

**DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES**

744 P Street, Sacramento, California 95814



June 16, 2003

ALL COUNTY LETTER NO. 03-26

TO: ALL COUNTY WELFARE DIRECTORS  
ALL CalWORKs PROGRAM SPECIALISTS  
ALL FOOD STAMP COORDINATORS  
ALL COUNTY REFUGEE COORDINATORS

**REASON FOR THIS TRANSMITTAL**

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

SUBJECT: INCREASES TO THE MAXIMUM AID PAYMENT (MAP) AND MINIMUM BASIC STANDARD OF ADEQUATE CARE (MBSAC) LEVELS IN THE CALIFORNIA WORK OPPORTUNITY AND RESPONSIBILITY TO KIDS (CalWORKs) PROGRAM AND THE REFUGEE CASH ASSISTANCE (RCA) PROGRAM

REFERENCE: WELFARE & INSTITUTIONS CODE SECTIONS 11450, 11452 AND 11453

The purpose of this letter is to inform the counties of increases to the MAP in the CalWORKs program effective June 1, 2003. Initially, the Department anticipated that legislation would pass suspending the June 2003 Cost-of-Living Adjustment (COLA). However, since no legislation or budget passed authorizing the suspension, county welfare departments are now required to implement current provisions in statute that provide for an annual COLA. This year's COLA increases the MAP and MBSAC by 3.74 percent.

The new MAP levels are used in determining the aid payments as of June 1, 2003, and subsequent months. The new CalWORKs Payment Standards tables for Region 1 and Region 2 are included in Attachments 1A and 1B, and are provided to assist in implementing the changes. The new MBSAC amounts affect families that apply for CalWORKs on or after June 1, 2003. The increased amounts in the In-Kind Income portion of the tables affect both recipients and new applicants of CalWORKs who state they earn or receive in-kind income for any of the need items listed on this table.

**MAP Increase**

Since an expedited resolution could not be reached to suspend the June 2003 COLA, the Department recognizes counties were not instructed in time to reprogram impacted automated systems to meet the MAP COLA increase effective on

June 1, 2003. Therefore, counties are instructed to issue retroactive supplemental payments to those recipients who are eligible to receive them back to the June 1, 2003 effective date. Pursuant to Manual of Policy and Procedures (MPP) Section 44-340.6, CalWORKs retroactive payments shall not be considered income or as a resource in the month paid nor the following month.

### **CalWORKs and Food Stamp Mass Informing Notice**

Attachments 2A and 2B provide the mass informing stuffers you should use to notify CalWORKs recipients of the new MAP levels. Attachment 2A is designed for residents of Region 1, and Attachment 2B for Region 2 residents. These stuffers provide information about changes in cash aid standards and serve as advance notification to CalWORKs recipients. Both attachments contain language to inform households that food stamps may be reduced due to the increase in cash aid. In addition, the stuffer includes the State's toll free number for public inquiries. Those calling the number will hear a taped message concerning the changes and hearing rights associated with law changes. The taped message will be provided in English and Spanish. Because the supplement must be completed promptly in accordance with MPP Section 44-340.13, the stuffers must be sent to current CalWORKs recipients so they are received as soon as it is administratively feasible.

### **CalWORKs Notice of Action (NOA) Language**

Attachment 3 provides a NOA for county use. Counties may, but are not legally required to, issue NOAs for increases in grants resulting solely from the law change.

### **Refugee Cash Assistance (RCA)**

These MBSAC and MAP COLAs also apply to RCA applicants and recipients effective June 1, 2003.

### **Food Stamp Information**

Adjustments in Food Stamp benefits resulting from mass cash aid changes are considered a mass change as provided in MPP Section 63-504.392. The mass informing stuffers provided in Attachments 2A and 2B contain the necessary information for advising Public Assistance Food Stamp households of benefit changes. An individual Notice of Change (DFA 377.4) is not required if the sole reason for the change in benefits is the MAP increase.

The following describes how to treat the CalWORKs MAP increase supplemental payments received by Food Stamp households:

For monthly reporting households subject to retrospective budgeting, if the County Welfare Department (CWD) sends a supplemental payment for the MAP increase in the month of June for the month of June, but did not have time

to prospectively budget the supplemental payment, the CWD must retrospectively budget the June supplement in August 2003 [MPP 63-503.232(c)(5)(A)].

However, if the June supplement is not sent until July, it is considered a non-recurring lump sum payment for Food Stamp Program purposes and is counted as a resource in the month of July [MPP 63-502.2(j)]. This provision applies to retrospectively budgeted households as well as prospectively budgeted households.

### **Overpayment Recovery**

Supplemental payments made to the CalWORKs recipients as head of their own AU, are to be offset against existing cash aid overpayments, as required by MPP Section 44-351.3. However, counties must not use these payments to offset supportive service overpayments. Regulations MPP Section 42-751.4 (e) for transportation and ancillary overpayments and Section 47-440.12 for child care overpayments permit a recipient to voluntarily have supportive service overpayments repaid through grant adjustment.

### **Camera-Ready Copies**

After you receive the copy of the English and Spanish CalWORKs forms and messages, please allow one week for the forms and messages to be translated and mailed to your CalWORKs Forms Coordinator. Language Translation Services (LTS) will mail camera-ready copies of Chinese, Vietnamese and Russian translations as soon as they become available. You do not need to initially request forms or messages from LTS. To order additional camera-ready forms or messages in Spanish, Chinese, Vietnamese or Russian, FAX your request to LTS at (916) 657-3429 or e-mail it to [LTS@dss.ca.gov](mailto:LTS@dss.ca.gov).

For a camera-ready copy and/or an additional copy of an English form, please call the Forms Management Unit (FMU) at (916) 657-1907. If your office has Internet access, you may obtain various forms (not including NOA messages) from the CDSS web page at: [www.dss.cahwnet.gov](http://www.dss.cahwnet.gov). FMU is currently in the process of making forms available on the Internet. If the name, mailing address or e-mail address of your CalWORKs Forms Coordinator changes, please contact FMU by telephone at (916) 654-1282 or by e-mail to [fm@dss.ca.gov](mailto:fm@dss.ca.gov). For additional copies of NOA messages in English, please contact Shawn Bradley at (916) 653-8675 or by e-mail at: [shawn.bradley@dss.ca.gov](mailto:shawn.bradley@dss.ca.gov).

### **Translations**

Your CalWORKs Forms Coordinator is to distribute translated forms and messages to each program and location. Each county shall provide bilingual/interpretive services and written translations to non-English or limited English proficient populations as required by the Dymally Alatorre Bilingual Services Act (Government Code Section

7290 et seq.), and by State regulations in MPP Division 21, Civil Rights Nondiscrimination, Section 115.

NOA Message M44-315 translated into Russian, Chinese and Vietnamese will be provided to counties by LTS under separate cover. For additional translated copies of the NOA messages contact LTS by phone at (916) 654-1282 or by e-mail at [LTS@dss.ca.gov](mailto:LTS@dss.ca.gov).

### **Contacts**

If you have any questions regarding the CalWORKs MAP and MBSAC increases, please contact Eden-Marie Eulingborough at (916) 653-4992. Questions about RCA should be addressed to Kathy Noble at (916) 654-2602. For questions regarding treatment of the MAP increase in the Food Stamp budget, you may contact Rosemary Akhidenor at (916) 654-2116.

Sincerely,

*Original signed by  
Bruce Wagstaff on 6/16/03*

BRUCE WAGSTAFF  
Deputy Director  
Welfare to Work Division

### Attachments

c: CWDA  
CSAC