



CDSS

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DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

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GOVERNOR

September 29, 2008

ALL COUNTY LETTER NO. 08-41

TO: ALL COUNTY WELFARE DIRECTORS
ALL CALWORKS PROGRAM SPECIALISTS
ALL COUNTY WELFARE TO WORK COORDINATORS
ALL CONSORTIUM PROJECT MANAGERS
ALL REFUGEE PROGRAM COORDINATORS

SUBJECT: CALIFORNIA WORK OPPORTUNITY AND RESPONSIBILITY TO
KIDS (CalWORKS) WELFARE-TO-WORK TRANSPORTATION
SERVICES

REFERENCE: All County Letter (ACL) 03-15, Manual of Policies and
Procedures (MPP) Section 42-713.21, MPP Section 42-750.11,
MPP Section 42-750.112, MPP Section 42-750.21, MPP
Section 42-780

The purpose of this ACL is to clarify state policy on counties' responsibility to review and update, when appropriate, CalWORKs transportation reimbursement rates and to provide guidance to counties regarding payments of necessary transportation costs. To ensure that welfare-to-work (WTW) participants receive the necessary supportive services to participate in the WTW program, counties must review the reimbursement rate used for CalWORKs participants' transportation expenses no less than once a year, update the rate when appropriate, and begin using the updated mileage reimbursement rate for CalWORKs participants at the time the rate is updated. During this review, the county must ensure that its transportation reimbursement rate reflects current regional market rates and covers necessary transportation costs.

Manual of Policies and Procedures (MPP) Section 42-750.11 states that necessary supportive services are to be available to every participant in order to participate in the WTW program activity(ies) to which he or she is assigned or to accept or retain employment. If necessary supportive services are not available, the individual would have good cause for not participating in the program under MPP Section 42-713.21. In

REASON FOR THIS TRANSMITTAL

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

addition, MPP Section 42-750.112 et al. specifies how CalWORKs transportation costs are reimbursed, including the establishment of transportation reimbursement when participants use a personal vehicle.

For reimbursing participants when they use a personal vehicle, counties must either (1) select an existing rate used in the county, or (2) develop a rate that covers necessary costs. Both of these types of rates must cover necessary transportation costs based on regional market rates and should include the cost of gas, oil, insurance, license and registration fees, as well as a provision for normal wear and tear and maintenance.

If a county chooses to develop its own rate for CalWORKs participants, it may do any of the following:

- Establish a flat mileage reimbursement rate that covers all necessary costs.
- Establish a mileage rate that includes basic costs (i.e., gas, oil, insurance, license fees) and also provide separate payments or reimbursements for costs such as registration, and wear and tear and maintenance. In combination, the basic mileage rate and separate payments or reimbursements must cover necessary costs.
- Establish a two-tiered rate that decreases after necessary fixed costs have been covered, such as vehicle license fees. The lowered rate would cover continuing expenses, such as gas and oil (see ACL 03-15).

Example 1

A county has established a mileage reimbursement rate for CalWORKs participants, which it reviews annually every July, of 25 cents per mile based upon the regional market rate of gasoline, oil, and auto insurance. The county also provides additional payments or reimbursements for vehicle repairs, licensing, and registration outside of the mileage reimbursement rate. Since the mileage reimbursement rate, in combination with the additional payments or reimbursements, covers necessary costs, the county may use this rate.

Example 2

A county is considering using a rate currently being used in the county by a non-profit agency to reimburse its volunteers at 15 cents per mile with no additional payments or reimbursements. If the average cost of gasoline in that county is \$3.89 per gallon, 15 cents per mile would not reflect the current market rates, nor would it sufficiently cover the current cost of gas, oil, insurance, license and registration fees, and normal wear and tear and maintenance. Therefore, the county could not use this rate.

As specified in ACL 03-15, before a county implements a new transportation reimbursement rate or changes an existing rate, the county must submit an amendment to the CalWORKs County Plan for state review and certification.

The Department also reminds counties that they should reimburse a participant for transportation costs as soon as administratively possible. As stated in ACL 03-15, the time in which the participant is reimbursed should not impede the participant's participation in a WTW activity or employment. MPP Section 42-750.21 specifies that necessary supportive services are to be advanced to a participant whenever necessary and desired by the participant so that the participant does not use personal funds to pay for these costs. The exception to paying the participant in advance is when the participant states it is not necessary or not desired to prevent the participant from using personal funds.

If you have questions or need additional information regarding the information in this letter, please contact your California Department of Social Services Employment Bureau county consultant at (916) 654-2137.

Sincerely,

Original Document Signed By:

CHARR LEE METSKER
Deputy Director
Welfare to Work Division

c: CWDA
CSAC