

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

744 P Street, Sacramento, California 95814



May 29, 1998

ALL COUNTY LETTER NO 98-36

TO: ALL COUNTY WELFARE DIRECTORS
 ALL COUNTY CAL-LEARN COORDINATORS
 ALL COUNTY WELFARE TO WORK
 COORDINATORS
 ALL CAL-LEARN CASE MANAGEMENT
 AGENCIES

**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: CAL-LEARN QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

REFERENCE: ALL COUNTY LETTER (ACL) 97-72
 ALL COUNTY INFORMATION NOTICE I- 79-97

The purpose of this letter is to transmit a copy of the questions and answers that have been received from counties since the distribution of implementing ACL 97-72 regarding Cal-Learn changes contained in Assembly Bill 1542, Chapter 270, Statutes of 1997.

If you have any questions regarding this letter, you may contact your county's Cal-Learn program analyst. You may call (916) 657-3403 or CALNET 473-3403, if you need assistance in contacting the appropriate Cal-Learn analyst.

Sincerely,

Original Document Signed By

BRUCE WAGSTAFF
 Deputy Director
 Welfare to Work Division

Enclosure

CAL-LEARN QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

19 Year Old Teens

1. *Can a teen who turns 19 years of age in December 1997 continue in Cal-Learn without a break in participation?*

Yes. Eligibility and Assistance Standards (EAS) regulation Section 42-763.72 specifies that a teen who has not earned a high school diploma or its equivalent is eligible for Cal-Learn until the end of the month he/she turns age 19. An eligible teen who turns 19 in December 1997 would therefore be eligible for the entire month of December and would be able to continue to participate on a voluntary basis beginning on January 1, 1998, without a break in participation.

2. *Can a teen who comes on aid for the first time as a 19 year old qualify for Cal-Learn participation?*

No. Assembly Bill (AB) 1542, Chapter 270, Statutes of 1997, limits voluntary Cal-Learn participation to a custodial parent or pregnant woman 19 years of age who, prior to becoming 19 years of age, was participating in the Cal-Learn program and is otherwise eligible for the program. A 19 year old receiving aid for the first time could not previously have participated in the Cal-Learn program.

3. *Can a 19 year old teen volunteer for Cal-Learn participation if the teen participated in the Cal-Learn program previously, but is not currently in the program? For example, a teen left the Cal-Learn program at the end of July 1997 because she turned 19 years of age during that month. Can she rejoin the Cal-Learn program effective January 1, 1998? What about a teen parent who left the Cal-Learn program at age 17 because her family went off aid. Can she rejoin the program when she goes on aid again at age 19?*

Yes. Any 19-year old who previously participated in the Cal-Learn program and is otherwise eligible for Cal-Learn participation can rejoin the program on a voluntary basis.

4. *In order for a 19 year old to participate in the Cal-Learn program, does the county have to track his/her school participation any differently than it tracks attendance for other Cal- Learn teens?*

No. AB 1542 did not impose any new or different Cal-Learn school participation tracking requirements for 19 year old teens. Enrollment and full-time attendance in a school program which leads to a high school diploma or its equivalent is a program requirement for all Cal- Learn participants, including 19 year old participants.

5. *Can a county discontinue a 19 year old voluntary participant from the Cal-Learn program and for what reasons?*

Yes. A county can discontinue a 19 year old voluntary participant from the Cal-Learn program for the same reasons that an 18 year old and under would be discontinued, i.e., is not a CalWORKs recipient, has obtained a high school diploma or its equivalent, does not reside with his/her child in the same assistance unit (AU) and is no longer pregnant with no other eligible child in the AU.

6. *Is a Notice of Action (NOA) required to inform 19 year old teens that they are being terminated from the Cal-Learn program? How long of a notice period is required?*

Yes. A NOA is required to inform a teen that he/she is being terminated from the Cal-Learn program. Form NA 843 (which explains why a teen is no longer eligible to participate in Cal-Learn) was revised effective January 1, 1998, to include the termination of 19 year olds. A copy of the revised form was included in All-County Information Notice I-79-97. Counties can check the box which reads: "You have turned 19 years old and are not eligible to volunteer to continue participating in the Cal-Learn program." Or counties can check the "Other" box and provide termination information specific to the teen involved. Since this is viewed as a negative action, the notice must be mailed at least 10 days before the effective date of the action.

7. *If a 19 year old is not attending school, would that be a reason for the county to send out a CL 3 (Cal-Learn Notice of Participation Problem)?*

It would be appropriate to send the CL 3 to the teen if he/she is not attending school. This would provide the teen the opportunity to resolve attendance problems with the case manager.

8. *Can a county apply a Cal-Learn sanction to a 19 year old volunteer if the teen "unvolunteers" because he/she knows that an upcoming report card will result in a sanction?*

It depends upon when the teen left the program. If the teen was in Cal-Learn during the report card period, the county can apply the sanction, even if the teen is not in Cal-Learn when the report card is issued.

9. *EAS regulation Section 42-763.8 deals with Break in Program Participation. Will this regulation apply to the 19 year old volunteers.*

Yes. 19 year old volunteers are eligible for the same benefits and sanctions as are any mandatory Cal-Learn participants.

Miscellaneous Cal-Learn Questions

10. *If a family includes a Cal-Learn eligible teen who has not been enrolled in Cal-Learn, either because of county oversight or because the family did not report the teen's pregnancy or parental status, can the county apply the school attendance penalty described in Welfare and Institutions Code (WIC) Section 11253.5 if the teen is not attending school?*

No. WIC Section 11253.5(a) states that all children in an AU for whom school attendance is compulsory, except individuals who are eligible for the Cal-Learn program, shall be required to attend school [All County Letter (ACL) 97-72]. Since the statute exempts teens eligible for Cal-Learn, rather than Cal-Learn participants, the school attendance penalty cannot be applied even if the teen has not been enrolled in Cal-Learn. The reason why the teen is not in Cal-Learn, whether because of county error or the client's failure to report, does not affect this answer. At the time the county becomes aware of this potential Cal-Learn teen, the county must begin the process to determine if the teen should be enrolled in Cal-Learn.

The school attendance requirement described in WIC Section 11253.5(a) would apply to any other children in that family who are not Cal-Learn eligible and for whom school attendance is compulsory.

11. *Will the exemption/deferral and good cause criteria specified in the Cal-Learn regulations continue to apply? They are based on GAIN criteria, many of which were eliminated or changed in AB 1542*

Yes, the exemption/deferral and good cause criteria specified in the Cal-Learn regulations continue to apply. The elimination of the GAIN Program did not effect these Cal-Learn regulations.

12. *If a Cal-Learn teen works, can counties pay for child care not covered by Cal-Learn funding using CalWORKs child care funds?*

Yes. A Cal-Learn teen can work and the county can use CalWORKs funds to pay for uncovered child care costs.

13. *What areas of the Cal-Learn regulations can be changed through the demonstration project guidelines in AB 1542?*

WIC Section 18231 allows a county to implement a three-year performance based demonstration project after approval by the director. For example, a demonstration project may alter Cal-Learn case management, supportive services and/or fiscal incentives.