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## Time Limits

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Working Against the Clock: The Implementation of Welfare Time Limits in California - Detailed Research Findings

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### Authors

Crow, Sarah E  
Anderson, Jacquelyn  
Abe, Yasuyo  
et al.

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## DETAILED RESEARCH FINDINGS

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*Sarah E. Crow and Jacquelyn Anderson  
With Yasuyo Abe, Johannes M. Bos, Sarah K. Cowan, Sara Edel,  
Jennifer Kuiper, Jane Gilbert Mauldon, and Deana Goldsmith Tanguay*

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Welfare Policy Research Project



CALIFORNIA POLICY RESEARCH CENTER  
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA



**DETAILED RESEARCH FINDINGS**

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**Welfare Policy Research Project**

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**California Policy Research Center**

1950 Addison Street, Suite 203  
Berkeley, CA 94720-7410

Phone: (510) 642-5514

Fax: (510) 642-8793

Program and publications information: <http://www.ucop.edu/cprc>

e-mail: [cprc@ucop.edu](mailto:cprc@ucop.edu)

**Welfare Policy Research Project**

1111 Franklin Street, 11th Floor  
Oakland, CA 94607-5200

Phone: (510) 987-9892

Fax: (510) 987-9456

Program and publications information: <http://wprp.ucop.edu>

email: [wprp@ucop.edu](mailto:wprp@ucop.edu)

## **About the California Policy Research Center and This Report**

The California Policy Research Center (CPRC) is a University of California program that operates under the aegis of the Office of the President to apply the extensive research expertise of the UC system to the analysis, development, and implementation of state policy as well as federal policy on issues of statewide importance. CPRC provides technical assistance to policymakers, commissions policy-relevant research, and disseminates research findings and recommendations through publications and special briefings.

This report is part of an ongoing study commissioned by the Welfare Policy Research Project (WPRP), a nonpartisan, legislatively mandated program. At the commencement of this study, WPRP was administered by the California Policy Research Center. The views and recommendations expressed are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the opinions of the sponsors and funders or the Regents of the University of California.

## **Forthcoming Reports from WPRP Study**

This report is the first in a series aimed at fully understanding the effects of the 60-month CalWORKs time limit. It describes the state's and counties' early efforts to implement CalWORKs time-limit policies. Our second report will analyze the responses to the first-wave survey of CalWORKs recipients who are nearing the 60-month time limit. In this next report, we will describe the characteristics of those recipients nearing the time limit and address two key questions: To what extent do these respondents understand the relevant CalWORKs time-limit policies, and how, if at all, are they preparing for time-limit grant reductions? Additional reports in 2006 and 2007 will address the following:

- How state and county time-limit policies and procedures may have changed since initial implementation.
- The demographic characteristics of those who time out, how these characteristics may have changed over time, and how those who time out differ from those who exit CalWORKs in other ways.
- How households subject to the time limit are faring.

At the conclusion of the study, WPRP will issue a final policy brief that summarizes the key findings from the previous papers.

## **About the Authors**

At the time WPRP launched this study, Sarah E. Crow was an analyst with Berkeley Policy Associates, and Jacquelyn Anderson was a research associate with MDRC. At present, Ms. Crow is a senior planning analyst at the San Francisco Human Services Agency, and Ms. Anderson is the project officer for policy research at the Corporation for Supportive Housing. Yasuyo Abe, Johannes M. Bos, and Deana Goldsmith Tanguay are principal analysts at Berkeley Public Associates (BPA). Sarah K. Cowan is a research assistant at BPA, and Jennifer Kuiper an affiliate. Sara Edel is a research assistant at

MDRC, and Jane Gilbert Mauldon is an associate professor at the Goldman School of Public Policy and associate director of the Survey Research Center, UC Berkeley.

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# CONTENTS

|   |    |
|---|----|
| <b>Executive Summary</b> .....  | ix |
| <b>1. Introduction</b> .....  | 1  |
| Policy Goals Served by Time Limits.....   | 4  |
| The Safety Net Program.....   | 5  |
| Caseload Trends Since the Implementation of the Time Limit.....                                     | 6  |
| Study Design and Limitations.....   | 8  |
| Report Structure.....   | 9  |
| Future Reports.....   | 9  |
| <b>2. The State’s Role in the Design and Implementation of the CalWORKs Time-Limit Policy</b> ..... | 11 |
| Key Findings.....   | 11 |
| Computerized Tracking of Time on Aid.....   | 22 |
| Conclusions and Policy Implications.....  | 23 |
| <b>3. Staff and Recipient Knowledge of the Time Limit</b> .....                                     | 25 |
| Key Findings.....   | 25 |
| Changing the Welfare Message.....   | 26 |
| Initial and Ongoing Notification of CalWORKs Recipients.....  | 32 |
| Notification in the Last Six to Nine Months on Aid.....   | 35 |
| Special Services for Non-English Speakers.....  | 37 |
| County Staff Understanding of Time-Limit Policies.....  | 39 |
| Recipient Understanding of Time-Limit Policies.....   | 41 |
| Conclusions and Policy Implications.....  | 43 |
| <b>4. County Implementation of the CalWORKs Time Limit</b> .....                                    | 45 |
| Key Findings.....   | 45 |
| Tracking Months on Aid.....   | 46 |
| Reviewing Case Files for Accuracy.....  | 48 |
| Exemptions and Extensions.....  | 54 |
| Child-Support Exemption.....  | 59 |
| Unable to Maintain Employment Extension.....  | 63 |
| Conclusions and Policy Recommendations.....   | 65 |
| <b>5. Services Provided Near and After the CalWORKs 60-Month Time Limit</b> .....                   | 67 |
| Key Findings.....   | 67 |
| Background: Policies Governing CalWORKs Services.....   | 67 |
| County Implementation of Discretionary Services.....  | 72 |
| County Implementation of Child Care, Food Stamps, and Medi-Cal.....                                 | 76 |
| Implementation Challenges.....  | 80 |
| Summary of Chapter Findings and Policy Implications.....  | 82 |
| <b>6. Conclusions and Policy Implications</b> .....   | 83 |
| Implementation of the Time Limit: Accomplishments and Remaining Challenges.....                     | 84 |
| Key Findings, Policy Implications, and Recommendations.....   | 86 |



|                         |    |
|-------------------------|----|
| <b>References</b> ..... | 95 |
|-------------------------|----|

**Appendixes**

|  |     |
|--|-----|
| A. Methodology for the Study Components.....   | A-1 |
| B. Cash Assistance and Food Stamp Calculations for<br>Region I and Region II .....   | B-1 |
| C. Sacramento County Flowchart to Determine If Participant Meets<br>Exception Condition as Unable to Maintain Employment ..... | C-1 |
| D. Los Angeles County Guide: The People’s Guide to<br>the CalWORKs 60-Month Limit.....   | D-1 |
| E. All-County Survey on the CalWORKs Time Limit.....   | E-1 |
| F. Staff Survey on the CalWORKs Time Limit.....  | F-1 |
| G. CalWORKs Participant Focus Group Guide .....  | G-1 |

**Exhibits**

|   |       |
|---|-------|
| 1.1. CalWORKs Caseload 1999–2003 .....  | 7     |
| 2.1. State Time-Limit Policies.....   | 13    |
| 2.2. Effects of Timing Out on Cash Assistance and Food Stamps, by Family Size.....                                    | 15    |
| 2.3. Effects of Timing Out on Cash Assistance and Food Stamps,<br>by Number of Hours Worked.....                      | 16    |
| 2.4. Federal and California Time-Limits Exemption Criteria.....   | 19    |
| 2.5. Allowable Reasons for CalWORKs Extensions .....  | 21    |
| 3.1. Types of Activities County Workers Encourage<br>Under the CalWORKs Time Limit .....                              | 29    |
| 3.2. Percent of County Staff That Often Encourage Recipients<br>with Small Grants to Bank Months .....                | 31    |
| 3.3. Percent of County Staff Who Regularly Explain Time-Limit Policies<br>in First Meetings with Recipients.....      | 34    |
| 3.4. Percent of County Staff Who Regularly Explain Time-Limit Policies<br>in Redetermination Meetings .....           | 35    |
| 3.5. Percent of County Staff Reporting Adequate Guidance/Training on<br>60-Month Time-Limit Rules and Procedures..... | 40    |
| 3.6. Percent of County Staff Correctly Identifying Allowable Reasons for<br>Exemption or Extension .....              | 41    |
| 4.1. County Staff Perception of Accuracy of Available Time-on-Aid Information .....                                   | 48    |
| 4.2. Percent of Counties That Count Prior Months of Aid Paid<br>in Other Counties and Reported in WDTIP .....         | 52    |
| 4.3. Percent of Counties That Contact Other Counties About Prior Time on Aid .....                                    | 52    |
| 4.4. County CalWORKs Cases Obtaining Child-Support Exemptions .....   | 60    |
| 4.5. Estimated Average Duration of Child-Support-Related Exemptions .....   | 61    |
| 5.1. State Policies Governing Services for CalWORKs Recipients by<br>Program Participation Status .....               | 70–71 |
| 5.2. Optional Services Provided by Counties to Recipients Who Have Reached<br>Their 60-Month Time Limits .....        | 74    |
| 5.3. Percent of County Staff Correctly Identifying Post-Time-Limit Services .....                                     | 81    |

**Sidebars**

60-Month Workshops for Recipients.....37  
Case Record Reviews at Application.....50  
County Requirements for Verifying Domestic Abuse for Purposes of Qualifying  
for Exemptions and Extensions from the CalWORKs Time Limit.....58  
Procedures for Exempting CalWORKs Months Due to Child-Support Collections .....62  
Overview of Services for Current CalWORKs Recipients.....68  
County Support for CalWORKs Recipients Approaching the Time Limit .....73  
Los Angeles County’s Post-Time-Limit Program .....75



## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

January 1, 2003, marked the first time that low-income families with children in California reached the new five-year lifetime limits on welfare. In this report we summarize early findings from our continuing four-year study examining the implementation and effects of 60-month welfare time limits in California. The data we present were collected in 2003. Officials in the state Department of Social Services and county welfare departments report that they have been addressing a number of the issues we describe here. In future reports, we will update these administrative findings.

## **BACKGROUND**

In 1996 Congress passed the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (PRWORA), creating the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program and a 60-month lifetime limit on federal cash assistance. This time limit represents a major shift in federal antipoverty policy. States may continue to provide cash aid to families reaching the federal time limit, but must do so with their own funds.

In 1997, to comply with PRWORA, California created the California Work Opportunity and Responsibility for Kids (CalWORKs) program. Under CalWORKs, adults lose their portion of the family's cash grant after 60 cumulative months, but their children usually remain eligible for the state-funded Safety Net program. The California law also seeks to cushion the loss of cash aid by providing more broadly for exemptions and extensions than does federal law.

To assess the early implementation of the CalWORKs time limit, from June through December 2003 we surveyed and interviewed welfare department staff and conducted focus groups with CalWORKs recipients nearing their time limits in six focus counties (Alameda, Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, Sacramento, and Tulare). We also conducted a statewide survey of CalWORKs program administrators (56 of California's 58 counties responded) and interviewed state-level program staff and administrators.

## **IMPLEMENTATION CHALLENGES**

PRWORA is intended to reduce welfare dependence by increasing recipients' efforts to become self-sufficient. For such a time-limit policy to be effective, however, recipients must be aware of the time limit and must know how many months of eligibility they have left. Hence, to effectively implement and administer the CalWORKs time limit, state and county officials face three key challenges. First, they must acquire, compile, and update the administrative data needed to accurately count recipients' time on aid. Second, they must equitably administer the exemptions and extensions to the 60-month time limit specified by state law. Third, county caseworkers must be able to advise adult recipients

about all the benefits and services for which they are eligible both before and after their cash assistance ends.

### **Tracking Time on Aid**

Accurate tracking of time on aid is essential. It ensures that adult recipients are neither discontinued prematurely nor aided for longer than 60 months. Accurate time keeping is also critical for caseworkers: They can devise more realistic welfare-to-work plans for the remaining time and help recipients obtain necessary support services.

- ***The statewide database for tracking time on aid is not yet reliable or complete.*** The state worked with counties to develop the Welfare Data Tracking Implementation Project (WDTIP), a statewide database, to help counties track recipients' time on aid regardless of any relocation. At the time of our interviews, county administrators and staff found it unreliable and incomplete: Los Angeles, Modoc, and Stanislaus counties were not yet importing county administrative data into WDTIP. State officials acknowledged that WDTIP data were incomplete and instructed the counties not to rely on these data alone. The addition of Los Angeles County data to the system, in September 2004, did make the data substantially more complete. However, until WDTIP includes all data (back to January 1998) for both CalWORKs benefits and child-support payments collected on the recipients' behalf, and until uploading and reporting glitches are resolved, its utility in tracking countable months of aid over time and across counties is limited. State officials are continuing to work with counties to improve WDTIP data.
- ***Tracking time on aid requires substantial staff time and resources.*** County staff devote substantial time to reviewing case records and to verifying exemptions and extensions. WDTIP data are checked against county data to ensure that both systems report the same information. Automated data are also checked against paper files to ensure accuracy. Workers also may have to contact other counties to verify WDTIP data. Staff report that it can take 15 minutes to several hours to review a single case.
- ***Focus counties are providing timely notices to recipients about the 60-month time limit and their remaining time on aid, but some counties may be providing inaccurate notices.*** CalWORKs regulations require that county welfare agencies notify recipients in writing about the time-limit policy and their remaining time on aid at application, at annual eligibility redetermination, between months 54 and 58, and at 60 months. The six focus counties are actually providing time-limit information more frequently than required as a means of motivating recipients to work or prepare for work.

In some counties, however, some notices may have reflected inaccurate information about the number of countable months on aid, particularly in counties where exemptions had not yet been fully implemented. Twenty-eight counties

reported voluntarily restoring CalWORKs cash aid to adult recipients as they systematically reviewed and improved their procedures for counting time on aid.

### **Granting Exemptions and Extensions**

California law specifies 12 circumstances that exempt months from counting toward the time limit and six circumstances that extend the time limit. Between 1998 and 2003, counties were primarily concerned with implementing exemptions, but as succeeding cohorts of families exhaust their 60 countable months of aid, extensions will become more important.

- ***Implementing California’s unique child-support exemption has proved particularly difficult because it requires interagency collaboration and data sharing.*** California is the only state that exempts months from counting toward an adult’s time limit when the state collects court-ordered child support on her behalf in amounts that fully offset the monthly costs of cash assistance. This exemption is inherently complicated because it requires county child-support departments to share data with county welfare departments. Because the full extent of the complexity was not initially evident, final state instructions for implementing this provision did not reach the counties until October 2002, three months before the first wave of CalWORKs adults exhausted their time limits.

At least nine counties—including three focus counties—were not ready to implement this child-support exemption when families first started reaching their 60-month time limits in early 2003. As a result, two focus counties reduced grants prematurely, at least for a time. In accord with instructions from the state Department of Social Services, the third county kept adults on assistance beyond 60 months to allow the county to determine applicable child-support exemptions before reducing grants. Delays in properly determining these exemptions also affect the accuracy of WDTIP information, at least temporarily.

Two focus counties, Los Angeles and Riverside, developed effective systems for integrating child-support and CalWORKs payment data. Riverside was the only focus county uploading these data to WDTIP.

- ***The child-support exemption “stopped the clock” for many adults nearing their time limits.*** Thirty-seven counties reported calculating the child-support exemption when cases had accumulated 54 or more months of aid. They also reported that the child-support exemption affected about 25% of counties’ adult-headed CalWORKs cases in early 2003. On average, counties exempted 12 months for families for whom they collected any child support.
- ***The documentation required to qualify for the domestic-abuse exemption varied greatly across the six focus counties and, in some counties, may disadvantage recipients who are victims of abuse.*** Seeking to deter fraudulent claims, some counties required extensive verification of domestic violence (such as police reports). Given the difficulty many victims have in reporting abuse,

especially to the police, such requirements may disadvantage particularly vulnerable CalWORKs recipients.

- ***Despite training, few focus-county caseworkers could identify all six reasons for granting extensions, five of which are also grounds for exemption.*** Well over half of the county staff we surveyed identified at least one of five reasons for extending benefits (these overlap substantially with reasons for granting an exemption), but fewer than two-fifths knew that a sixth—complying with CalWORKs requirements but being unable to maintain employment—was a valid reason for granting extensions. In the focus counties, only 12% to 22% identified all six reasons, although not all the county staff we surveyed were expected to know this information.
- ***Recipients in our focus groups understand there is a time limit, but are confused about exemption and extension policies.*** Most focus-group participants had been aware of a time limit for several years, having heard about it in orientation sessions or from caseworkers, written materials from the state and the counties, and/or outside sources (family members, friends, news programs). Nevertheless, these recipients were unfamiliar with or confused about the criteria governing exemptions and extensions. This may prevent them from requesting exemptions or extensions for which they are eligible.\*
- ***County workers do not often grant extensions beyond the 60-month time limit.*** As of early 2003, 34 counties reported they had yet to grant a single extension of cash aid, and 25 reported that they had yet to establish criteria for granting extensions.

### **Benefits and Services for Timed-Out Adults**

Federal and state policymakers intended that certain benefits and services for which CalWORKs recipients are typically eligible (Medi-Cal, food stamps, and child-care assistance) continue uninterrupted when otherwise eligible families reach their 60-month time limits or leave cash assistance for other reasons. State law also permits counties to provide optional services (e.g., counseling for mental health issues, substance abuse, and domestic abuse) to those who exit CalWORKs.

- ***Counties report that they provide timed-out adults with uninterrupted Food Stamp, Medi-Cal, and child-care benefits.*** County officials generally said they had little trouble ensuring that families with timed-out adults continued to receive Food Stamp and Medi-Cal benefits. This is because the same CalWORKs eligibility workers typically assist families when they shift from the regular

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\* Focus groups are in-depth qualitative interviews with a select group of CalWORKs recipients nearing the 60-month time limit. These groups are not necessarily representative of the CalWORKs population. Focus-group data are qualitative and provide detailed information about patterns, themes, or perspectives on a particular issue. It is methodologically inappropriate to report focus-group data by percentage, frequencies, or statistics. See Appendix A for further details about the focus groups that we conducted for this report.

CalWORKs program to the Safety Net program. Focus-county staff reported that the child-care transition was generally seamless, but they also noted that the administrative complexity of child care (with different state agencies and contractors responsible for different phases of child care) increases the likelihood of service disruptions.

- ***There is considerable confusion among recipients about their continued eligibility for non-time-limited benefits.*** Many recipients who participated in our focus groups expressed deep concerns about losing their child-care or medical benefits, both of which should be unaffected by reaching their 60-month time limits.
- ***Forty-nine counties reported providing optional services to former recipients generally, and 26 reported providing services specifically for timed-out adults.*** These support services are typically available to employed former recipients and commonly include counseling for mental health, substance abuse, and domestic violence. Less commonly they include job-related services such as help with transportation and other job-related expenses. However, focus counties offering optional services reported that current and future budget cuts would cause them to scale back such services for all former welfare recipients in general, and for timed-out recipients in particular.

