CalWORKs Reform Provisions

Description	Statutory Deadline	Overview	Implementation Notes	County Letter Guidance
Ending of Work Participation Rate (WPR) county case sampling	7/1/2025	Counties are no longer required to sample cases via Research and Development Enterprise Project (RADEP) and Enterprise II Lite (E2Lite). DSS now utilizes administrative data extracts from California Statewide Automated Welfare System (CalSAWS) to fulfill federal data reporting requirements.	Effective 7/1/2025	All County Letter (ACL) 25-77 (November 17, 2025) California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids (CalWORKs): Elimination of Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) and Work Incentive Nutritional Supplement (WINS) county case sampling workload effective July 1, 2025
Repeal of mandatory interim job search activities	10/31/2025	Participants whose Welfare-to-Work (WTW) activities are not immediately available are no longer required to participate in job search activities.	Effective 10/31/2025	ACL 25-78 (October 31, 2025) Transforming CalWORKs Initiative: Overview of related policy changes; ACL 26-32 (May 8, 2026) Transforming CalWORKs: Job search as a WTW activity choice
Repeal of reappraisal	10/31/2025	Reappraisal after the completion of a WTW plan is no longer required.	Effective 10/31/2025	Initial guidance anticipated by Fall 2026

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Description	Statutory Deadline	Overview	Implementation Notes	County Letter Guidance
WPR pass-on to counties	10/31/2025	Counties are no longer responsible for half of any penalty on the state for failure to meet WPR requirements.	Effective 10/31/2025	ACL 25-74 (November 4, 2025) Elimination of the work participation rate penalty pass-through for CalWORKs
Streamlined appraisal and WTW plan	7/1/2026, or when automation is complete	Simplified appraisal that participants may complete independently online or with their case worker. Participants may independently create their own WTW plan online, or they may reach out to their case worker to complete the plan together.	Both of these items require significant revision to current tools, significant automation, and will be piloted in select counties prior to statewide release. Approximate timeline: Appraisal pilot: Santa Clara and Lake counties beginning Fall 2026; WTW plan pilot, Fall 2026	Initial guidance anticipated by Fall 2026
Job club optional	7/1/2026	Removes job search as a mandatory activity but retains it as an optional activity.	Job search is a WTW activity a participant can choose to participate in at any time. Refer to the Transforming CalWORKs Initiative webpage for the webinar slide deck.	ACL 26-32 (May 8, 2026) Transforming CalWORKs: Job search as a WTW activity choice

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Description	Statutory Deadline	Overview	Implementation Notes	County Letter Guidance
Expanding allowable activities	7/1/2026	Streamlines categories of allowable plan activities into education activities, work activities, and barrier removal services.	Education Activities include college or community college, high school diploma or equivalent, technical/vocational education and training, career-specific education, job skills training directly related to employment, adult basic education. Work Activities include subsidized and unsubsidized employment. Barrier Removal Services include mental health and substance abuse services, the Home Visiting Program, domestic abuse services, financial literacy classes and coaching, activities that develop and enhance workplace skills, other activities that build foundations for employment, activities that ensure child well-being and family unity, and activities related to legal issues or housing stability.	Initial guidance anticipated by Fall 2026
Transportation supportive services: Shift to advanced payment	7/1/2026	Expands definition of transportation services and costs. Costs are to be advanced to participants once plan activities or assignments are determined. Costs include payment for transporting a participant's children.	Senate Bill 119 updates the following: • Allowable types of transportation services available in the county • The requirement that all transportation supportive services are provided in advance of requiring participation in a WTW activity • That transportation costs must include payment for transporting a participant's child(ren) when necessary for the participant to participate in their WTW activity • Impacts to county HHSA processes for determining and issuing advance transportation supportive services and the codification of optional additional payments for private vehicle usage	ACL 26-31 (May 1, 2026) Transforming CalWORKs: Implementation of advance transportation payments and other changes to transportation services

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Description	Statutory Deadline	Overview	Implementation Notes	County Letter Guidance
Sanctions - curing, child care check and 90-day deferral	Various	Simplifies the sanction curing process, effective July 1, 2026, or when necessary automation is complete. Child care check, effective July 1, 2026. No sanctions for 90 days, effective July 1, 2026, or when necessary automation is complete.	Financial sanctions end when the participant indicates verbally or in writing that they want to cure the sanction and participate, or at the time the county verifies or discovers the individual meets federal hourly requirements. The county must verify provision of a child care request form and reimbursement rules (CCP7) for child care supportive services, and the participant had secured child care, before imposing a sanction. Prohibits sanctions during the initial 90-day universal engagement period.	ACL 26-28 (April 24, 2026) Transforming CalWORKs: Changes to WTW non-compliance and sanctions