which an individual meets one or more of the exceptions described in MPP Section 42-710.6, does not count against the 18- or 24-month time limit.) Once a start date for the 18- or 24-month time limit is set, counties must not change the start date when the recipient signs a new WTW plan or amendment, even in cases when a county believes that the participant's WTW plan is no longer appropriate, and a new plan is warranted, unless the change is related to one of the exceptions described above.

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As a reminder to counties, pursuant to MPP Section 42-711.552, a recipient who is already working enough hours to meet the participation requirements noted in MPP Section 42-711.4, before assessment, is not required to go to assessment or sign a WTW plan, unless he or she elects to receive other WTW services (excluding supportive services). It should be noted that an "employed" recipient must be provided necessary supportive services (i.e., child care, transportation, ancillary expenses, and personal counseling) even if he or she has not gone to assessment and signed a WTW plan. A recipient who elects not to receive other services, and does not sign a welfare-to-work plan, is not subject to the 18- or 24- month time limit.

If you have any questions regarding this letter or the start of the 18- or 24-month time limit, please contact Milt Yee, Employment Bureau, at (916) 657-3399.

Sincerely,

Original Document Signed By
Bruce Wagstaff on 8/30/00
BRUCE WAGSTAFF
Deputy Director
Welfare to Work Division

c: CWDA
CSAC