## **CONCLUSIONS AND POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS**

Although the CalWORKs statute permits counties administrative discretion, the statute and regulations also set forth eligibility and benefit payment standards for cash grants that are, for the most part, intended to be administered consistently and equitably across counties. That is, with respect to benefit payments, similarly situated CalWORKs recipients should be treated the same regardless of where they live. The data we collected in 2003 reveal considerable variation in how counties implemented key program rules, most notably regarding exemptions and extensions, which affect adult recipients' eligibility and benefit payments. As a result, some counties were more likely than others to reduce grants for recipients in comparable circumstances. Aside from state-permitted county discretion, we attribute much of the county variation to administrative differences, such as how months of cash assistance were tracked, staff understanding of county policies, and procedures for implementing exemptions and extensions.

### **WDTIP**

Given the importance of obtaining an accurate count of time on aid, including any exempted months, it is critical that the Department of Social Services work with the counties to improve both the scope and accuracy of the WDTIP data on which counties need to rely. Having a central statewide database that accurately records benefit payments, child-support collections, and exemptions or extensions would significantly increase the equity and efficiency of CalWORKs operations. This is especially true in



smaller counties, which often lack the resources to create, maintain, and update such systems on their own.

### **Exemptions and Extensions**

It is important that county staff be able to communicate clearly to recipients the qualifying conditions for exemptions or extensions, since these rules affect the most vulnerable families, including those facing serious illnesses, disabilities, and domestic abuse. Counties should consider additional training for staff, particularly with respect to exemption and extension policies, and developing user-friendly ways to help staff stay abreast of these policies. Counties also should consider means of verifying domestic abuse apart from police reports, court documents, or proof of counseling or medical treatment.

### **Support Services**

Our research uncovered two major issues regarding the availability of support services for time-limited adults. First, recipients who participated in our focus groups were confused about their continued eligibility for support services and other benefits following their time-limit-triggered grant reductions. To the extent that these focus-group participants represent most CalWORKs recipients, the state and counties should consider how they can better inform recipients about post-time-limit services and benefits.

Second, recipients who reach their 60-month time limits and have their grants cut are no longer required to seek employment. As funding for optional support services dries up, counties will be less able to encourage such adults to make the transition to work and leave the Safety Net program altogether. Essentially, this reduces the post-time-limit CalWORKs experience to a pre-CalWORKs AFDC program with a somewhat lower grant. The main difference is that the CalWORKs Safety Net program is funded entirely with state funds. In the long run, such a service-poor program is unlikely to benefit recipients, their children, or state taxpayers.

### **Next Steps**

The report summarized here is the first of several aimed at fully understanding the effects of the 60-month CalWORKs time limit. Forthcoming reports will update these administrative findings, as well as examine how families prepare for the time limit and how those subject to the time-limit-triggered grant reductions are faring.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

In August 1996, the federal Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (PRWORA, P.L. 104-193) was signed into law, replacing the Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) program with Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF). There are many differences between the old and new laws, but three of the most significant changes are the imposition of the federal time limit on aid funded with federal dollars, the manner in which the federal and state governments fund the programs, and the increased decentralization of program policies and administration.

The AFDC program and the new TANF program share the goal of helping low-income parents become self-sufficient (and independent of public assistance) by promoting work. However, AFDC guaranteed, without time limits, federally subsidized cash assistance to eligible families who remained under- or unemployed. By contrast, federal cash assistance provided under TANF is time-limited. TANF imposes a five-year lifetime limit on federal cash assistance and requires most adult recipients to work or engage in work-related activities approved by the state, within the first two years of receiving aid.

A second significant change made by the federal 1996 welfare overhaul is the manner in which public assistance to low-income families with children is financed. AFDC was an entitlement program, funded by an open-ended federal matching grant to the states. The federal match varied by state, but the wealthiest per-capita income states (including California) received a federal matching rate of 50%, with poorer states receiving a more generous federal matching rate.<sup>1</sup> States had to first spend their own dollars to draw down the federal matching dollars. An increase in state spending automatically triggered an increase in federal dollars flowing to that state. This counter-cyclical feature was particularly welcome in economic downturns and recessions, when employment grew scarce and state welfare caseloads tended to rise, increasing the demand for public assistance.

Under TANF, federal funds are distributed to the states in the form of closed-end block grants.<sup>2</sup> Each state's annual share of federal TANF dollars is generally fixed, and Congress may periodically reconsider the terms and conditions of these grants to the states when the statute is reauthorized.<sup>3</sup> Under TANF, states are required to maintain a certain level of state spending for their programs to needy families, often referred to as a state's Maintenance of Effort (MOE) spending.<sup>4</sup>

Finally, the manner in which states can spend federal funds changed substantially with the passage of TANF. Whereas the AFDC program permitted states some latitude in

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<sup>1</sup> Committee on Ways and Means, U.S. House of Representatives, 1994 Green Book, WMCP 103-27, 383.

<sup>2</sup> Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act, P.L. 104-193.

<sup>3</sup> At this writing, Congress is in the process of reauthorizing the TANF legislation.

<sup>4</sup> Congress voted to reauthorize the TANF program in February 2006.

setting eligibility and benefit levels, and in implementing required welfare-to-work and job-skills training and education programs, the TANF program has generally markedly increased states' policy and administrative flexibility.<sup>5</sup> Under AFDC, state and federal AFDC funds were commingled and subject to the same program policies and rules within a given state's federally approved plan. By contrast, the TANF program allows states to use their MOE dollars for programs that are not permissible uses of TANF block grant dollars so long as the expenditures meet one of the four federally-specified TANF goals: (1) providing assistance to needy families so that the children may be cared for in their own homes or in the homes of relatives; (2) ending the dependence of poor parents on government benefits by promoting job preparation, work, and marriage; (3) preventing and reducing out-of-wedlock pregnancies; and (4) encouraging the formation and maintenance of two-parent families. For example, while TANF dollars may not be used to provide cash assistance to families in which any adult has accumulated 60 federally countable months of aid, MOE dollars may be spent on these families. California has chosen to use MOE dollars to provide assistance to families that have reached the federal time limit.<sup>6</sup>

The implementation of the 60-month lifetime limit on the receipt of federal cash assistance by low-income families with children was one of the most dramatic and controversial changes introduced by the 1996 federal welfare overhaul. Proponents of this change argued that time-limited assistance, which cut off all federal cash aid to households in which the adult(s) exhausted 60 months of aid, would increase welfare recipients' efforts to become self-reliant, increase work effort, increase family income and well-being, and help to foster more responsible child-bearing and family formation.

In 1997, California's Democrat-controlled legislature and Republican Governor agreed on major new legislation in response to the changes in federal law. Called the California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids (CalWORKs) program, the state created a time limit and other policies that sought to achieve several goals. Specifically, California sought not only to promote work, reduce dependency, and reduce welfare caseloads, but also to help low-income families become economically self-sufficient and better off by working. In addition, California sought to ensure that those families who are unable to earn enough income to leave the program would continue to receive reduced cash assistance through CalWORKs after reaching the time limit.<sup>7</sup>

The central features of the CalWORKs time-limit policy are, generally, a lifetime maximum of 60 months of welfare participation for adults, but no time limits on

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<sup>6</sup> In some instances, TANF restricted the flexibility of states compared to AFDC. For example, under AFDC, states had more latitude in funding education and training programs with federal and state dollars. Under TANF, education and certain training programs are now restricted, at least if federal funds are being used.

<sup>6</sup> States could also choose a shorter time limit, and a number of them did. We discuss the states' choices in further detail in Chapter 2.

<sup>7</sup> Information from fall 2003 interviews with senior staff at the California Department of Social Services.

participation for eligible low-income children.<sup>8</sup> After an adult exhausts the 60 months of cash assistance, her/his otherwise eligible children will continue to receive some cash assistance through the state-funded Safety Net program. The Safety Net monthly cash grant is less than the regular CalWORKs grants because the parent is excluded from the case for purposes of calculating the grant. The Safety Net program is a distinctive feature of California's system; few other states provide this kind of funding to children of timed-out parents.<sup>9</sup>

The CalWORKs program differs in other important respects from TANF programs operating in other states. First, California law provides a unique means of exempting months from the 60-month time-limit clock: using accrued dollars collected through the enforcement of court-ordered child support to "buy back" months of welfare payments. Along with many other states, California provides other exemptions beyond those permitted by federal law.<sup>10,11</sup> In addition to the child-support exemption, months of welfare receipt do not count against the 60-month limit in California if the recipient: (1) is over 60 years of age; (2) receives a monthly welfare grant of less than \$10; (3) has a temporary disability; (4) is caring for a family member and this inhibits working or participation in welfare-to-work activities; (5) is a victim of domestic abuse;<sup>12</sup> or (6) is the nonparent caretaker relative of either a dependent "child of the court" or a child the county determines is at risk of placement in foster care. There are several other reasons for exemption as well.

California's time-limited assistance policies affect both low-income families with children and state and county expenditures. Proponents of time limits have argued that time limits will make families better off because adults will take steps to work their way off welfare and become self-sufficient. Others have expressed concern that those families in which adults cannot earn additional income will be made worse off as their grants are reduced, increasing the material hardship of their dependent children. The CalWORKs program incorporates a number of policies that encourage work and protect against hardship. In this report, we begin to assess how the state and counties are managing the implementation of these complicated time limit policies and the implications for state and county expenditures. In subsequent reports, we will assess the well-being of families subject to the time limit.

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<sup>8</sup> Child-only cases do not accumulate months towards the federal time limit. Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act, P.L. 104-193.

<sup>9</sup> Bloom et al. (2002).

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

<sup>11</sup> Federal law exempts a recipient who fulfills at least one of the following: (1) a teen parent who is attending school; (2) a teen parent who is not the head of the household or married to the head of the household; (3) a resident of Indian Country or an Alaskan native village where at least 50% of adults are unemployed; (4) sanctioned for noncooperation with welfare-to-work activities. U.S. Department of Human Services (2003).

<sup>12</sup> According to California Welfare and Institution code 11320.3(f)(2), counties have the option of waiving program requirements if the recipient is a victim of domestic violence. Thus, while a domestic-abuse waiver can and often does act as an exemption, a waiver can also include other programmatic decisions specific to this population.

### **Policy Goals Served by Time Limits**

The introduction of a time limit on federal assistance in the 1996 PRWORA legislation was prompted by concerns about increasing welfare caseloads and long-term dependency. By time-limiting cash assistance, Congress sought to reduce welfare dependency, increase the speed with which welfare recipients leave welfare for work, and reduce long-term expenditures on public assistance.<sup>13</sup>

Proponents of the federal time limit expect it to reduce welfare receipt in three ways.<sup>14</sup> First, welfare recipients may anticipate the time limit and pursue alternatives to welfare, including taking a job, working more hours, or getting married. Second, recipients who receive small welfare payments to supplement their income from other sources may voluntarily forgo those grants in order to conserve or “bank” their months of welfare eligibility for times when they may not have other sources of income. Third, welfare recipients who reach the 60-month time limit will simply have their federal benefits terminated.

In California, the CalWORKs time limit is also expected to reduce caseloads by encouraging recipients to work or to bank their months. However, the incentive to leave welfare for work is weaker in California than in most other states because California’s Safety Net program reduces, but does not terminate, the cash grant to the family in which the adult has exhausted his or her 60 months on aid. In other words, able-bodied adults are removed from the case when they reach the 60-month limit, but otherwise eligible children will continue to receive a reduced cash grant. Moreover, once a household is shifted to the state-only funded Safety Net program, adults are no longer subject to CalWORKs welfare-to-work requirements. As a result, we expect the effects of the CalWORKs time limit on recipient behavior to be smaller than in states with stricter time-limit policies. By the same token, we also expect California’s policy of providing a reduced grant, rather than eliminating the cash grant altogether, to reduce any potential harm to children in families that reach the 60-month limit.

Financial incentives to increase work participation and sanctions for noncompliance with work activities interact with the time limit, with varying effects. Since December 1992, California has sought to “make work pay” more than welfare by providing a generous work-incentive policy. Currently, the first \$225 of monthly earnings is disregarded in the benefit calculation, and each additional dollar of earned income reduces the grant by 50 cents.<sup>15</sup> This policy, together with increases in the minimum wage and the federal Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC), increased recipients’ incentive to work, which may ultimately aid recipients in becoming self-sufficient. However, unless recipients find relatively high-paying, full-time work that renders them ineligible for cash assistance, the current work-incentive policy also tends to increase the length of time that recipients receive cash

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<sup>13</sup> Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act, P.L. 104-193.

<sup>14</sup> Rector and Youssef (1999); Rector and Fagan (2001).

<sup>15</sup> Crouse, State Implementation of Major Changes to Welfare Policies, 1992-1998, Table W-4, [http://aspe.hhs.gov/hsp/Waiver-Policies99/W4ern\\_dsrg.htm](http://aspe.hhs.gov/hsp/Waiver-Policies99/W4ern_dsrg.htm).

assistance relative to a less generous policy, thereby increasing the likelihood that these adults will exhaust their 60 months of aid.

The CalWORKs program also imposes fiscal sanctions in the form of grant reductions on families in which adults fail to meet program requirements (such as participating in required work activities) without good cause.<sup>16</sup> Months in which recipients are sanctioned do not count toward the time limit, thereby lengthening the number of months before they reach the time limit.

Together, California's policies imply that those households that reached their 60-month time limit early are likely to be those who complied with program requirements but have been unable to exit the program through work or other means. Some analysts predicted that the first group of recipients to time out would disproportionately be those who work, speak a primary language other than English, and live in two-parent families.<sup>17</sup>

### **The Safety Net Program**

The legislation to reauthorize the federal TANF program, enacted into law in February 2006, emphasizes increased work participation and the concept of "universal engagement." Given this federal focus and California policymakers' own concerns about increasing work effort and self-sufficiency, to what extent should California policymakers now consider requiring those adults whose children are in the Safety Net program to engage in work-related activities.

The current Safety Net program spends state-only dollars to support these adults' eligible children until they reach age 18 without imposing work-related obligations on the parents. Imposing work-related obligations on parents whose families are enrolled in the Safety Net program would require additional expenditures in the short run. The extent to which such investments would produce significant long-term gains in reduced dependence on public assistance, increased net income, and well-being for the families in question is unclear. At this time, given the state's budget problems, it would be difficult for the state to sustain new short-term expenditures to engage parents in work-related activities after they reach their 60-month limit.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> An adult who is sanctioned is removed from the assistance unit, reducing the family's grant by the adult's share. If the sanctioned adult eventually fully complies with program requirements, he or she can usually be restored to the family's grant.

<sup>17</sup> California Budget Project (2002).

<sup>18</sup> We describe Safety Net grant calculations in more detail in Chapter 2.

## **Caseload Trends Since the Implementation of the Time Limit**

As discussed in Klerman et al. (2002), California's welfare caseload trends have differed from national trends: California's caseload peaked later (in March 1995 as opposed to March 1994) and declined less sharply than the national caseload.<sup>19</sup> Nevertheless, California has seen significant caseload reductions in the past decade. The March 1995 AFDC caseload was 932,345.<sup>20</sup> In October 2003, the CalWORKs caseload was 494,453, a reduction of 47%.<sup>21</sup> Approximately half of this caseload decline occurred prior to the start of the CalWORKs program in January 1998 and cannot be attributed to the program, although changes in recipients' attitudes and expectations about welfare may have played a role in the decline even before the new program was put in place. The robust economic recovery is also widely credited for contributing to the significant decline in welfare cases.<sup>22</sup>

Exhibit 1.1 shows that the decline in the total CalWORKs caseload leveled off after the middle of 2000, and the number of cases increased slightly in early 2002. The exhibit divides the caseload into four categories: child-only cases on CalWORKs; one-parent cases that have exhausted the federal 60-month limit but still receive their entire cash grants ("TANF Timed-Out Cases"); one- and two-parent cases on CalWORKs; and state-only-funded Safety Net cases. Cases in the "TANF Timed-Out" category are cases that have reached the 60-month federal TANF time limit but have not yet reached the CalWORKs time limit.<sup>23</sup> These include cases that have received CalWORKs exemptions and extensions that are not federally recognized, as well as cases in which the federal TANF clock started before the CalWORKs program was implemented. The latter category will diminish over time, while the former is likely to grow. As the figure shows, Safety Net cases were first opened in January 2003 and accounted for a small but growing share of the caseload by October of that year.

These caseload data show that some recipients were unable or unwilling to exit the program prior to reaching their 60-month limit. Notably, we see no evidence of an increase in the state caseload during this recessionary period.

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<sup>19</sup> Part of the increased caseload in California prior to the implementation of PRWORA may be related to the implementation of the Work Pays program, which increased financial incentives to combine work and welfare. Klerman et al (2002), p. 45.

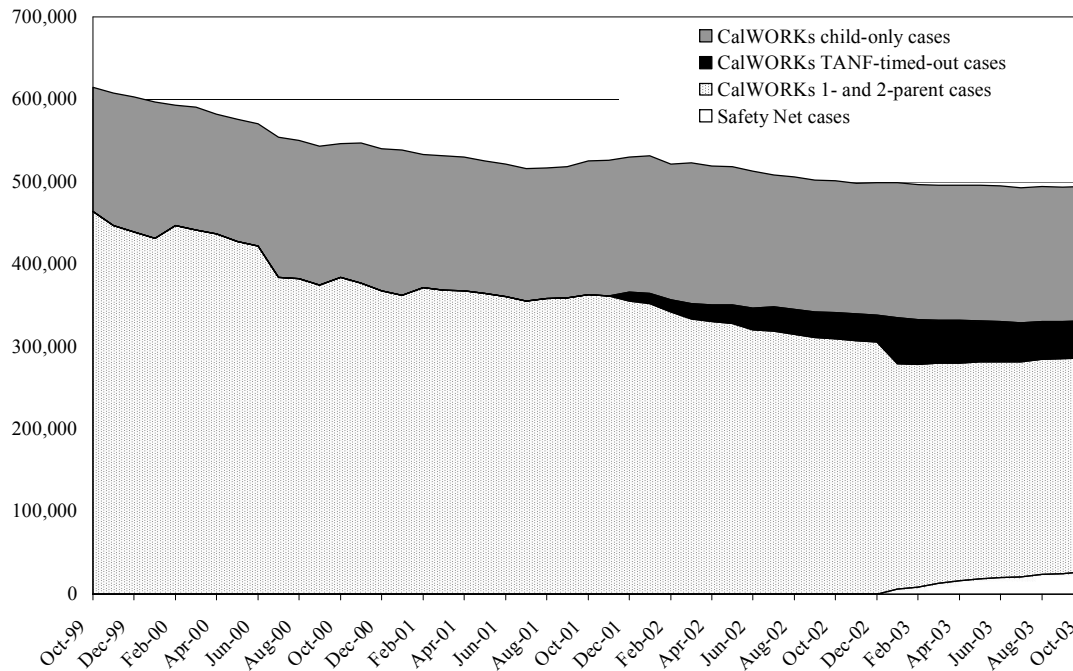
<sup>20</sup> Klerman et al. (2002).

