

**DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES**

744 P Street, Sacramento, CA 95814



October 13, 2005

## COUNTY FISCAL LETTER (CFL) NO. 05/06-28

TO: COUNTY WELFARE DIRECTORS  
COUNTY FISCAL OFFICERS  
COUNTY AUDITOR CONTROLLERS  
COUNTY PROBATION OFFICERS

SUBJECT: UNUSED ASSISTANCE PROVIDED THROUGH WARRANTS AND  
ELECTRONIC BENEFIT TRANSFERS (EBT)

The purpose of this CFL is to provide direction to County Welfare Departments (CWDs) for the return of unused public assistance funds to the California Department of Social Services (CDSS). These instructions pertain to assistance benefits that have been provided through the public assistance warrants that have been cancelled for nonpresentation within the established period of time, and EBT benefits that have been expunged from the EBT system.

Funding for the public assistance warrants and EBT is provided by CDSS to the counties each month through the monthly assistance advance procedure. Only the process for providing the assistance to the recipient and the time limit for benefit usage differs.

Public assistance provided through warrants issued by the county auditor is subject to the time limits established by Government Code Section 29802. Any warrant issued is void if not presented to the county treasurer for payment within six months after its issue date.

Public assistance provided through EBT accounts is subject to the usage time limits established by the Manual of Policies and Procedures (MPP) Division 16, Section 16-120. Cash assistance provided through EBT will be expunged if there is no debit activity on the card for a period of 270 days.

When public assistance is not used within the respective time limits specified, the warrants and EBT benefits are cancelled. The funds for the assistance benefit must then be returned to the CDSS until such time the benefits have been reactivated and reissued due to contact or reapplication by the recipient (MPP 25-200.7 and 25-520.14; The State of California Accounting Standards and Procedures for Counties Section 19.14).

The amount of the outdated warrants and EBT benefits should be claimed on the CA 800 Automated Assistance Claims under the appropriate aid code, on the

designated line for "Prior Month Negative Adjustments," and will be a reduction to the assistance claim. Counties must maintain appropriate documentation and a clear audit trail within the CWD for those unused cash assistance benefits (MPP Section 16-120).

If you have any questions regarding this matter, please submit your concerns regarding outdated warrants to [assistance.claims@dss.ca.gov](mailto:assistance.claims@dss.ca.gov), or for EBT benefits, to the EBT Unit at (916) 654-1874.

Sincerely,

*Original signed by  
Douglas D. Park  
on 10/13/05*

DOUGLAS D. PARK, Chief  
Fiscal Systems and Accounting Branch