<sup>21</sup> California Department of Social Services, Research and Development Division. CA 237 CW for October 2003.

<sup>22</sup> Klerman et al. (2002).

<sup>23</sup> Because the CalWORKs program was not implemented until January 1998, there was a 13-month gap between the beginning of the TANF and CalWORKs programs. Time on aid began to count against recipients' federal TANF time limits beginning in December 1996. These recipients experienced no change to their cash grants when they reach their federal TANF time limits however, because they had not reached their CalWORKs time limits. Because two-parent cases were moved to a program funded entirely by the state in October 1999, the federal time limit does not apply to them.

Exhibit 1.1  
CalWORKs Caseload 1999-2003



Disentangling the net effects of the rebounding economy, other policies that increased incentives to go to work, and recipients' reactions to the information that welfare benefits had become time-limited is beyond the scope of this report. However, we will model effects of the time limit on the CalWORKs caseload in a forthcoming report.

It is important to note that the first group of recipients to reach the time limit in early 2003 is probably distinct from CalWORKs recipients who have "timed out" since and those who will time out in the future. Many adults in the first group of CalWORKs recipients to exhaust 60 months of aid were probably long-time welfare recipients who had also enrolled in AFDC and California's GAIN program, thereby receiving total welfare assistance in both programs combined for longer than five years.

In contrast to that first group, individuals who time out now and in the future will increasingly have ever had only five years of assistance, unless they qualify for exemptions or extensions during their time on aid. In the present study, we do not focus on the initial group to reach the time limit, but rather on later cohorts, whose lifetime experience with cash assistance is more likely to have been with the CalWORKs program. We do this in order to better focus attention on the characteristics and experiences of the recipients and households that state and county officials will work with in the future.



## **Study Design and Limitations**

This study will provide a broad understanding of the implementation and effects of the CalWORKs time limit statewide, with a detailed and comprehensive picture of the implementation and impacts of the time limit in six focus counties (Alameda, Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, Sacramento, and Tulare). Together, these counties account for 56% of all CalWORKs cases in California.<sup>24</sup> This study, commissioned by the University of California's Welfare Policy Research Project, is being conducted by Berkeley Policy Associates in collaboration with MDRC and UC Berkeley's Survey Research Center.

### ***Data Sources Used in This Report***

Data in this report, which we collected between June and December 2003, come from five main sources, listed below. We discuss each of these data sources in more detail in Appendix A, including sample sizes, response rates, and respondent selection criteria.

- Site visits to six California counties (Alameda, Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, Sacramento, and Tulare), where we conducted interviews with county welfare administrators, managers, and case workers.
- A survey of county CalWORKs program administrators in all California counties (see Appendix E).
- A survey of CalWORKs staff in each of the six focus counties (see Appendix F).
- Focus groups with CalWORKs recipients nearing their 60-month time limit in each of the focus counties (see Appendix G).<sup>25</sup>
- Interviews with CalWORKs state program and administrative staff.

### ***Limitations***

These data sources provide a wealth of information about the implementation of the time limit across California's counties. However, there are certain important limitations to note: First, this report does not address the *effects* of time limits on recipients; it discusses the implementation of time limit policies and procedures and initial impressions about the implications of the time limit. Second, because of the limited size of the focus groups we conducted and the method we used to select participants, those whom we interviewed are neither necessarily representative of the population of recipients in general, nor of those nearing the time limit. Third, the information we report here reflects the research we conducted at a point in time shortly after counties implemented time-limit policies.

Although this report captures only the early implementation of the time limit, we are conducting a second wave of surveys and interviews in the six focus counties in 2005. In

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<sup>24</sup> California Department of Social Services, Research and Development Division CA 237 for January 2003. [http://www.dss.cahwnet.gov/research/CA237CW-Ca\\_389.htm](http://www.dss.cahwnet.gov/research/CA237CW-Ca_389.htm).

<sup>25</sup> Researchers conducted at least two focus groups in each of the six site visit counties. Focus groups generally comprised six to 10 participants each. The groups were conducted in English with the exception of two focus groups conducted in Spanish in Los Angeles County. Some of the respondents in Los Angeles and Tulare had already timed out at the time of our focus-group discussions.

future reports we will update our characterization of county practices. For a fuller discussion of our methodology and the limitations of this study, please refer to Appendix A.

Future reports will draw on survey data that are representative of the caseloads nearing time limits in the focus counties and, if available, administrative data on the state's CalWORKs caseload as a whole.<sup>26</sup> We will use these data sources to model the effects of time limits on recipients. Because the methodology of this study does not include an experiment or random assignment, we will not be able definitively to rule out competing explanations for the outcomes we will study.

### **Report Structure**

In the chapters that follow we present research findings on the implementation of the time limit statewide (Chapter 2), on staff and recipient knowledge of CalWORKs time limit policies (Chapter 3), on the strategies counties employ to accurately track recipients' months on aid (Chapter 4), and on the benefits and services counties provide to recipients who are approaching their time limit or have already timed out (Chapter 5). Finally, in Chapter 6, we summarize our conclusions and policy implications.

### **Future Reports**

This report is the first of several aimed at understanding the effects of California's five-year time limit on CalWORKs benefits. Our second report will analyze the responses to the first-wave survey of CalWORKs recipients who are nearing the 60-month time limit. We will describe the characteristics of those recipients nearing the time limit and address two key questions: To what extent do these respondents understand the relevant CalWORKs time-limit policies, and how, if at all, are they preparing for time-limit grant reductions? Several additional reports are planned for 2006 and 2007. They will address:

- How state and county time-limit policies and procedures may have changed since initial implementation.
- The demographic characteristics of those who time out, how these characteristics may have changed over time, and how those who time out differ from those who exit CalWORKs in other ways.
- How households subject to the time limit are faring.

At the conclusion of the study, WPRP will issue a final policy brief that summarizes the key findings from the reports.

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<sup>26</sup> At this writing, it is unclear whether the statewide database (called the Welfare Data Tracking Implementation Project, or WDTIP) used to track welfare-to-work and lifetime time-limit clocks will be sufficiently reliable for us to analyze within the time frame of this study. See Chapter 2 for a more detailed discussion of this data source. WDTIP is the only statewide source intended to track time-limit clocks.



## 2. THE STATE'S ROLE IN THE DESIGN AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CalWORKs TIME-LIMIT POLICY

### Key Findings

- California created a time-limit policy that incorporates more safeguards for long-term welfare recipients than many other states. These include a time-limit policy that applies only to the adult recipients, and a relatively long list of exemptions and extensions that allows many recipients to receive aid for longer than five years, usually at state expense.
- California is the only state in the U.S. that allows recipients to receive cash assistance for longer than five years when the state collects court-ordered child support on their behalf in amounts that fully offset the monthly costs of cash assistance. This child-support exemption depends on links between two disparate public systems, the welfare system and the child-support enforcement system, and was difficult to design and implement. Final state instructions on how to implement this exemption were not provided to the counties until shortly before recipients reached CalWORKs time limits.
- During the first year of implementation of the time limit, the state-designed database for tracking CalWORKs recipients' time on aid did not yet provide a complete and accurate accounting of time on aid because of the omission of information from three counties (including Los Angeles, the county with the largest share of the state's CalWORKs caseload), and because of interface problems between county and state data systems.

Through its 1997 CalWORKs legislation, California created a 60-month lifetime time limit for adult CalWORKs recipients. Recipients' time on aid began counting against California's 60-month clock on January 1, 1998;<sup>27</sup> therefore, the first group of CalWORKs recipients saw their cash assistance reduced on January 1, 2003.

California's time-limit policy accommodates federal law by restricting the use of federal TANF block-grant funds to 60 months of aid for federally eligible households.<sup>28</sup> However, California has opted to provide CalWORKs assistance to other low-income households in a number of circumstances for which federal TANF funds may not be used. Notably, California's time limit applies only to the adults on a case (not to the children), and adults may be eligible to extend their time on aid.<sup>29</sup> Compared to other

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<sup>27</sup> CDSS All County Letter No. 99-90, October 21, 1999.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid.

<sup>29</sup> No child-only case accumulates months toward the federal time limit. Further, no child accumulates months toward the time limit even while part of an assistance unit containing adults. That is, a child in a timed-out family is still eligible for federal assistance if he or she moves to another household.

states, California has a relatively long list of reasons that may exclude certain months of an adult's time on aid from counting toward the lifetime limit (called exemptions) or add months to an adult's time on aid past the 60-month limit (called extensions).<sup>30</sup>

Unique to California is the exemption for parents on whose behalf the state collects court-ordered child support in amounts that offset their cash grants.<sup>31</sup> The state uses child-support payments it collects from absent parents to reimburse itself for the costs of providing cash assistance to low-income custodial parents and their children. In turn, the state exempts any month on aid from counting against the 60-month clock when it has collected child-support payments equal to the cost of one month's CalWORKs cash grant.<sup>32</sup>

Taken together, California's extension and exemption policies create a 60-month time limit that is less restrictive than time limits found in many other states. Because of the restrictions on federal TANF funds, California assumes most of the costs of cash aid provided beyond the limits specified by federal law.

### ***Adult-Only Time-Limit Policy***

Children of adults who time out of CalWORKs typically continue to receive reduced cash aid under the state-funded Safety Net program.<sup>33</sup> According to interviews with state officials, California legislators provided this benefit in order to protect the health and safety of children on welfare. Some legislators favored a program with no time limit; others argued for a shorter time limit or a "full-family" time limit (i.e., one that would end assistance for the entire family). The resulting legislation, which continues to provide assistance to children, is thus a compromise.

However, California is not alone in providing cash assistance to households past the federal 60-month lifetime limit. Michigan and Vermont continue full-family cash benefits to all federally time limited families, and New York replaces some cash benefits with in-kind benefits, such as vouchers for rent and utilities.<sup>34</sup> Four other states (Maine, Maryland, Rhode Island, and Washington) and the District of Columbia, like California, continue benefits to children after the adults reach the 60-month limit.<sup>35</sup> Together these eight states and the District of Columbia represented 42% of the national welfare caseload in 2001, the year before any family was subject to a welfare time limit in the United States.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> Only two other states have more reasons to exempt and extend aid than California: Arkansas and Tennessee (CLASP, CBPP June 2000). However, some of the exemptions available to welfare recipients in other states are quite generous: in Oregon, for example, adults are exempt from the time limit if they comply with work requirements (Bloom et al. 2002).

<sup>31</sup> CLASP, CBPP (June 2000).

<sup>32</sup> CDSS All County Letter No. 02-74, October 1, 2002.

<sup>33</sup> To qualify for Safety Net benefits, the children of a timed-out parent must reside in a household whose income and assets are still low enough to meet CalWORKs eligibility requirements.

<sup>34</sup> Bloom et al. (2002).

<sup>35</sup> Ibid. Indiana and Arizona also remove only the adults from cash assistance, but those states' time limits are shorter than 60 months.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid.

Exhibit 2.1 summarizes the number of states that have adopted various time-limit policies, including setting shorter time limits (that is, fewer than 60 months), reducing but not terminating grants after the time limit is reached, and imposing no time limit at all.

**Exhibit 2.1**  
**State Time-Limit Policies**

| Type of Time Limit  | Number of States | Percent of U.S. Caseload |
|---|------------------|--------------------------|
| Maximum 60-Month Limit  | 23               | 30                       |
| Shorter than 60-Month Time Limit, Full-Family Termination   | 17               | 25                       |
| Reduction of Grant Amount at 60 Months or Replacement Time Limit (state assumes financial burden after 60 months) | 7                | 38                       |
| Shorter than 60-Month Time Limit, with Grant Amount Reduced   | 2                | 4                        |
| No Time Limit   | 2                | 4                        |

The number of states includes the District of Columbia. The percent of caseload does not sum to 100 due to rounding.

Source: Bloom et al. (2002). *Welfare Time Limits: State Policies, Implementation, and Effects on Families*. New York: MDRC.

Because eligible children continue to receive their share of cash assistance after their parents reach the CalWORKs five-year time limit, the total financial effect of the time limit in California is likely to be smaller than in states that remove the entire family from cash assistance. Furthermore, the loss of cash assistance in California and other states is partially offset by an increase in federal Food Stamp benefits.<sup>37</sup>

<sup>37</sup> Federal Food Stamp benefits are calculated for the total number of persons in the household (including any parents who may be excluded from the CalWORKs grant) and by counting all other sources of income. If the household's size does not change, but total monthly income declines because of a TANF or CalWORKs grant reduction, Food Stamp benefits will increase to partially offset the loss of cash income. United States Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service (2004); Center on Budget and Policy Priorities (1999); California Department of Social Services All County Letter 02-62, August 28, 2002; Western Center on Law and Poverty (2000).

Exhibit 2.2 simulates the financial effects of timing out for single-parent families in California in which no adult is employed.<sup>38</sup> For example, the CalWORKs cash grant of an unemployed single parent with three children drops by 16% after the parent reaches the CalWORKs time limit. However, after factoring in the associated 17% increase in the value of the family's monthly Food Stamp benefit, the net effect on the family's total income is a reduction of 9%.<sup>39</sup>

The financial effects of adults timing out vary across households with different characteristics. For example, smaller families lose a greater percentage of their CalWORKs assistance after timing out than do larger families: The cash grant for an unemployed parent with one child declines by 39%, while the grant for an unemployed parent with five children declines by 11%.

Exhibit 2.3 shows the effects of the time limit for a hypothetical parent with two children, under work weeks of various lengths. After reaching the time limit, a family with an adult who works 20 hours per week experiences a 25% grant reduction, and an 8% change in total income. Although the dollar amount of the grant reduction is the same, a family with an adult who works 35 hours per week experiences a 40% reduction in its cash grant, and a 7% change in its total income.

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<sup>38</sup> For simplicity, the calculations presented include grant amounts only for California's Region I. A table with calculations for both Regions I and II appears in Appendix B. In general, the grant amounts in Region II are about \$30 less than those in Region I. Region II includes these counties: Alpine, Amador, Butte, Calaveras, Colusa, Del Norte, El Dorado, Fresno, Glenn, Humboldt, Imperial, Inyo, Kern, Kings, Lake, Lassen, Madera, Mariposa, Mendocino, Merced, Modoc, Mono, Nevada, Placer, Plumas, Riverside, Sacramento, San Benito, San Bernardino, San Joaquin, Shasta, Sierra, Siskiyou, Stanislaus, Sutter, Tehama, Trinity, Tulare, Tuolumne, Yolo, and Yuba. Western Center on Law and Poverty (2000).

<sup>39</sup> This calculation assumes that the noncash Food Stamp benefit has the same value to the family as the CalWORKs cash it replaces.

**Exhibit 2.2**  
**Effects of Timing Out on Cash Assistance and Food Stamps, by Family Size**

|  | Before<br>Time Limit | After<br>Time Limit | Change<br>(%) | Change<br>(\$) |
|--|----------------------|---------------------|---------------|----------------|
| <b>Unemployed Single Parent Family</b> |                      |                     |               |                |
| <b>One Child</b>                       |                      |                     |               |                |
| Cash Grant                             | \$584.00             | \$359.00            | -38.5%        | -\$225.00      |
| Food Stamps <sup>a</sup>               | 124.00               | 191.50              | 54.4          | \$67.50        |
| Total Income                           | 708.00               | 550.50              | -22.2         | -157.50        |
| <b>Two Children</b>                    |                      |                     |               |                |
| Cash Grant                             | 723.00               | 584.00              | -19.2         | -139.00        |
| Food Stamps                            | 194.30               | 236.00              | 21.5          | 41.70          |
| Total Income                           | 917.30               | 820.00              | -10.6         | -97.30         |
| <b>Three Children</b>                  |                      |                     |               |                |
| Cash Grant                             | 862.00               | 723.00              | -16.1         | -139.00        |
| Food Stamps                            | 252.60               | 294.30              | 16.5          | 41.70          |
| Total Income                           | 1,114.60             | 1,017.30            | -8.7          | -97.30         |
| <b>Four Children</b>                   |                      |                     |               |                |
| Cash Grant                             | 980.00               | 862.00              | -12.0         | -118.00        |
| Food Stamps                            | 310.10               | 345.50              | 11.4          | 35.40          |
| Total Income                           | 1,290.10             | 1,207.50            | -6.4          | -82.60         |
| <b>Five Children</b>                   |                      |                     |               |                |
| Cash Grant                             | 1,101.00             | 980.00              | -11.0         | -121.00        |
| Food Stamps                            | 392.10               | 428.40              | 9.3           | 36.30          |
| Total Income                           | 1,493.10             | 1,408.40            | -5.7          | -84.70         |

Calculations shown for Region I for SFY 2004-2005, excepting September 1, 2004-November 30, 2004 (the state budget provided for a suspension of the SFY 2004-2005 increase for those months). Region I includes Alameda, Contra Costa, Los Angeles, Marin, Monterey, Napa, Orange, San Diego, San Francisco, San Luis Obispo, San Mateo, Santa Barbara, Santa Clara, Santa Cruz, Solano, Sonoma, and Ventura counties.

<sup>a</sup> The median shelter cost for a family of three or four in California is \$408. This amount was used to calculate the Food Stamps shelter disregard in all the budget scenarios. The Food Stamps calculation used a \$0 child-care deduction based on the assumption that CalWORKs recipients who were working/complying with the program requirements would have subsidized child care at no cost to them. In the instance of families who have reached the time limit, the child care deduction remained at \$0. If a parent is not working after timing out, he or she no longer needs child care to fulfill program requirements. If a parent is working, he or she remains eligible for subsidized child care.

Sources: All-County Letter No. 0434, August 31, 2004; Western Center on Law and Poverty "A Comprehensive Guide to Welfare and Related Medi-Cal Issues for California Families" (2004); www.fns.usda.gov "Fact Sheet on Resources, Income, and Benefits for the Food Stamp Program."



**Exhibit 2.3**  
**Effects of Timing Out on Cash Assistance and Food Stamps, by Number of Hours Worked**

|   | Before Time<br>Limit | After Time<br>Limit | Change (%) | Change<br>(\$) |
|---|----------------------|---------------------|------------|----------------|
| Employed Single Parent Family with Two Children |                      |                     |            |                |
| 20 hours per week <sup>a</sup>                  |                      |                     |            |                |
| Earnings  | \$560.25             | \$560.25            |            |                |
| Cash Grant                                      | 555.38               | 416.38              | -25.0      | -\$139.00      |
| Food Stamps <sup>b</sup>                        | 110.13               | 151.83              | 37.9       | 41.70          |
| Total Income <sup>c</sup>                       | 1,225.75             | 1,128.45            | -7.9       | -97.30         |
| 25 hours per week <sup>a</sup>                  |                      |                     |            |                |
| Earnings  | 700.31               | 700.31              |            |                |
| Cash Grant                                      | 485.34               | 346.34              | -28.6      | -139.00        |
| Food Stamps                                     | 97.52                | 139.22              | 42.8       | 41.70          |
| Total Income <sup>c</sup>                       | 1,283.18             | 1,185.88            | -7.6       | -97.30         |
| 30 hours per week <sup>a</sup>                  |                      |                     |            |                |
| Earnings  | 840.38               | 840.38              |            |                |
| Cash Grant                                      | 415.31               | 276.31              | -33.5      | -139.00        |
| Food Stamps                                     | 84.92                | 126.62              | 49.1       | 41.70          |
| Total Income <sup>c</sup>                       | 1,340.60             | 1,243.30            | -7.3       | -97.30         |
| 35 hours per week <sup>a</sup>                  |                      |                     |            |                |
| Earnings  | 980.44               | 980.44              |            |                |
| Cash Grant                                      | 345.28               | 206.28              | -40.3      | -139.00        |
| Food Stamps                                     | 72.31                | 114.01              | 57.7       | 41.70          |
| Total Income <sup>c</sup>                       | 1,398.03             | 1,300.73            | -7.0       | -97.30         |

Calculations shown for Region I for SFY 2004-2005, excepting September 1, 2004-November 30, 2004 (the state budget provided for a suspension of the SFY 2004-2005 increase for those months). Region I includes Alameda, Contra Costa, Los Angeles, Marin, Monterey, Napa, Orange, San Diego, San Francisco, San Luis Obispo, San Mateo, Santa Barbara, Santa Clara, Santa Cruz, Solano, Sonoma, and Ventura counties.

<sup>a</sup> Employed at minimum wage, which is \$6.75 per hour in California.

<sup>b</sup> The median shelter cost for a family of three or four in California is \$408. This amount was used to calculate the Food Stamps shelter disregard in all the budget scenarios. The Food Stamps calculation used a \$0 child-care deduction based on the assumption that CalWORKs recipients who were working/complying with the program requirements would have subsidized child care at no cost to them. In the instance of families who have reached the time limit, the child care deduction remained at \$0. If a parent is not working after timing out, he or she no longer needs child care to fulfill program requirements. If a parent is working, he or she remains eligible for subsidized child care.

<sup>c</sup> Individual income category amounts may not add up to the totals shown due to rounding.

Sources: Western Center on Law and Poverty "A Comprehensive Guide to Welfare and Related Medi-Cal Issues for California Families" (2004); www.fns.usda.gov "Fact Sheet on Resources, Income, and Benefits for the Food Stamp Program."

Families in which at least one adult is working nearly full-time before reaching the time limit may lose their eligibility for the Safety Net program. This can occur because the parents' earnings continue to affect their CalWORKs grants, even if the adults have timed out. Once adults time out, they are excluded from household grant calculations. Consequently, a mother with two children still has three persons but, after reaching the time limit, loses her share of the benefits and this three-person family receives a benefit payment designed for two persons. Moreover, the excluded adult's earnings are counted against the reduced benefit payment. If the excluded parent's earnings are high enough, they can reduce the Safety Net grant to zero.

### ***Exemptions***

In addition to its Safety Net program, which aids children after their parents exhaust 60 months of cash benefits, the CalWORKs program exempts months from counting against the 60-month clock for adults with special circumstances (conditions that are deemed to prevent them from working or participating in required program activities). Exempting months, also sometimes referred to as "stopping the clock" or "unticking months," permits adult recipients to receive aid during months that will not count against their 60-month limit. Recipients may receive exemptions for current conditions or retroactively for prior conditions. The duration of the exemption must match the duration of the permissible condition. For example, the CalWORKs clock should stop for four months for a recipient who has a back injury that keeps him/her from working for four months, subject to medical verification. The state requires counties to inform recipients about permissible exemptions and the qualifying criteria for each.<sup>40</sup>

Exempting months from the 60-month time clock for specific reasons seems straightforward but can be difficult to implement. Exemptions fall into two categories: (1) those that caseworkers can readily recognize, and (2) those that recipients must first report and for which their caseworkers must obtain verification. The former category requires only that caseworkers understand and note allowable reasons for which they are exempting months, while the latter requires that both recipients and caseworkers recognize conditions or situations that qualify for exemptions. Our interviews with county staff indicate that properly implementing exemptions in this second category is especially difficult. Determining recipients' eligibility for such exemptions and recertifying the qualifying conditions over time, particularly retrospectively, has proved complicated and expensive to administer.

The federal TANF program requires four exemptions, but CalWORKs includes 12, three of which are identical to federal exemptions (see Exhibit 2.4 for details). The broader scope of the CalWORKs exemptions introduces the possibility that a CalWORKs recipient could continue to receive CalWORKs benefits long after she or he has reached the federal TANF 60-month time limit. As a result, a current CalWORKs recipient who has not reached her/his CalWORKs time limit and moves to another, less generous state may find that she or he is ineligible to receive aid in that state due to having exhausted 60 months on the federal time clock. However, because there is no national database of

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<sup>40</sup> CDSS All County Information Notice No. I-47-02, June 2002.

TANF time on aid, it is difficult for individual states to systematically track recipients' time on aid in other states.

California is the only state that has created an exemption for CalWORKs recipients on whose behalf the county collects court-ordered child-support payments.<sup>41,42</sup> Under CalWORKs regulations, a county welfare department must notify the local child-support office when a child on welfare has a noncustodial parent. Local child-support offices must then provide child-support services, including establishing paternity, establishing and enforcing a support obligation, and collecting support payments.<sup>43</sup> As long as the custodial parent has an open CalWORKs case, all child-support payments that the child-support agency collects on behalf of this parent go directly to the county.<sup>44</sup> When the county recoups enough cumulative child-support payments to fully reimburse a month of cash aid, California exempts a month from counting toward the 60-month time limit.

Lacking models from other states or previous programs, the state and counties faced challenges as they attempted to implement the child-support exemption. The California Department of Social Services (CDSS) and county welfare agencies began discussions in late 1997 about both how to interpret and implement this exemption.<sup>45</sup> At that time, CDSS staff assumed that the counties would begin applying child-support collections to CalWORKs recipients' time-on-aid clocks beginning with aid payments from 1998 onward.<sup>46</sup> However, as the practical difficulty of merging child-support collection and CalWORKs payment data became clear, CDSS staff recognized that the counties needed assistance. According to interviews, CDSS staff sought to clarify the legislation, which was vague on a number of issues, including whether an exemption should apply only to a month in which the child-support payment fully reimburses the cash welfare grant paid *in that month* or whether a month should be exempted when cash aid is offset by cumulative child-support collections (dating back to January 1998). CDSS put the latter interpretation into regulation. However, it took several years of negotiation and discussion before CDSS issued final instructions on how counties were to count months for purposes of the child-support exemption. The state agency issued its final instructions to the counties on October 1, 2002, just three months before the first CalWORKs recipients were due to time out. This left counties little time to come into compliance with the final regulations.

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<sup>41</sup> CLASP, CBPP (June 2000).

<sup>42</sup> Beginning in 1975, federal law requires all states to actively attempt to establish paternity, serve court orders, and collect child support from noncustodial parents on behalf of welfare recipients and their children.

<sup>43</sup> Kelch (2002).

<sup>44</sup> California "passes through" to the custodial parent the first \$50 of child support it collects each month (Roberts and Jordan 2003). Any child-support collections that exceed reimbursements for welfare payments are also passed along to custodial parents.

<sup>45</sup> CDSS issued All County Letter 97-65 on October 29, 1997, which described the reasons for exemption under CalWORKs. ACL 98-44, dated July 1, 1998, released the CalWORKs time-limit regulations, including further description of the child-support exemption.

<sup>46</sup> Information from interviews with CDSS staff.

**Exhibit 2.4**  
**Federal and California Time-Limits Exemption Criteria**

| CalWORKs and Federal Exemptions   | Federal Exemption | California Exemption |
|---|-------------------|----------------------|
| Family in which no adult is receiving cash assistance (child-only cases).   | ✓                 | ✓                    |
| Family containing an aided adult who is a resident of Indian Country or an Alaskan native village where at least 50% of adults are unemployed. <sup>a</sup>   | ✓                 | ✓                    |
| Individual is receiving only child care, case management, or supportive services.   | ✓                 | ✓                    |
| Pregnant or parenting minor who is not the head of a household or married to the head of a household. <sup>b</sup>  | ✓                 |                      |
| Individual is eligible for, participating in, or exempt from Cal-Learn or another DSS-approved teen parent program. <sup>c</sup>  |                   | ✓                    |
| Individual is exempt from welfare-to-work activities because of a disability expected to last more than 30 days. <sup>d</sup>   |                   | ✓                    |
| Family receives a cash grant under \$10.  |                   | ✓                    |
| State collects enough cumulative child support on behalf of a family to fully reimburse a month of cash aid.  |                   | ✓                    |
| Individual is age 60 or older.  |                   | ✓                    |
| Individual is exempt from welfare-to-work activities because caring for an ill or incapacitated person residing in the home impairs regular employment or participation in welfare-to-work activities.  |                   | ✓                    |
| Individual is exempt from welfare-to-work activities because being the nonparent caretaker of a dependent child of the court, a Kin-GAP child, or a child who is at risk of placement in foster care impairs regular employment or participation in welfare-to-work activities. |                   | ✓                    |
| Individual is a victim of domestic abuse, as determined by the county, and the abuse prevents the individual from finding employment or participating in welfare-to-work activities.  |                   | ✓                    |
| Individual is excluded from the assistance unit for reasons other than exceeding the time limit.  |                   | ✓                    |

<sup>a</sup> Recognizing the problem of high unemployment in the Reservations/Rancherias, California administers a time limit exemption if the unemployment rate there exceeds 50%. CDSS contacts Reservations/Rancherias annually to obtain unemployment rates and distributes a list of tribes eligible for the exemption to the counties in an All County Letter. An individual whose tribe is not listed but can provide documentation, indicating residence in Indian Country with an unemployment rate of at least 50%, is also eligible. Because this exemption applies to relatively few California counties, it is not a focus of this study.

<sup>b</sup> This exemption category overlaps with, but is not identical to, the state exemption for teens (see the row immediately below).

<sup>c</sup> Because it is unlikely for a teen parent to reach the 60-month time limit while still a teen, this exemption is not a focus of this report.

<sup>d</sup> This definition of disability is less restrictive than that employed by the Social Security Disability or Supplemental Security Income (SSI) benefits programs; disability for the purposes of exemption includes shorter-term disabling conditions, such as a broken arm or pregnancy.

Sources: CDSS California Manual of Policies and Procedures, sec. 42-302.21. U.S. Department of Human Services; Administration for Children and Family. Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Program Information Memorandum No. TANF-ACF-IM-2003-03.

At the same time, state and county agencies were struggling to integrate their data systems. To implement the child-support exemption, the state and counties needed to merge historical child-support collection data with welfare payment data. This requires matching data collected and maintained by two separate departments at the state level and in each county. Such a task is complicated because computer and data systems vary significantly between departments and across counties.

According to interviews with state officials, CDSS staff held meetings with their counterparts in the Department of Child Support Services to assess the options for automation. The Department of Child Support Services agreed to provide historical data to county welfare offices that had not retained those records. However, the two state departments were unable to develop a uniform and timely means of automating the match of child-support and welfare data. In the absence of a uniform, statewide approach, it fell to each county to determine how it could best implement the child-support exemption. Some counties had to resort to labor-intensive manual checks of child-support data for recipients who were close to timing out.

### ***Extensions***

In addition to exemptions, which “untick” months of assistance, counties may extend CalWORKs recipients’ time on aid past 60 months if certain conditions apply. Federal law permits states to extend federally funded cash aid past 60 months to households experiencing hardships, so long as such hardship-related extensions do not exceed 20% of the state’s TANF caseload on average. Federal regulations leave the definition of “hardship” up to the states. States may extend cases in excess of 20% if those cases qualify for “good cause domestic-violence waivers,” and if the states can show that it is only because of these federally qualified waiver cases that they exceeded the 20% cap on hardship-related extensions.<sup>47</sup>

In California, “hardship” extensions may be granted to individuals who have already reached the federal 60-month time limit but not the CalWORKs time limit, or who meet one of six CalWORKs extension criteria (see Exhibit 2.5). Extensions differ from exemptions in one other important aspect: in order for the adult to qualify for an extension, all parents, caretaker relatives, and aided stepparents in the home of the aided child must meet one of the extension criteria.<sup>48</sup> *Exemptions*, by contrast, are granted to individual adults without regard to the other aided adults in the household. This eligibility requirement for extensions is waived only for individuals who have qualified for domestic-abuse waivers, or if the other adults in the household have not reached the time limit or are in sanction status.<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>47</sup> CLASP, CBPP (July 2000). A good cause domestic-abuse waiver is defined as a waiver of one or more program requirements granted by a state to a victim of domestic abuse. Such waivers can be granted “based on the need for continued assistance due to current or past domestic abuse or the risk of further domestic violence.” Federal Register Vol. 64, No. 69. Monday, April 12, 1999, pp. 17881-17882. See in particular Section 260.59.

<sup>48</sup> California Manual of Policy and Procedures 42-302.11.

<sup>49</sup> California Manual of Policy and Procedures 42.302.12.

The first four reasons for extension listed in Exhibit 2.5 are identical to exemption criteria. The fifth, regarding disability, is more difficult to qualify for than a disability-related exemption in that disabled adults who are granted extensions must also qualify for state or federal disability benefits. The last, having to do with inability to maintain employment, is complicated; we discuss it in detail in Chapter 4.

**Exhibit 2.5**  
**Allowable Reasons for CalWORKs Extensions**

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- 60 years of age or older.
- Exempt from welfare-to-work activities because caring for an ill or incapacitated person residing in the home impairs regular employment or participation in welfare-to-work activities.
- Exempt from welfare-to-work activities because being the nonparent caretaker of a dependent child of the court, a Kin-GAP child, or a child who is at risk of placement in foster care impairs regular employment or participation in welfare-to-work activities.
- Individual is a victim of domestic abuse, as determined by the county, and the abuse prevents the individual from finding employment or participating in welfare-to-work activities.
- Disabled in a manner that impairs regular employment or participation in welfare-to-work activities, **and** the recipient receives certain disability benefits (State Disability Insurance, Temporary Disability Insurance, In-Home Supportive Services, or Supplemental Security Income/State Supplementary Payment benefits).
- Unable to maintain employment or to participate in welfare-to-work activities, based on a current assessment of the individual and the county's finding that the individual has a history of participation and full cooperation in welfare-to-work activities.

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Source: CDSS California Manual of Policies and Procedures, sec. 42-302.11 through 42.302.12.

Extensions may become increasingly important to the CalWORKs program because, over time, it is likely that a growing pool of individuals may qualify. Regulations stipulate that “extender exceptions apply at any time that timed-out individuals meet exception criteria.”<sup>50</sup> That is, extensions are available to all individuals who time out, even years later. As more and more CalWORKs recipients reach the 60-month time limit, the population potentially eligible for extensions will grow.

In theory, extension policies pose important fiscal considerations for the CalWORKs program. The federal government allows up to 20% of cases that have reached the federal 60-month TANF time limit, on average, to continue to be funded with federal dollars. Making full use of this 20% hardship category permits the state to reserve its Maintenance of Effort funds for other purposes, including supporting the growing number of timed-out cases that will require state-only-funded Safety Net program benefits. As we write this report, total state expenditures for activities that cannot use federal TANF funds still fall well within required state Maintenance of Effort spending.

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<sup>50</sup> CDSS All County Information Notice No. I-95-02, December 20, 2002.

In the latest month for which data are available, Safety Net cases account for 5.4% of the total California caseload.<sup>51</sup> The proportion of the caseload in the Safety Net program is likely to increase over time as more adults reach the time limit. Many of these state-funded Safety Net cases may qualify for a domestic-abuse or hardship extension and thus for federally funded benefits.<sup>52,53</sup> So long as these cases do not exceed 20% of California's caseload, it makes sense to grant such households federally permissible extensions rather than converting them to state-funded Safety Net cases. By doing so, the families would be eligible for the full-family benefit, rather than the reduced benefit paid under the Safety Net program. Also, the adults would be required to participate in welfare-to-work activities and would continue to be eligible for the supportive services provided to current CalWORKs recipients, such as child care and transportation. However, as we discuss in Chapter 4, according to the All-County Survey we conducted in 2003, 25 out of 56 responding counties had yet to establish criteria for granting extensions. The potential budget implications of shifting Safety Net cases to federally funded extensions are unclear, especially in the long run. We plan to address these issues further in a future report.

### **Computerized Tracking of Time on Aid**

To help counties track individual recipients' time on aid, the state initiated the Welfare Data Tracking Implementation Project (WDTIP). The Health and Human Services Data Center, within the Department of General Services, and CDSS created WDTIP to help counties track time on aid across counties and over time. Counties track time on aid with their own data systems, but the CalWORKs program requires that a complete record of cumulative time on aid be kept, necessitating information sharing between counties for families that move across county lines. WDTIP provides specific information about exemptions and extensions, and counts months of cash aid back to December 1996, as required by federal law. Counties began to connect their CalWORKs data systems to WDTIP in 2000.<sup>54</sup>

According to the state officials we interviewed, CDSS originally intended to create a fully integrated statewide data system that would track time on aid and enable counties to view detailed recipient-level information drawn from each other's data systems. Moreover, the system would include relevant information from other programs, such as child-support collections. To accomplish these objectives, CDSS began work on the Statewide Automated Welfare System–Technical Architecture (SAWS-TA) project soon after CalWORKs was enacted in August 1997. However, the complexity of this project, along with the immediate need for statewide data tracking, led state officials to make the

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<sup>51</sup> California Department of Social Services, Research and Development Division. January to November 2003. <http://www.dss.cahwnet.gov/research/default.htm>.

<sup>52</sup> States that have adopted the Family Violence Option as outlined in the Family Violence Amendment to the federal welfare statute are not required to count cases extended due to domestic abuse when demonstrating compliance with the 20% extension policy. *Family Violence Option/Wellstone-Murray Amendment*. CLASP, CBPP (July 2000); Burt et al. (2000).

<sup>53</sup> U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families (2003).

<sup>54</sup> Welfare Data Tracking Implementation Project County Conversion Calendar History, provided by the Department of Social Services Program Integrity Branch. October 29, 2003.

development of WDTIP a priority, at least as an interim statewide solution. At this writing, state officials are not planning to implement the more comprehensive SAWS-TA program because of its complexity and cost.<sup>55</sup>

When we conducted the research for this report in 2003, WDTIP data appeared to be unreliable for two reasons. To begin with, WDTIP must interface with several different county data systems. According to the state officials we interviewed, the WDTIP system has been programmed to accept all data requirements pertaining to the tracking of time on aid, but transactions can be rejected if they do not meet system requirements. Transactions rejected by the system range from county errors in the data files to more fundamental problems with the county/consortia systems.<sup>56</sup> Consequently, county data were not always uploaded completely and accurately. Worse, according to the interviews we conducted in our focus counties, the uploading problems did not seem to be systematic, which has made it difficult to pinpoint the precise causes, much less fix them. Because of these ongoing difficulties, state officials could not guarantee the accuracy and reliability of WDTIP data. As a result, CDSS advised county welfare agencies to validate all WDTIP information by contacting the counties from which recipients had moved in the past five years in order to verify the months on aid listed in WDTIP.<sup>57</sup>

Incompleteness of WDTIP data also had implications for their reliability. In particular, three counties had yet to merge their data with the WDTIP system: Los Angeles, Stanislaus, and Modoc.<sup>58</sup> The omission of Los Angeles County was particularly significant because over a third of the state's CalWORKs caseload lives in Los Angeles County.<sup>59</sup> Los Angeles joined WDTIP in September 2004. At the time of our field research, county CalWORKs staff reviewing new CalWORKs applications from applicants who previously received aid in Los Angeles had to contact Los Angeles County to verify applicants' prior time on aid. In addition, many counties did not have the time to construct accurate historical records for all recipients, which contributed to the unreliability of WDTIP data. We discuss these challenges in more detail in Chapter 4.

## **Conclusions and Policy Implications**

The California legislature created time-limit policies intended not only to encourage work and responsible recipient behavior, but also to protect families from undue hardship. The CalWORKs program permits adults to stay on aid longer than five years if they face serious impediments to becoming self-sufficient. However, the federal TANF program does not cover most of the costs of the benefits California provides to families beyond 60 months, including benefits provided under California's more generous exemption policies and its Safety Net program (which continues to cover eligible children when their parents

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<sup>55</sup> Information from interviews with CDSS staff.

<sup>56</sup> Consortia systems are data systems developed and used jointly by multiple counties.

<sup>57</sup> CDSS All County Information Notice No. I-37-03, June 2003.

<sup>58</sup> Stanislaus County plans to integrate with WDTIP by the end of 2004. Modoc County has no current plans to join WDTIP.

<sup>59</sup> CDSS Research and Development Division. September 2003.



time out). Until 2004, California paid for these continued benefits entirely with state funds.<sup>60</sup>

Implementing any new welfare policy in California is difficult because of the state's size and decentralized, county-administered welfare system. With so many changes to implement, there were inevitable challenges, some of which interfered with the timely and accurate implementation of the 60-month time limit and its exemption and extension policies.

Specifically, the new time-limit policies proved particularly challenging to implement in two areas: (1) developing an effective statewide data system to track recipients' time on aid across counties and over time and (2) implementing the child-support exemption. The state worked with counties to develop WDTIP, a statewide database, to help counties track recipients' time on aid regardless of where they live in the state. The technical difficulties of this effort have been substantial and some of the problems remain: Los Angeles, Stanislaus, and Modoc counties did not initially participate in WDTIP. Los Angeles County joined WDTIP in September 2004, and Stanislaus County began participating in August 2005.<sup>61</sup> In addition, computer interfaces between the counties' computer systems and the state's system are causing data to be transmitted inaccurately. For these reasons, at the time we interviewed them, state and county officials told us that they did not trust the reliability of WDTIP data.

The state was unable, in a timely fashion, to define the rules and procedures by which counties would exempt months of cash aid offset by the collection of court-ordered child-support payments. Implementing this exemption is inherently complicated and requires disparate data to be merged across separate county departments and computer systems. Matters were not helped by the ambiguity in the state's authorizing legislation. Final state instructions did not reach the counties until October 2002, just three months before the first wave of CalWORKs adults exhausted their 60-month time limit. As we discuss in greater detail in Chapter 4, this led three of our six focus counties to simply delay granting child-support exemptions to households that might have qualified for them.

In the final year of this study, we will revisit state- and county-level implementation of the CalWORKs time limit to identify how, if at all, these administrative practices have changed.

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<sup>60</sup> CDSS began using federal dollars to cover those coded as "TANF timed-out" in January 2004. County Fiscal Letter 02/03-29, attachment II (code 32) and the update on code 32, 03/04-36.

<sup>61</sup> In those instances where counties could not provide time-on-aid information for WDTIP, data from the state's Medi-Cal Eligibility Data System (MEDS) were temporarily substituted. The state instructed the counties to correct any WDTIP data that conflicted with their own administrative records.

### 3. STAFF AND RECIPIENT KNOWLEDGE OF THE TIME LIMIT

#### Key Findings

- Most of the focus counties couch their “message” about the time limit within the context of the goals of the CalWORKs program, using the time limit to underscore the importance of pursuing work and economic self-sufficiency.
- County workers report that the time limit affects the type of program activities they encourage.
- The focus counties are conscientious about notifying recipients about the time limit on an ongoing basis, but primarily use written materials to convey information about how much time on aid recipients have left.
- More time and resources are dedicated to notifying recipients who are within six to nine months of reaching the time limit than those who have accumulated fewer months.
- Despite staff training, workers in the focus counties have a somewhat limited knowledge of the rules governing exemptions and extensions.
- Recipients know there is a time limit, but they have a limited understanding of exemptions, extensions, and post-time-limit benefits and services.

The rules governing the CalWORKs 60-month time limit are complicated and posed implementation challenges for both state and county staff. In this chapter we discuss the degree to which county staff, and the recipients with whom they work, understand CalWORKs time-limit policies. We begin with a description of the types of messages counties use to explain the time limit to recipients. We then discuss how workers clarify time-limit policies to recipients as the latter accumulate countable months, and we characterize staff members’ familiarity with time-limit policies. Finally, we present data from the focus groups we conducted to gauge recipients’ knowledge of the time limit and related policies.<sup>62</sup>

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<sup>62</sup> Focus groups are in-depth qualitative interviews with a select group of CalWORKs recipients nearing the 60-month time limit. The groups we assembled are not necessarily representative of the CalWORKs population. Focus-group data are qualitative and provide detailed information about patterns, themes, or perspectives on a particular issue. It is methodologically inappropriate to report focus-group data by percentage, frequencies, or statistics. See Appendix A for further details about the focus groups that we conducted for this report.

## **Changing the Welfare Message**

In 1996, Congress changed both the reality and the message of federally subsidized public assistance for low-income families with children. Under PRWORA, federally subsidized cash welfare payments are temporary, so adult recipients are encouraged to become self-sufficient as soon as possible.

California policymakers decided to use state funds to moderate the federal time-limit policy. Rather than terminate all cash benefits to a family in which the adult reaches the 60-month time limit, California opted to pay a reduced CalWORKs grant at state expense, thereby ensuring less severe fiscal consequences for the dependent children in that family. At the same time, the CalWORKs program has generous earnings disregards and benefit reduction rates<sup>63</sup> that provide a strong financial incentive to work. Policymakers also ensured that CalWORKs recipients would have access to needed services to help them find and retain jobs.

These efforts to protect vulnerable children from undue hardship and to help low-income adults enter the workforce have complicated the new welfare message that state and county officials must deliver to CalWORKs recipients. Time limits and work requirements encourage recipients to strive to become self-sufficient and to leave the CalWORKs program as soon as possible, both to improve family income and to conserve limited months of assistance for future hard times. However, at the same time, the improved work incentives and supportive services also encourage recipients to combine work and welfare, thereby potentially prolonging their time in the CalWORKs program and causing recipients to use up their time on aid more quickly.

Given the competing imperatives of the CalWORKs time-limit policies, what message(s) are county welfare officials communicating to recipients? In our six focus counties, it appears as if two general messages are being delivered to CalWORKs adults: (1) Take full advantage of your 60 months on aid and the available CalWORKs employment services while you can; and (2) Bank your months because you may need assistance in the future more than you need it now.

On the ground, these two messages take various forms. To begin with, program regulations require county workers to inform CalWORKs applicants and recipients about the time-limited nature of cash benefits.<sup>64</sup> These procedural notifications frequently emphasize the existence of the time limit, but little else. For example, eligibility workers in Los Angeles County are required to remind recipients about the time limit each year

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<sup>63</sup> When calculating the household's monthly grant, the first \$225 and 50% of all additional earned income is disregarded. For example, a single parent with two children and no earnings receives \$689 per month in Riverside County (a Region II county). If this parent began working at \$6 per hour for 32 hours per week, the monthly earned income for that family would be \$768. The first \$225 of these earnings would be disregarded entirely ( $\$768 - \$225 = \$543$ ). Fifty percent of the remaining earnings ( $\$543 \times 0.5 = \$271.50$ ) is counted against her grant: the maximum allowable payment for a family of three in Region II is \$689 reduced by \$271, or \$418. This benefit payment, together with her earnings ( $\$418 + \$768$ ) would provide the household with gross monthly income of \$1,186. (Example provided by Riverside County.)

<sup>64</sup> Source: CDSS All County Letter No. 02-33, May 2002.

when they conduct redetermination interviews to recertify the recipients' ongoing eligibility for aid. However, because eligibility workers are often responsible for 250 cases or more per month, these meetings are necessarily short.<sup>65</sup> Workers briefly remind recipients of the policy and give them handouts noting the amount of time on aid still available to them and describing allowable exemptions and extensions.

In Riverside County, workers explain the time-limit policy to applicants but try not to give it too much weight. Their approach is to focus on the benefits of employment and participation in CalWORKs, rather than on the penalties for noncompliance or the adverse consequences of failing to achieve self-sufficiency.

Based on our interviews in the six focus counties, however, we find that the workers who have the most contact with CalWORKs recipients—eligibility and employment-services workers—typically tailor their messages to individual circumstances, taking into account a recipient's time on aid, work readiness, and other financial resources. The messages they deliver to CalWORKs adults include three main components:

- **Self-Sufficiency.** Recipients are encouraged to take advantage of their time on aid to pursue economic self-sufficiency through the county's welfare-to-work services. This message is probably the most common and most in line with the principles embodied in the larger CalWORKs program.
- **Banking.** Some recipients may be encouraged to voluntarily terminate their cash aid in order to "bank" months for future use. However, county workers usually encourage "banking" only when the cash grants are small and the recipients have other means of support.
- **Urgency.** This message is closely related to and augments the self-sufficiency component of the message. It is designed to encourage recipients to take immediate action, often because they are close to reaching their 60-month time limit.

Below, we describe these message components in greater detail, drawing on the findings from the All-County Survey, Staff Survey, staff interviews, and CalWORKs recipient focus groups that we conducted in the six focus counties.<sup>66</sup>

### ***Self-Sufficiency***

The time-limit message that county staff most often deliver to recipients is that they should take advantage of their time on aid to pursue economic self-sufficiency through activities such as job search and short-term training. This message fits in well with the goals of the CalWORKs program, and most workers focus on self-sufficiency regardless of a recipient's remaining months of eligibility.

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<sup>65</sup> Information is based on interviews with eligibility workers in Los Angeles.

<sup>66</sup> For more information on the methods used to conduct this research, see Appendix A.

Most county staff said that attaining self-sufficiency is closely related to recipients' compliance with welfare-to-work activities. In fact, 76% of the eligibility and employment-services workers we surveyed reported that work requirements have as much or more of an effect on recipients finding jobs and leaving cash assistance than does the time limit. On average, 50% of the staff agreed or strongly agreed with the statement "*Everyone who fully complies with the work requirements should be able to achieve self-sufficiency before reaching the time limit.*"<sup>67</sup>

County workers in all six focus counties said the time limit influences the activities that they encourage recipients to pursue, which include finding a job or enrolling in a training program now that aid is time limited (see Exhibit 3.1). Workers in Los Angeles County are more likely to encourage training, whereas workers in Orange and Sacramento counties are more likely to encourage work. Despite the focus on employment, and notwithstanding the time limit, 81% of the county workers reported that they did not encourage recipients to take jobs with unfavorable conditions, such as irregular or swing shifts and/or long commutes.

Based on Staff Survey responses, most of the workers stated that the time limit has an effect on whether recipients decide to pursue education and training and/or look for work. On average, 44% of the workers said that the time limit has a large effect on recipients' decision to pursue education and training, and 42% said that it has some effect. Similarly, 41% of the workers reported that the time limit has a large effect on recipients' decisions to look for work, and 46% stated that it has some effect.<sup>68</sup> Although our focus groups with recipients were small and not necessarily representative, their responses reinforced these perceptions. Often these focus-group respondents were already working and planned to work more hours when they timed out. A few said they were enrolled in education and training as a way to obtain better-paying jobs in the future.<sup>69</sup>

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<sup>67</sup> Caseworkers responded with a 6 or a 7 on a 7-point scale where 1 was "strongly disagree" and 7 was "strongly agree."

<sup>68</sup> Estimates for "large effect" are based on the percentage of workers who responded with a 6 or 7 on a 7-point scale about whether the time limit had "no effect" or a "large effect" on recipient decisions. Estimates for "some effect" are based on the percentage of workers who responded with a 3, 4, or 5 on the same 7-point scale.

<sup>69</sup> In discussions of the focus groups we conducted, we describe findings in broad terms, including "few," "many," and "some." Quantifying our focus-group findings may be misleading, as the focus-group participants we assembled are not necessarily representative of CalWORKs recipients approaching the time limit.

**Exhibit 3.1**  
**Types of Activities County Workers Encourage Under the CalWORKs Time Limit**

| Because of the time limit, I am more likely to encourage recipients:  | All Counties | Alameda | Los Angeles | Orange | Riverside | Sacramento | Tulare |
|---|--------------|---------|-------------|--------|-----------|------------|--------|
| To go to work as soon as possible   | 61.7         | 51.9    | 61.6        | 77.8   | 52.2      | 65.6       | 61.4   |
| To pursue education and training  | 60.3         | 66.0    | 70.1        | 54.3   | 46.3      | 61.6       | 63.5   |
| To enter education and training programs that they can complete in six months or less, rather than programs that are longer in duration | 50.9         | 36.2    | 63.2        | 50.0   | 46.3      | 52.0       | 57.9   |
| To pursue child support from the noncustodial parent  | 28.6         | 26.6    | 26.0        | 27.4   | 32.5      | 26.0       | 33.3   |
| To take a job that has unfavorable features (e.g., long travel time, late shift, etc.)  | 19.1         | 16.7    | 16.5        | 19.3   | 16.5      | 20.8       | 24.6   |
| Minimum Sample Size   | 515          | 46      | 144         | 46     | 41        | 123        | 112    |
| Maximum Sample Size   | 870          | 79      | 304         | 135    | 115       | 125        | 115    |

Sample size varies across variables; maximum and minimum sample size reported. Percent of staff who agree or strongly agree (response = 6 or 7 on a 7-point scale).

Source: Staff Survey of caseworkers in six focus counties, 2003. Questions C10 b, c, d, j, k.

Despite these steps toward self-sufficiency, recipients in the focus groups we conducted were anxious about achieving economic stability and independence from public aid. Most respondents were concerned about having to support their families on less money after they reach the time limit. Several respondents said they tried saving in preparation for the time limit but found it difficult to put any money away. Many respondents who were working voiced concern about the stability of their jobs. They worried about being laid off or fired in the future and did not know how they would be able to sustain themselves and their families without cash assistance.

Focus-group participants also expressed concern and confusion about their access to employment and work-support services after they timed out. They were particularly concerned about their continuing eligibility for other important benefits, especially Food Stamps, child care, and housing subsidies. Some of the respondents with Section 8 housing vouchers seemed less concerned about the time limit than those without, and a few of those with unsubsidized housing mentioned that they wanted to acquire Section 8 vouchers before they reached the 60-month CalWORKs time limit.

### ***Banking Time on Aid***

Workers in some counties encourage recipients to leave CalWORKs in order to “bank” months for future use only if the recipients are receiving small grants or clearly have other means of support. The percentage of staff in the focus counties that encourages banking ranges from a quarter to over 60%. Most workers whom we interviewed in the focus counties said it is unwise to encourage new CalWORKs applicants to bank months unless their financial predicaments are temporary and can be addressed by cash diversion payments.<sup>70</sup> Otherwise, the county workers told us that recipients are better off taking part in the employment services offered by the welfare agencies.

After recipients find employment and their cash grants are subsequently reduced, workers are much more likely to encourage “banking” future months of aid (see Exhibit 3.2). In Los Angeles County, for example, employment-services workers are instructed to encourage recipients with grants of \$100 or less per month to terminate aid and to save those months for when they might really need them. Similarly, Alameda County created a flier focused on the concept of “banking” months. The county sends this flier to all CalWORKs recipients and encourages those receiving monthly cash grants of less than \$100 to consider closing their cases.

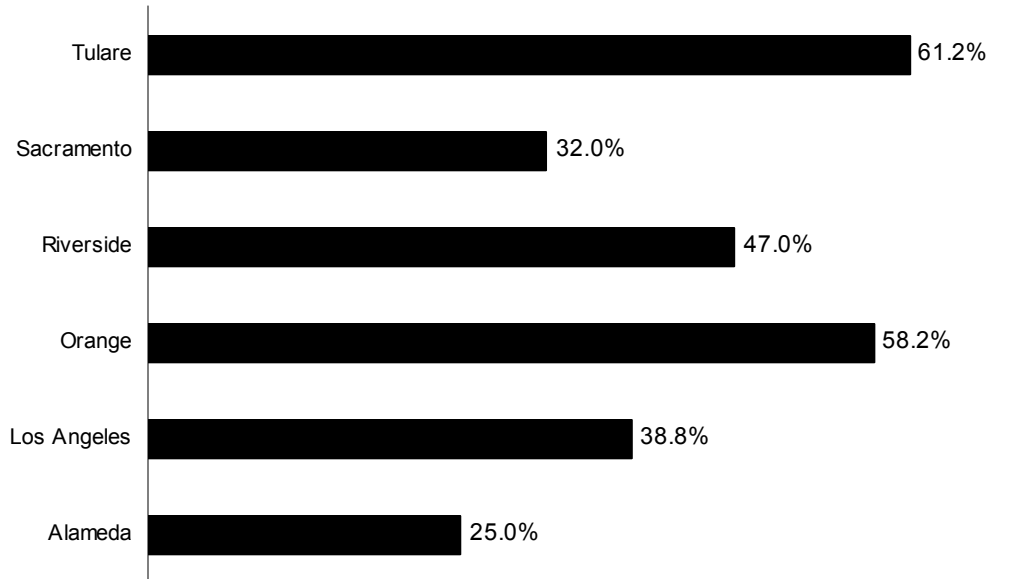
Our focus counties vary in the extent to which they encourage recipients with small grants to conserve months of aid for the future. Even though Alameda County has taken steps to encourage banking with its flier, as illustrated in Exhibit 3.2, the county’s staff are much less likely to encourage recipients to bank months than staff in other counties. One possible reason Alameda workers may refrain from encouraging more recipients to bank months of aid is the high cost of living—and particularly the high cost of housing—in that county.

Although workers encourage banking, many noted that recipients are unlikely to follow their advice to conserve months of aid for the future. Some focus-group respondents told us they considered banking months of aid, but decided against it because they needed the additional income (even from low monthly cash grants) to pay their bills. Recipients said that losing their small monthly grants—even as little as \$50—would significantly affect their ability to make ends meet. Focus-group participants worried that grant reductions, together with the loss of other work supports such as transportation assistance, would leave them struggling to cover basics such as utilities and clothes for their children. Others told us they went off aid for short periods of time, but ended up reapplying for assistance because of emergencies. In Orange County, one recipient said she banked months for two years “because my husband said he would contribute, but we couldn’t survive, so we went back on aid.”

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<sup>70</sup> When applicants apply for CalWORKs, they can choose to receive a lump sum cash payment (a diversion payment) in lieu of a monthly CalWORKs cash grant. For more information on diversion payment policies, see Western Center on Law and Social Poverty. “CalWORKs Manual: Chapter IV.B: Lump Sum Diversion.” [www.wclp.org/advocates/library/calworks/ch4b.html](http://www.wclp.org/advocates/library/calworks/ch4b.html).

**Exhibit 3.2**  
**Percent of County Staff That Often Encourage**  
**Recipients with Small Grants to Bank Months**



Sample size is 878. Sample size varies across counties and is reported for all six counties. Percent of staff who responded often or very often (response = 6 or 7 on 7-point scale).

Source: Staff Survey of caseworkers in study counties, 2003. Question B6

### ***Urgency***

Based on our interviews, county workers seem to deliver the self-sufficiency message with more or less urgency depending on the number of CalWORKs months still available to recipients. The less time on aid remaining, the more county workers seek to motivate recipients to work or to engage in activities that will lead to work. Caseworkers do this, in part, by emphasizing the negative repercussions if the recipients fail to find other sources of income. Although workers do not usually emphasize urgency with new CalWORKs recipients (those at the start of their 60 months on aid), many of the brochures and written materials distributed to applicants and new recipients stress the need to act quickly, and employ graphics of a clock or an hourglass to illustrate the concept of time running out.

When recipients get closer to reaching the time limit, county workers increasingly emphasize the urgent need for recipients to take action. In their last months on aid, workers often use the time limit to motivate adult recipients to engage in activities that will lead to employment. In Los Angeles County, for example, caseworkers create new employment plans and work intensively with recipients who have less than nine months



of aid remaining. (Work-related activities often include short-term certificate programs and individualized job-search assistance.) In the same vein, caseworkers in Alameda County intensify their work with recipients nearing the time limit. They make in-person or telephone contact with recipients who are within six months of timing out and often refer these recipients to the local career centers to help them find jobs.

The “urgency” message seems to resonate more with those recipients whose own concerns about the time limit are elevated. Many of the county caseworkers we interviewed reported that the time limit is not a major concern for recipients. Just 9% of workers responding to the Staff Survey said that the average first-time CalWORKs applicant is very worried about the time limit. By contrast, 33% of the workers said that the average CalWORKs recipient with only six months of aid remaining is very worried about timing out.<sup>71</sup>

This is echoed by many of our focus-group respondents, almost all of who were nearing their 60-month limit.<sup>72</sup> These recipients expressed a number of concerns about their impending time limit: Many reported being unemployed or not earning enough to pay their bills, and they were most concerned about how the time limit would affect their other benefits.

In the next section, we describe California’s requirements that counties notify recipients about time-limit policies.

### **Initial and Ongoing Notification of CalWORKs Recipients**

The efficacy of a time-limit policy is contingent upon recipients knowing about the policy. CalWORKs program regulations require that county welfare agencies notify recipients in writing about the time-limit policy and their remaining time on aid at both application and redetermination.<sup>73</sup> Based on our interviews, the focus counties are meeting these requirements. In fact, all of the focus counties are providing information about the time limit more frequently than required as a means of motivating recipients to work or prepare for work.

#### ***Initial Notification***

CalWORKs applicants usually get their official descriptions of the time limit when they meet with their intake eligibility workers at CalWORKs orientation sessions and again when they meet with their ongoing eligibility and employment-services workers.

In these initial meetings and orientations, applicants and recipients receive a tremendous amount of information about the CalWORKs program—including employment services, work requirements, and support services. The eligibility and employment-services

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<sup>71</sup> Estimates are the percentage of staff that reported recipients are “worried” to “very worried” about the time limit—6 or 7 on a 7-point scale.

<sup>72</sup> Some of the respondents in Los Angeles and Tulare had already timed out.

<sup>73</sup> Notification is also required between the 54<sup>th</sup> and 58<sup>th</sup> month on aid, at the 60<sup>th</sup> month when the adult is timed out, and upon the recipient’s request. Sources: CDSS All County Letter No. 02-33, May 2002. CDSS Manual of Policy and Procedures, sec. 40-107.14 through .144.

workers devote only part of these early discussions to the time-limit policy, focusing primarily on such key elements as duration and time on aid. They sometimes skip the more complicated explanations of exemptions, extensions, and post-time-limit benefits and services. As Exhibit 3.3 shows, almost two-thirds of caseworkers in the focus counties (65%) regularly talk to new recipients about the existence of the time limit in their first meetings. Fewer workers regularly mention exemptions (40%), extensions (30%), and post-time-limit benefits and services (36%).<sup>74</sup>

Based on our staff interviews, caseworkers most often provided more detailed information about time-limit policies in writing (and generally in their native languages for non-English speakers) to new CalWORKs applicants and recipients. However, these bulletins and brochures often accompany stacks of other reading materials on the CalWORKs program and referrals to outside services. Applicants and recipients who are literate may not take the time to go through all of these materials and, thus, may not fully comprehend key time-limit policies.<sup>75</sup> The information remains virtually inaccessible to those who are functionally illiterate in their primary languages.

Some of the focus counties make it a point to create clearly written, user-friendly materials. For example, in conjunction with the county welfare department, the advocacy community in Los Angeles County created “The People’s Guide to the CalWORKs 60-Month Limit.” This guide covers all of the necessary information that a CalWORKs recipient needs to know about the time-limit policy and is written in clear, simple language. It also provides examples of how CalWORKs grants for households of different sizes are affected by the time limit, and contains copies of the forms that recipients need to apply for exemptions. We include a copy of this guide in Appendix D.

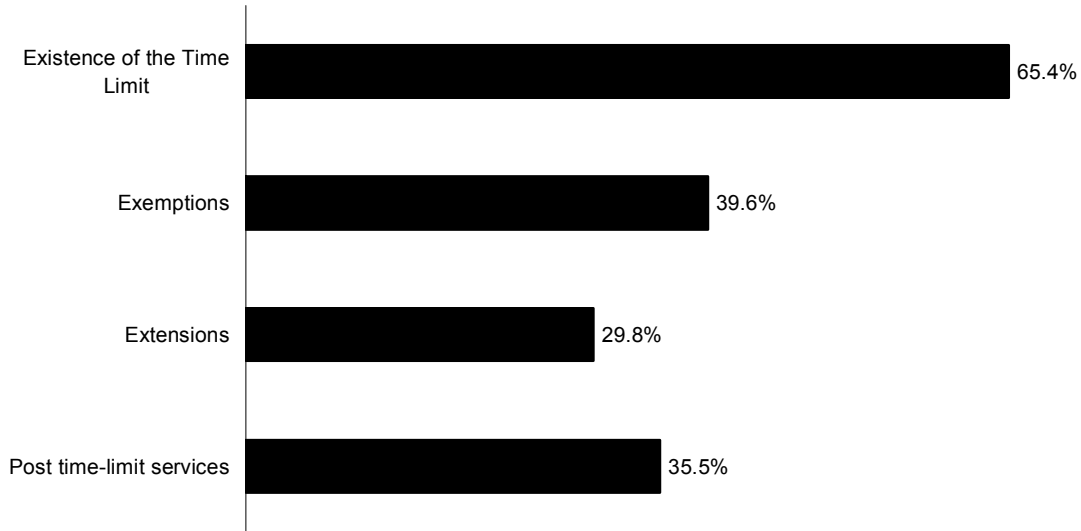
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<sup>74</sup> In interpreting this data, it is important to remember that, depending on the county, each recipient may have initial meetings with a number of different kinds of workers (e.g., intake eligibility worker, ongoing eligibility worker, or employment-services worker). Therefore, recipients could be hearing about exemptions from their intake worker but not their ongoing worker. In general, however, we found from the on-site interviews that caseworkers were less likely to focus on exemptions and extensions than on the existence of the time limit itself.

<sup>75</sup> However, some counties make additional efforts to communicate with recipients. For example, Los Angeles County eligibility workers conduct home visits during which they can explain time limits and the GAIN program to participants, among other things.

**Exhibit 3.3**  
**Percent of County Staff Who Regularly Explain Time-Limit Policies in First Meetings with Recipients**

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Sample size is 871. Sample size varies across counties and variables; maximum sample size reported for all six counties. Percent of staff who often or very often explain these policies (response = 6 or 7 on 7-point scale).

Source: Staff Survey of caseworkers in focus counties, 2003. Question B1a-d.

### ***Ongoing Notification***

State regulations require county workers to provide CalWORKs recipients with information about their remaining time on aid when their cases are redetermined to establish ongoing eligibility.<sup>76</sup> The information must be provided in writing, and written notices are usually mailed to recipients. In most cases, eligibility workers who conduct redetermination appointments also remind recipients about the time limit and their remaining time on aid during those meetings. Again, however, workers usually have a lot of topics to cover in these meetings, and they do not always discuss extensions, exemptions, and post-time-limit benefits and services. As Exhibit 3.4 illustrates, 53% of the workers in the focus counties regularly inform recipients of their time on aid, but only 35% regularly explain exemptions, 25% extensions, and 27% post-time-limit services.

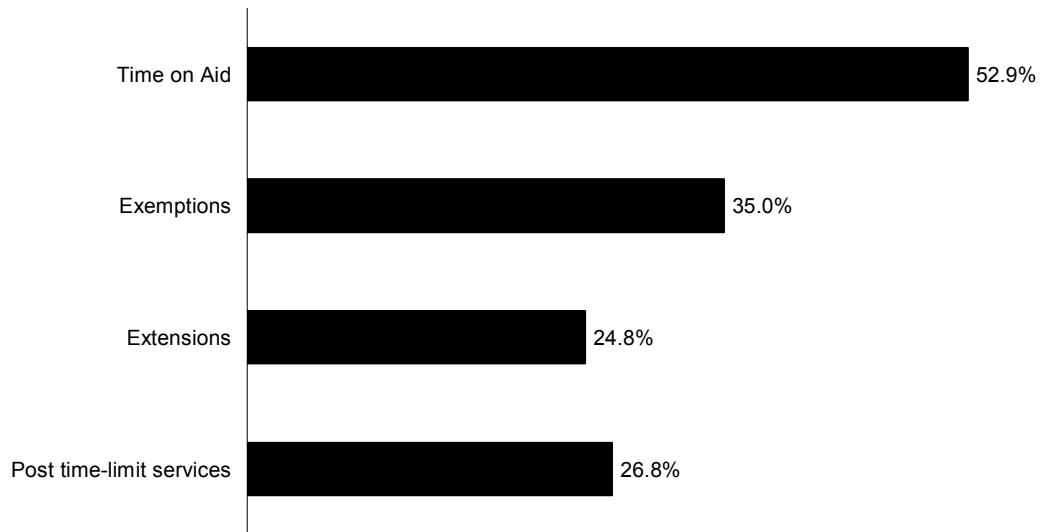
Most workers provide recipients with information about the time limit on a more regular basis than state regulations require. Over half of the workers in the focus counties reported providing recipients with information about their time on aid at least every six months. Employment-services workers in Alameda County, for example, said they discuss time on aid at each quarterly meeting they have with recipients. Similarly, administrators in Orange County reported that they encourage staff to discuss the time

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<sup>76</sup> Source: CDSS All County Letter No. 02-33, May 2002.

limit in every interaction and meeting they have with a recipient over the life of the case. Despite these efforts by county officials and staff, the information we gleaned from the focus groups indicates that recipients still may be unaware of exemptions and extensions for which they may be eligible.

**Exhibit 3.4**  
**Percent of County Staff Who Regularly Explain Time-Limit Policies in Redetermination Meetings**



Sample size is 525. Sample size varies across counties and variables; maximum sample size reported for all six counties. Percent of staff who often or very often explain these policies (response = 6 or 7 on 7-point scale).

Source: Staff Survey of caseworkers in focus counties, 2003. Question B3a-d.

### **Notification in the Last Six to Nine Months on Aid**

County workers make their most intensive efforts to inform recipients about the 60-month time limit within the recipients' last six to nine months of aid. These efforts are important because recipients need to know what will happen to their grants and plan accordingly. In addition, counties sometimes err in recording time on aid and/or in notifying recipients about exemptions. It is important that recipients have the opportunity to correct any errors in their case records and to report any previously undisclosed reasons for exemption. A few workers in Los Angeles County, for example, said that an impending time limit often persuades recipients to disclose instances of domestic abuse that they may not have otherwise revealed.

Counties are required to notify recipients of their time on aid in writing at some point between the 54<sup>th</sup> and 58<sup>th</sup> months and upon reaching the 60-month time limit.<sup>77</sup> In

<sup>77</sup> California Manual of Policy and Procedures, sec. 40-107.14 through .144.

addition, the majority of California's counties—over 85% (47 of 55 counties responding to this question in the All-County Survey)—reported that they require workers to contact recipients approaching the end of their time on aid. Based on our interviews, county workers review possible reasons for exemptions and/or extensions in these meetings. Where none apply, they create special action plans for recipients to help them prepare for the grant reductions that the 60-month limit, once reached, triggers. Preparations may include job-search assistance and referrals to other support services.

### ***County Strategies***

The six focus counties have tried a variety of approaches to inform and assist recipients in their last six to nine months on aid. All six counties mail notices to recipients approaching the time limit, and five (the exception being Tulare) provide additional notification. Most commonly, workers meet with those in their caseloads who are close to timing out. In addition to mailed notices and in-person and telephone meetings, Los Angeles County offers information workshops for recipients nearing the time limit, and Sacramento County has social workers conduct home visits with recipients.

In Alameda County, employment-services workers are required to initiate personal meetings with recipients three to six months before they time out. At such a meeting, the worker and recipient discuss the recipient's goals and develop a plan to help the recipient start looking for employment right away. The worker makes referrals to the career center, reviews the family's budget, and shows the recipient what will happen to his/her grant when she or he is removed from the case. Riverside County staff also work one-on-one with recipients close to timing out. In their personal meetings with recipients, Riverside workers cover issues such as budgeting and strategies for managing household finances after the time limit is reached and the family's grant is reduced. In Los Angeles County, staff work actively to get recipients with less than nine months of aid remaining into activities that will help them find a job, including short-term certificate programs and individualized job search assistance. Workers create new action plans for these recipients, keeping in mind their remaining time on aid.

Tulare County is the only focus county that does not require its workers to contact or meet individually with those recipients who are reaching the end of their time on aid. Because of recent budget cuts, Tulare workers' caseloads are quite high and workers said that they do not have time to provide any special interventions for these recipients.

### **60-Month Workshops for Recipients**

Los Angeles and Riverside Counties created voluntary workshops and seminars for interested recipients close to reaching the time limit:

In **Los Angeles County**, workshops include an eight-minute video about the time-limit policy and information about how the welfare-to-work program can help recipients achieve self-sufficiency in the few months they have remaining through job-search assistance and short-term training. The workshops also discuss “banking” as a way recipients can save their remaining months for future use. After the workshops, recipients are encouraged to meet with their case managers to talk about these issues in depth, and the case managers create short-term action plans for the recipients.

**Riverside County** created seminars for those about to time out. These seminars focused on household budgeting and strategies for managing finances after the time limit is reached and the families’ grants are reduced. Recipients were also referred to other community resources.

Unfortunately, recipients often do not take advantage of these voluntary services. In Riverside and Los Angeles Counties, only 5% to 10% of those invited to the time-limit workshops attended, despite frequent mailings and other attempts to encourage recipients to attend. Riverside County stopped providing the seminars because of the lack of interest. A number of factors may explain this apparent lack of interest: To begin with, these workshops and seminars are optional. Given the other, more pressing demands on their time, many recipients may feel they do not have time to attend. Still others may doubt the benefit of such services, particularly if their participation will not affect the ultimate outcome—that their cash aid will be cut. Finally, county workers reported having a difficult time contacting recipients about to reach the time limit. Thus, many recipients may remain unaware of these services.

### **Special Services for Non-English Speakers**

Providing information on the time limit in multiple languages is imperative in a state with California’s multilingual population, some of whom are not proficient in English. Indeed, some of the focus counties reported that the first cohort of recipients to time out in early 2003 was composed disproportionately of non-English speakers.<sup>78</sup>

In general, the state and counties are sensitive to the needs of non-English speakers. State regulations require all counties to provide bilingual staff for all languages spoken by at least 5% of the county’s non-English-speaking welfare caseload. In addition, counties must provide written translations, regardless of the percent of the caseload that speaks a given language, so long as CDSS has provided the program materials or forms in that language. For example, a county must provide written materials in Tagalog if any of that

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<sup>78</sup> The California Budget Project (2002) predicted that in four of the state’s most populous counties, over 50% of adults who would time out in early 2003 speak an Asian language as their primary language. For more information about immigrants’ use of public-assistance programs in California, see the WPRP-funded study by Brady et al. (2002).

county's non-English-speaking recipients speak Tagalog and the translated forms are available from CDSS.<sup>79</sup>

Based on our All-County Survey, 91% of the counties (51 of 56 responding) provide official county communications, referred to as Notices of Action (NOAs), in languages other than English as necessary. Workers send these translated forms automatically if recipients are known to have primary languages other than English. In most counties, the most common language besides English is Spanish.

Beyond the written Notices of Action, all of the focus counties have the internal capacity to provide case management services in English and Spanish. Alameda County attempts to match CalWORKs recipients who speak Vietnamese, Spanish, Chinese, Farsi, or Russian with workers who speak their languages. Additionally, the county contracts with community-based organizations to provide job club services in Vietnamese and Spanish.

Sacramento, Riverside, Los Angeles, and Orange counties also employ workers who speak a variety of languages and who can assist with translations as necessary. Many workers in Tulare speak Spanish as well as English. Los Angeles County contracts with numerous community-based organizations to provide language- and culture-appropriate employment and case management services to a variety of ethnic groups. If counties cannot provide necessary translations in-house or through contracts with community-based organizations, they can use the AT&T Language Line for translation services.<sup>80</sup> Translation services notwithstanding, respondents in our Spanish-speaking focus groups struggled to understand time limit policies in ways similar to their English-speaking counterparts. Respondents in both Spanish-speaking focus groups (conducted in Los Angeles County) knew there was a 60-month time limit, but did not fully understand the circumstances in which months could be exempted or aid could be extended. Furthermore, most of these Spanish-speaking respondents did not seem to understand how reaching the time limit would affect their grants and other benefits and services.

Compared to English-speaking respondents, the Spanish-speakers in our focus groups seemed more likely to feel unprepared for the time limit. Some said their workers denied them access to training programs, presumably because of their limited English skills. Others said that they were matched with workers who did not speak Spanish and, as a result, the workers were not effective in helping them to understand the time limit or to prepare for it.<sup>81</sup> So while Los Angeles County has the capacity to provide language-appropriate case management services, some recipients in need of these services appear to be falling through the cracks.

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<sup>79</sup> CDSS All County Letter No. 03-56, October 29, 2003.

<sup>80</sup> The AT&T Language Line provides instant translation services over the phone, paid for by the county.

<sup>81</sup> According to county staff, Los Angeles County recipients are matched with Spanish-speaking workers when they indicate that preference on the "Primary Language Designation Form," which is provided at intake and upon request.

## **County Staff Understanding of Time-Limit Policies**

On its face, the time limit is a relatively straightforward policy—CalWORKs recipients are allowed 60 months of cash assistance before their grants are reduced. However, the rules of the policy are much more complicated. There are 12 different situations in which months on aid can be exempted from counting toward the 60-month limit. In addition, there are six reasons which permit households to receive CalWORKs benefits for longer than 60 months.

Focus groups suggested that recipients' knowledge of time-limit policies is, in large part, dependent upon their county workers' understanding of the policies and rules. Furthermore, the Staff Survey indicates that, in five of the six focus counties, supervisor oversight of exemptions and extensions is not common.<sup>82</sup> This makes it all the more critical that staff understand the relevant rules. Prior to implementing the time limit, most counties (52 of 56 responding) conducted some sort of training for their eligibility and/or employment-services workers. CDSS also conducted several regional training sessions in 2001 on the time limit for county staff. In each of the focus counties, staff reportedly received training on the 60-month time limit, exemptions, extensions, and post-time-limit benefits and services.

Most of the focus counties concentrated their staff-training efforts during the six months prior to January 2003, when the first group of recipients reached their 60-month time limit. Riverside and Sacramento Counties were the exceptions, providing training to their staff much earlier (as early as 1998 in Riverside County). All six focus counties supplemented these training sessions with reference documents, in the form of desk guides, policies and procedures available on the county's computer intranet, and/or memoranda.

The vast majority of the county workers we surveyed told us that their training on time-limit policies and procedures was adequate (see Exhibit 3.5). Eighty-five percent or more of staff reported adequate training in all the areas we asked about. Training on the availability of post-time-limit services received the lowest marks: 15% found training in that area inadequate. Twelve percent said they were inadequately trained to recalculate the case grant when the adult has timed out and the children are converted to the Safety Net program. Knowledge in both of these areas is most pertinent once a recipient reaches his/her 60-month time limit, which usually occurs in only a small percentage of a worker's caseload. In the focus counties, some workers acknowledged that they had been trained in all these areas, but explained that they had to, in a sense, "relearn" what they had been taught by the time their first cases exhausted 60 months of aid.

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<sup>82</sup> In five of the six focus counties, roughly a third or less of staff responded that supervisors "often or very often" review cases. In one county, about half of staff responded that supervisors review cases for this reason. This estimate includes responses of a 6 or 7 on a 7 point scale where 1 = "never" and 7 = "very often." Responses of "not applicable" were not counted in calculating this estimate.



**Exhibit 3.5**  
**Percent of County Staff Reporting Adequate Guidance/Training**  
**on 60-Month Time-Limit Rules and Procedures**

|  | Average Percent <sup>a</sup> |
|--|------------------------------|
| Availability of post-time-limit services                             | 84.9                         |
| Calculating cash benefits when adult is removed from the case        | 88.5                         |
| Conditions under which extensions can be granted                     | 88.8                         |
| Providing guidance to CalWORKs recipients approaching the time limit | 90.1                         |
| Accessing information about time on aid                              | 91.1                         |
| Conditions under which exemptions can be granted                     | 91.8                         |
| Explaining time limit to CalWORKs applicants                         | 93.8                         |
| Maximum Sample Size <sup>b</sup>                                     | 856                          |
| Minimum Sample Size  | 691                          |

<sup>a</sup> Staff responses of adequate include all responses except inadequate or very inadequate (response = 1 or 2 on a 7-point scale).

<sup>b</sup> Sample size varies across variables; maximum and minimum sample size reported.

Source: Staff Survey of caseworkers in study counties, questions A5a-g. Workers are not included into the calculations if they responded "not applicable" to the question.

Despite the training they receive, workers often do not appear to fully understand some of the rules related to the 60-month time-limit policy. For example, the Staff Survey found some confusion among staff regarding the allowable reasons for exemptions and extensions. As illustrated in Exhibit 3.6, although two-thirds know that months of CalWORKs aid that are fully reimbursed by child-support collections are to be exempted from counting toward the 60-month time limit, fully one-third did not. Similarly, 29% of the county workers did not know that domestic abuse is a reason for exemption and extension. Over 25% of workers did not know that being over 60 qualifies for an exemption or extension, and 15% did not know that caring for a disabled family member qualifies. However, nearly all of the workers (92%) understand that a recipient with a verified disability may have months exempted or extended.<sup>83</sup>

<sup>83</sup> Questions about exemptions and extensions were asked of all Staff Survey respondents. Although not all workers are in charge of *granting* exemptions and extensions, they all have caseloads comprised of recipients who are subject to the time limit and are responsible for communicating information about the time limit. All questions pertaining to the process of granting exemptions or extensions were asked only of those who have this responsibility.

**Exhibit 3.6**  
**Percent of County Staff Correctly Identifying Allowable Reasons for**  
**Exemption or Extension**

|   | Average Percent |
|---|-----------------|
| Child support fully repays cash grant                 | 66.7            |
| Current victim of domestic abuse                      | 71.2            |
| Age 60 or over  | 72.8            |
| Caring for an ill or incapacitated person in the home | 84.3            |
| Verified disability                                   | 92.3            |
| Maximum Sample Size <sup>a</sup>                      | 858             |
| Minimum Sample Size                                   | 835             |

<sup>a</sup> Sample size varies across variables; maximum and minimum sample size reported.

Source: Staff Survey of case workers in focus counties, Questions A1a, c, d, e, f, and g.

These findings seem to indicate that some workers (8% to 33%) do not fully understand all of the relevant policies. Although caseworkers all should have access to a policy manual if recipients ask about exemptions, limited staff knowledge of the rules is an indicator that workers may not regularly explain these policies to recipients. This can affect whether recipients apply for exemptions or extensions, particularly in cases where the qualifying conditions are not apparent to the caseworkers. In the following section, we describe findings from our recipient focus groups regarding how much focus-group participants know about the time-limit policies.

### **Recipient Understanding of Time-Limit Policies**

Recipients in our focus groups were aware of the time limit, but most were not aware of all its complexities—especially relating to months of aid that can be exempted from counting toward the 60-month limit, reasons for extending aid past 60 months, and the nature of benefits and services that continue to be available to them after they time out. Their responses are consistent with our prior findings from the Staff Survey that workers often do not delve into these aspects of the time-limit policy during their initial and ongoing meetings with recipients.

Some focus-group participants said they remember hearing about the time limit when they first applied for CalWORKs, and most have known about the time limit for several years. They reported hearing about the time limit in numerous ways, including from their workers, during orientation sessions, and/or from letters or other written materials. Some of the participants said they initially found out about the time limit from sources outside of the welfare office, usually from family and friends or news programs.

Many of the recipients in our focus groups reported receiving a Notice of Action from their workers telling them approximately how many months they had left on aid. However, a few respondents reported receiving conflicting information. One respondent received two letters with inconsistent information on the number of months remaining to her. This may have occurred because, subsequent to the first notice, the county

discovered she was eligible to exempt a number of months of aid that were offset by child-support collections. Although this indicates that the county was reviewing case records to make sure time-on-aid calculations were accurate, it left this recipient feeling that the county did not have a good idea of how much time she had left on aid.

One recipient told us she thought her CalWORKs aid should have stopped several months earlier based on her Notice of Action letter; however, she was still receiving a grant. Even though she said that she had “an excellent worker,” she thought that her continued grant was an oversight. She was afraid to ask about her benefits for fear that her worker would realize she no longer qualified for cash assistance. Some of the recipients in the focus groups claimed to not know how close they were to time limit. One respondent told us, “I heard about the time limit because they cut me off. I never got anything in the mail.”

### ***Changes in the Cash Grant***

In each of the six focus counties, most of the staff—from 55% in Alameda County to 70% in Orange County—reported that most recipients understand how their cash grants will change once they reach their 60-month time limit.<sup>84</sup> Although most focus-group participants knew that only the adult would be removed from the grant, a few did not fully understand that their children could continue to receive aid after they reached the 60-month limit. One recipient thought that changes in the cash grant after reaching the time limit would depend on worker discretion. Another expressed frustration about not understanding what would happen to the cash grant: “My biggest gripe is that they don’t explain [things] to me.”

### ***Exemptions and Extensions***

Most of the recipients in our focus groups did not know all of the exemptions and extensions for which they might qualify. In fact, some claimed to have never heard of any circumstances that stop the 60-month clock. When asked, a few focus-group participants mentioned some of the most common exemptions, including having a disability, being sanctioned and receiving child support.<sup>85</sup> Some indicated that they knew about the domestic-abuse exemption. Others, however, mistakenly thought they could receive exemptions for different reasons. A few focus-group participants thought that months in which they worked or went to school would be exempted, and one thought that by leaving aid, she could somehow earn back months of aid.

Notably, in Los Angeles County, many respondents knew about exemptions—mostly because they had been exempted at one time or another. Focus-group participants in Los Angeles correctly named a number of reasons for exemptions: child support, sanctions, having a disability, and having a child with a disability.

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<sup>84</sup> Estimates are based on the percentage of staff that believe “many” or “very many” recipients understand that reaching the time limit will mean that the adult portion of their cash grant will be terminated (rather than the full cash grant)—6 or 7 on a 7-point scale where 7 is “very many.”

<sup>85</sup> While a case is sanctioned, noncomplying adults on the case are not part of the assistance unit, which reduces the grant by the noncomplying adult’s share, causing the period during which the sanction is in effect not to be counted against the clock.

### ***Post-Time-Limit Benefits and Services***

Despite the counties' efforts to meet with recipients and to explain what they and their families should expect after the adults exhaust their 60 months of cash aid, recipients in our focus groups remained confused. They were unsure about how or when the time limit would affect their families and expressed deep anxiety about which benefits might end when they timed out.

In some of the focus groups, recipients were confused about whether they and their children could continue to receive other public benefits after the time limit. A few recipients believed their families would lose all benefits. Many of the recipients, however, understood that Medi-Cal continued, and several said that they did not care what happened to their cash as long as they still received this benefit. There seemed to be more confusion about their continued eligibility for other benefits. A few recipients understood that their Food Stamp benefit would increase when their cash grant decreased, but others thought that they would be ineligible for food stamps altogether.

Working recipients were particularly concerned about whether they would continue to receive child care benefits after they timed out. Some felt that they could not continue to work without child care subsidies. Those who believed they would be eligible for continued child care benefits did not understand what, if anything, they had to do to ensure that the subsidies continue. One respondent said, "It's not always clear whom you call regarding child care." Similarly, a few recipients said they had gotten notices about child care, but did not know if they had to do anything special to continue to receive those benefits. One respondent thought there was a yearlong waiting list for child care. (Actual county practices concerning child care are discussed in Chapter 5).

When asked, many recipients in our focus groups stated that, once they timed out, they would not qualify for optional services such as transportation assistance, employment services, and social services such as mental health counseling. (In most cases, they were correct: only Los Angeles County offers all of these services to those who time out and are unemployed, and Sacramento County offers transportation and employment services to timed-out unemployed recipients. Orange, Riverside, and Sacramento counties provide employed timed-out recipients with the same job-retention services they offered to any former CalWORKs recipients who are employed and within 12 months of leaving assistance.) A few recipients noted that they valued the transportation assistance, employment services, and social services they had received while in the CalWORKs program. One commented, "If you have a job, they'll make sure you get to it."

### **Conclusions and Policy Implications**

One key premise of a time-limited welfare program is that recipients must grasp that there is a time limit, and must further understand its ramifications for their families, in order for the policy to motivate recipients to work and become self-sufficient. Focus groups and field research suggest that recipients hear about time-limit policies, in large part, from the welfare department personnel who handle their cases. In the six focus counties, based on our surveys, interviews, and focus groups, we find that both county workers and recipients fully grasp that there is a CalWORKs time limit, but that both

workers and recipients remain somewhat confused about several key components of the time-limit policies.

Recipient confusion and the failure of some caseworkers to understand and explain all the rules raise several potentially serious problems. Most importantly, recipients who do not know about all the time-limit policies will not apply for exemptions or extensions for which they are eligible. In turn, this could unnecessarily disadvantage these families, particularly those with impairments that prevent them from being fully self-sufficient. Furthermore, lack of recipient and caseworker knowledge about the time-limit policy also may create an inequitable application of the rules. For example, two recipients could be eligible for an exemption, but only one receives the exemption because she had a worker who explained the rules more thoroughly or because she was able to read and understand the written materials provided to her. Although it is impossible to create a completely efficient system, providing information to recipients on a more regular basis may eliminate some of this confusion.

We identified three sorts of messages county staff use to discuss the time limit with recipients. Two of these—self-sufficiency and “banking”—are designed to motivate recipients to leave the welfare program. The third—urgency—is used to augment the self-sufficiency message when recipients are close to reaching their 60-month limit.

Our focus-group discussions with recipients show that they know cash assistance is limited to five years but that they do not have a clear understanding of the other important components of the policy—exemptions, extensions, and post-time-limit services. Not surprisingly, recipients reflect much the same confusion about these aspects of CalWORKs time limit as the county personnel advising them.

### ***Recommendation***

Given these findings, we recommend that counties take steps to better acquaint their caseworkers with the reasons for exempting months from counting toward the 60-month limit, the reasons for extending aid past 60 months, and the nature of benefits and services that remain available to families in which the adults time out. In addition, workers should be encouraged to share this information with recipients on a more regular basis.

## 4. COUNTY IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CalWORKs TIME LIMIT

### Key Findings

- Tracking time on aid requires substantial county staff time and resources.
- County welfare agencies use the Welfare Data Tracking Implementation Project (WDTIP) to track recipients' time on aid, but state and county staff at all levels have often found this database unreliable.
- Because California decentralizes welfare program administration to its 58 counties, there is considerable variation in the implementation of the time limit, including the accuracy with which time on aid and exemptions are tracked, and the frequency with which exemptions and extensions are granted.
- Counties find implementing the child-support exemption to be the greatest challenge because it requires interagency collaboration and data sharing. Late state instructions left the counties little time to plan efficient systems for these purposes. At the time of our survey, some counties had not yet implemented this exemption.
- The child-support exemption benefits a significant proportion of CalWORKs recipients. Twenty counties reported to us that at least one-fifth of their adult-headed cases had received such exemptions; 15 of those counties reported that 30% or more of their caseload qualified for child-support exemptions. The number of months exempted was substantial: 40% of the counties reported that child-support collections "bought back" over 12 months of CalWORKs benefits on average for each recipient for whom child-support payments were collected.
- At this writing, county personnel do not often grant extensions of aid past 60 months, partly because the rules for these extensions are narrowly drawn, partly because existing exemptions often pre-empt the need to use extensions, and partly because CalWORKs employment-service workers, eligibility workers, and recipients do not always fully understand who is eligible for extensions and under what circumstances.

Counties have implemented a number of policies and procedures to count each recipient's months of CalWORKs cash assistance, but tracking this information is difficult due to the complexity of program rules. As a result, ensuring the accuracy of time-on-aid calculations is an ongoing challenge. Nonetheless, accurate tracking of recipients' time on aid is important for four reasons: First, county workers must be able to tell adult recipients how much time on aid remains to them. Second, workers must help adult recipients map out realistic welfare-to-work activities in the time remaining. Third, workers must help recipients obtain appropriate support services, which may vary depending on the amount of time on aid remaining to the recipient. Finally, tracking time

on aid accurately ensures that adult recipients are neither discontinued from aid prematurely nor aided for longer than the 60 months permitted by state law.

In this chapter we describe how counties have implemented the CalWORKs time limit, detailing the successes and challenges that have emerged from their experiences. Specifically, we discuss how counties track recipients' time in the CalWORKs program (both intra- and intercounty), as well as time on TANF in other states. We also describe how counties are tracking exemptions and extensions. We discuss two program components in detail—exempting months from counting against the 60-month time limit due to child-support collections and the extension of CalWORKs aid past 60 months—because they have proved to be particularly challenging to implement. The data sources we use in this chapter include our site-visit interviews and the Staff Survey we conducted in each of the six focus counties, as well as the All-County Survey. For more information on these data sources, see Appendix A.

### **Tracking Months on Aid**

The CalWORKs program contains three time limits that counties must track:

- The federal TANF 60-month lifetime limit.
- The California 60-month lifetime limit.
- California's 18- or 24-month work requirement time limit.<sup>86</sup>

These different time limits operate independently, and months on aid may count against some of these time limits, but not others. For example, if a recipient is age 60 or older, his or her time on aid will be exempt under all three time limits. However, a younger adult's months on aid that are offset by child-support collections will count toward the federal TANF 60-month time limit, but not the CalWORKs 60-month time limit. A verified physical disability exempts a recipient's months on aid from counting against the 18- or 24-month work-requirement time limit and the CalWORKs 60-month time limit, but not the federal 60-month time limit.

These complicated counting rules have serious implications for both recipient households and the governments that fund their benefits. The tracking of months on aid, modified by any applicable exemptions and/or extensions, directly affects low-income families with children, whose benefits may or may not be reduced. How time on aid is counted for fiscal-reporting purposes affects federal, state, and county coffers, and has real budgetary implications for California and its counties. In many instances, households that retain

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<sup>86</sup> Under CalWORKs, adults already receiving cash assistance in January 1998 were eligible for 24 months of welfare-to-work services before being required to work or engage in approved work-related activities. Persons applying for cash assistance on or after January 1, 1998, are eligible for 18 months of such services before being required to fulfill work requirements. CDSS California Manual of Policy and Procedures, sec. 42-710.1 through .3.

eligibility for CalWORKs, but not TANF, will receive grants that are funded by state-only dollars.<sup>87</sup>

Counties have used two main staffing models for assigning responsibility for tracking recipient time on aid. In the first model, one worker is responsible for all tracking. In the other, this responsibility is divided between two or more workers. For example, in Alameda and Riverside Counties, each recipient works with a CalWORKs employment-services worker, chiefly responsible for job placement, and a CalWORKs eligibility worker, chiefly responsible for eligibility and enrollment procedures. Both of these workers share responsibility for tracking recipients' time on aid. In the other four focus counties, the responsibility for tracking time on aid falls to a single worker (the eligibility worker in Orange County, for example).

More than one case worker means there are likely two or more sets of files and documents that must be reviewed in order to track time on aid. Respondents noted that not having all time-limit-related information in a single location can lead to confusion and inefficiency. A system with a single worker for each case allows information to be consolidated, and may reduce recipient confusion about whom to contact. However, giving all the responsibility for tracking time to one worker also poses challenges. For example, individual workers in Tulare and Sacramento counties are responsible for all aspects of their CalWORKs cases. These workers may be overburdened by the task of tracking time on aid in addition to their other responsibilities, including devising work-activity plans, arranging child care, making referrals to other social services, monitoring recipients' compliance, and so on.

Both models have their merits. When more than one worker share responsibility for a case, clear communication and information sharing can enhance the ease and accuracy with which the workers track time on aid. In the single-worker model, workers need sufficient time to carefully complete all required tasks for each of their cases. This may require county managers to reallocate cases among workers. For example, workers with more complicated cases—those with frequent child-support payments or other exemptions—might be made responsible for fewer cases.

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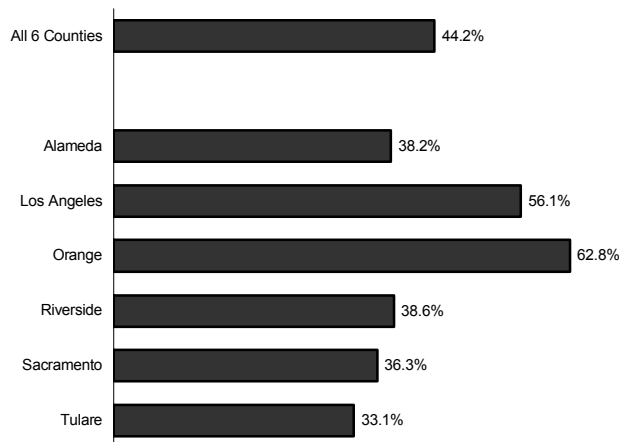
<sup>87</sup> The exception to this is when California qualifies these cases for the federal “20 percent hardship extension” (discussed in Chapter 2). CDSS began using federal funds to cover those coded as “TANF timed-out” in January 2004. County Fiscal Letter 02/03-29, attachment II (code 32) and the update on code 32, 03/04-36.



## Reviewing Case Files for Accuracy

Given the difficulties of tracking recipients' time on aid accurately, it is no surprise that many counties have made errors. About half of California's counties (28 out of 54 counties that responded to this item in the All-County Survey) reported voluntarily restoring CalWORKs cash aid to adult recipients because of county errors in calculating their countable time on aid. In four of our six focus counties, fewer than half of the staff we surveyed vouched for the accuracy of the WDTIP and the county-specific data they rely on to track recipients' time on aid (Exhibit 4.1).<sup>88</sup> Overall, only 44% of the county staff we interviewed in the six focus counties thought time-on-aid information was accurate. However, in Los Angeles County, which carries over a third of the state's CalWORKs caseload,<sup>89</sup> 56% of the county workers thought their county's information was accurate. In Orange County, an even larger percentage (62.6%) said that both WDTIP and their county data are accurate.

**Exhibit 4.1**  
**County Staff Perception of Accuracy of Available Time-on-Aid Information\***



\*Accuracy is defined by an answer of 6-7 on a 7-point scale where 1 = not at all accurate and 7 = very accurate. Sample size is 850. Sample size varies across counties; sample size is reported for all six counties. Source: Staff Survey, question A7.

<sup>88</sup> Survey respondents were asked "How accurate is the information you have about the number of remaining months that recipients have left on their time limit 'clocks'?"

<sup>89</sup> CDSS Research and Development Division (September 2003).

Adults who exhausted their 60-month CalWORKs time limit early in 2003 initiated their CalWORKs cases early in 1998. In the late 1990s, county staff were still learning the rules for tracking and exempting time on aid. Moreover, some relevant policies, such as the child-support exemption, were established late or subsequently amended, requiring county personnel to revisit and reconstruct case records to make sure time on aid was being accurately counted. According to interviews, this could entail manual searches of hard-copy, paper files going back five years.

Tracking time on aid requires county workers to review case files to ensure that the records contain complete and accurate information. According to state regulations, counties must periodically notify recipients about the time limit and their remaining time on aid. At a minimum, counties must notify recipients at application, at annual recertification, between 54 and 58 months on aid, at 60 months on aid, and any time at a recipient's request.<sup>90</sup> Generally, according to interviews, county workers conduct case reviews prior to issuing these notices to ensure that all relevant time-on-aid information is included. Case reviews involve several steps: workers check WDTIP data against county data to ensure that both systems report the same information. In some cases, automated data sources are also checked against historical paper files, to ensure all the automated data are correct. Workers also may have to contact other counties to verify WDTIP data. Based on our interviews with staff in the focus counties, the total length of time it takes a worker to review a case can range from 15 minutes to several hours.

Counties were slow to implement procedures for reviewing paper case files. Of our six focus counties, only Riverside began this process early in the life of the CalWORKs program—starting as early as 1998. The other five focus counties did not begin until late 2001 and into 2002, so the information these five counties distributed to recipients at application and redetermination may have been inaccurate early in the life of the program. These counties did not undertake thorough case reviews until the first wave of CalWORKs cases were nearing their 60-month CalWORKs time limit.

Counties were slow to implement these review procedures for two main reasons: First, counties were fully engaged in the process of helping recipients find and take jobs or enroll in welfare-to-work activities. At least initially, these work-focused objectives took priority over developing policies and procedures to implement the seemingly distant 60-month time limit. Second, a number of county and state officials doubted that California would actually impose the time-limit grant reductions on low-income families with children. According to one senior county welfare administrator: “We really didn't think time limits would happen.”

As the first cohort of recipients approached their 60-month time limit in January 2003, the sheer volume of cases needing review was daunting. Instructions issued by the California Department of Social Services state that “counties must review case records to verify the accuracy of time limit tracking information before taking action to discontinue

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<sup>90</sup> CDSS All County Letter No. 03-21, May 23, 2003.

the adult's aid due to timing out.”<sup>91</sup> However, in five of the six focus counties cases had not been comprehensively reviewed for the purposes of enforcing the time limit, in part due to the large size of this cohort.<sup>92</sup> Subsequent cohorts are noticeably smaller, which means county workers must review fewer case records.

Given their late start and the large number of initial cases approaching the 60-month time limit, five of the six focus counties had difficulty completing their case-record reviews by December 31, 2002. Tulare County staff, for example, began checking case files in June 2002, but some of Tulare's county offices did not complete all case reviews for the first group of recipients due to time out in January 2003. Staff in Orange County came to work on several “Super Saturdays” to put in extra hours to meet their January deadline for case-record reviews.

#### **Case Record Reviews at Application**

Workers in **Sacramento, Los Angeles, and Orange** counties first conduct case-record reviews at the time adults apply for CalWORKs. These initial reviews provide workers with accurate information about applicants' previous time on aid going back to 1996. These reviews are burdensome for “intake” staff, but they simplify subsequent reviews of ongoing cases by eliminating the need for caseworkers to review historical paper files (unless discrepancies arise). Accurate counts of time on aid from the outset also allow employment-services workers to help recipients develop realistic welfare-to-work plans in the time that remains to them.

At the time of our site-visit interviews, all focus counties except Los Angeles County routinely reviewed case records between 54 and 58 countable months on aid in order to provide accurate information to recipients as required by state law. Workers in Los Angeles County conducted case-record reviews only at a recipient's request, relying instead on the accuracy of automated case-record data that have been entered into the county data system to provide the required information to recipients. According to the staff we interviewed in Los Angeles County, a high percentage of recipients who request case reviews succeed in obtaining exemptions. This suggests that a subset of cases qualify for exemptions that are not now identified in the county's data system. It is not clear, however, if these cases are representative of all cases that time out in Los Angeles County.

To improve the accuracy of tracking time on aid, some counties have implemented a secondary review process to ensure that adult recipients do not have their grants cut in error. Riverside and Alameda Counties conduct additional case reviews toward the end of the 60 months. In Riverside County, for example, the Statistical Services Unit generates a

<sup>91</sup> All County Information Notice 1-95-02.

<sup>92</sup> According to interviews, the first cohort of recipients to time out was larger than subsequent groups. Recipients who timed out included recipients who had been on cash assistance since prior to the implementation of CalWORKs, in addition to those who began assistance in 1998.

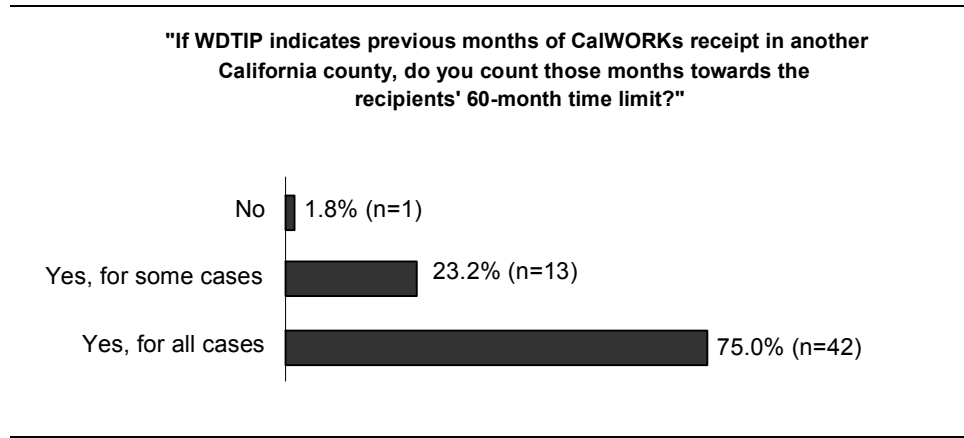
spreadsheet of cases that have accrued 58 countable months, and staff from the CalWORKs Policy Development Unit check county-based electronic data against WDTIP to make sure that the time-on-aid information has been correctly recorded in both systems.

***Tracking Time Across Counties***

Because the CalWORKs 60-month time limit applies statewide, counties must determine applicants’ previous time on aid in other counties before determining recipients’ total time on aid. CDSS instructs county staff to check WDTIP for recipients’ aid history in other counties as far back as December 1996.<sup>93</sup> Although staff report that accounting for time on aid in other counties is labor-intensive, only about 4% of low-income, female-headed households move from county to county in California in any given year.<sup>94</sup> Between January and November 2003, counties closed an average of 1,600 cases per month (about 0.33% of the total monthly caseload) because recipients moved or could not be located. On average 41,000 cases are closed per month for other reasons.<sup>95</sup>

As summarized in Exhibit 4.2, almost all of the counties that responded (55 out of 56) report that they count aid in other California counties in some or all cases where WDTIP indicates such receipt. However, the county officials we surveyed indicated that their counties do not rely exclusively on WDTIP for this information. Most counties contact the other counties directly when WDTIP, the CalWORKs applicants, or the case files indicate prior assistance in other counties (see Exhibit 4.3).

**Exhibit 4.2  
Percent of Counties That Count Prior Months of Aid Paid in Other Counties and Reported in WDTIP**



Source: All-County Survey; 56 counties responded.

<sup>93</sup> Counties must also track the TANF 60-month time limit, which began in December 1996. The 60-month CalWORKs time limit began on January 1, 1998. CDSS All County Letter 02-70, September 20, 2002.

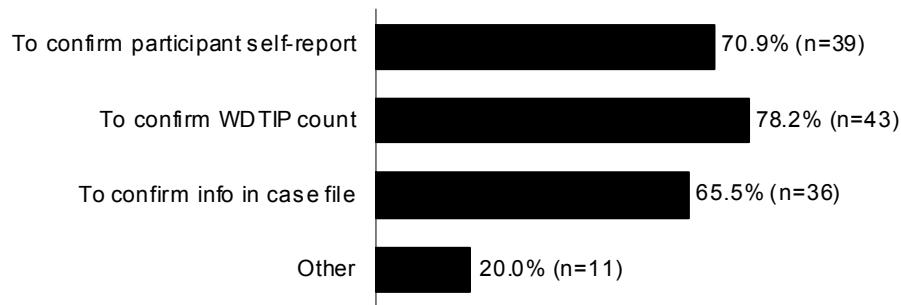
<sup>94</sup> Estimates by BPA staff using the Current Population Survey. The Current Population Survey (CPS) is a monthly survey of about 50,000 households conducted by the Bureau of the Census for the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

<sup>95</sup> California Department of Social Services, Research and Development Division (November 2003).

**Exhibit 4.3**  
**Percent of Counties that Contact Other Counties about Prior Time On Aid**

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**"Under what circumstances do you contact another county to check for countable months of assistance?"**



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Source: All-County Survey; 55 counties responded.

Although staff in the focus counties access WDTIP data to track time on aid across counties, they raised several concerns about the WDTIP system, and many expressed frustration with it. As discussed in Chapter 2, WDTIP is programmed to address all data requirements pertaining to the tracking of time on aid, but county data being uploaded can be rejected if they do not meet certain system requirements or if there are problems with data quality. As a result, when we visited the counties, staff could not always successfully upload their data into WDTIP. Worse, when uploading failed, county staff could not always determine why. Consequently, with each attempt, county workers had to check whether data had uploaded correctly, and, if not, re-enter the data and check again.

Until these uploading problems are correctly identified and fixed, counties will have to use their scarce resources to compensate for the system's glitches. Some counties added extra staff to ensure that WDTIP reports accurate information. In Orange County, for example, eligibility workers would contact a small group of county data specialists to report discrepancies between WDTIP and the county data system that they cannot fix. These data specialists would make individual case-by-case corrections to the WDTIP system as needed.

WDTIP's usefulness was limited further because during our research in 2003, Los Angeles, Modoc, and Stanislaus counties did not yet participate in WDTIP. Roughly 35% of the state's total caseload resides in Los Angeles County, so while Los Angeles County was not participating, WDTIP included less than two-thirds of the necessary county

data.<sup>96</sup> While workers in the 55 counties participating in WDTIP could check prior aid data from other WDTIP counties, they had to contact Los Angeles, Modoc, and Stanislaus counties directly to verify countable time on aid for any applicants who received aid in those three counties going back to 1996. This problem has been largely resolved now that two of these counties have begun participating in WDTIP: Los Angeles County in September 2004 and Stanislaus County in August 2005. According to state interviews, Modoc has no current plans for joining the system.

### ***Tracking Time Across States***

Tracking time on aid is further complicated by the possibility that an applicant for CalWORKs might have moved across state lines. Under federal law, federally funded TANF cash assistance is limited to five years nationwide.<sup>97</sup> This requires that states track applicants' receipt of federally subsidized cash aid in other states in order to ascertain their eligibility for federally funded assistance.

Currently, there is no systematic way for any state to ascertain whether a recipient has received TANF aid from another state or states. In California, CDSS instructs county eligibility workers to ask CalWORKs applicants whether they previously resided and received public assistance in other states.<sup>98</sup> As there is no national welfare database, this system depends entirely on applicants' self-reports. When applicants tell county workers that they have received cash assistance in other states, the workers call contacts in those states (CDSS provides a list of state contacts to counties) to verify the information. When implemented faithfully, this process adds to the length and complexity of case-record reviews. The federal requirement to check time on aid in other states is, in practice, difficult for any state to fully and accurately implement.

States could better fulfill this requirement if the federal government were to create an automated data system for tracking TANF receipt across all 50 states. To say that the legal concerns, technical requirements, and costs of implementing such a system would be significant is an understatement. Given the difficulty California has experienced in creating WDTIP, developing a uniform federal tracking system that would interface successfully with 50 separate state data systems seems implausible. Even if such a system were feasible and affordable, its benefits would be limited, because relatively few welfare recipients move from one state to another. (Based on data from the Current Population Survey, we estimate that fewer than 3% of low-income, female-headed households move from state to state in a typical year.)<sup>99</sup>

### **Exemptions and Extensions**

As we discussed in Chapter 2, when adult recipients meet one or more of the exemption criteria specified by state law, they can receive CalWORKs cash assistance for the

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<sup>96</sup> CDSS Research and Development Division. CA 237 CW (September 2003). <http://www.dss.cahwnet.gov/research/default.htm>

<sup>97</sup> *Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996*.

<sup>98</sup> CDSS All County Letter No. 99-90, October 21, 1999.

<sup>99</sup> Calculations by BPA staff using Current Population Survey data. This number calculated mobility within the previous year. Estimates over a lifetime would be higher.

affected month or months without those months counting against their 60-month time limit. In addition to these exemptions, state law specifies *extension* criteria. Recipients who qualify for extensions remain eligible for full monthly cash grants even though they have already collected CalWORKs cash benefits for 60 countable months.

Generally, exemptions and extensions protect vulnerable families from the grant reductions triggered by the 60-month CalWORKs time limit, particularly when adult recipients cannot reasonably be expected to comply with the program's requirements. For example, recipients may contend with conditions beyond their control (including age or physical disability) or they may be doing everything asked of them but still be unable to find or keep work due to personal impairments or family circumstances.

The premise of the child-support exemption is different. Rather than focusing on the adult recipients' good-faith efforts to comply with program requirements, this provision addresses the perceived unfairness of counting months in which the cash grant is fully offset by child support. When court-ordered child-support payments from an absent parent fully offset the cost of the monthly CalWORKs cash benefit, the state exempts those months from counting toward the 60-month CalWORKs time limit. In other words, if the county and state are fully reimbursed for one month of benefits by one or more months of cumulative child-support payments, that month of benefits should not count against the CalWORKs time limit.

The state also exempts months of CalWORKs cash assistance for other reasons: In any month in which the household cash benefit drops below \$10, the state exempts that month from counting against the 60-month CalWORKs time limit. State law also exempts months from counting against the 60-month CalWORKs clock when an adult recipient does not receive any cash aid in a month because she or he is subject to a sanction (that is, a fiscal penalty for failing to comply with program requirements without good cause).

Generally, exemptions and extensions are recognized in one of two ways, as discussed in Chapter 2: Either recipients make their conditions or circumstances known to their county workers, or their county workers or the county data system recognizes and identifies the qualifying conditions.<sup>100</sup> Below, we discuss each in turn.

### ***Recipient-Initiated Exemptions and Extensions***

Certain reasons for exempting months from the CalWORKs time limit and/or extending time on aid past 60 months may not be obvious to the county eligibility and/or employment-services workers who track recipients' time on aid. It is not always self-evident to county workers that adult recipients are caring for at-risk children, caring for ill or incapacitated persons in their homes, are disabled, or are the victims of domestic abuse. The onus of identifying these conditions, and documenting them, falls on the adult recipients.

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<sup>100</sup> For example, in Los Angeles County, the county data system automatically implements the child-support exemption.

Recipients may not know to volunteer personal information about themselves to their county workers, or may not think it appropriate to raise such problems during their short annual redetermination meetings. However, they may be more likely to do so if they are informed of, and understand, the permissible reasons for exempting months from the time limit and/or for extending aid past the time limit.

State regulations require counties to notify adults about the reasons for exemptions and extensions when they first apply for aid, when aid is redetermined annually, and any other time the county sends recipients Notices of Action to establish their time on aid, including between the 54<sup>th</sup> and 58<sup>th</sup> months on aid.<sup>101</sup> However, as we noted in Chapter 3, neither all county workers nor the recipients with whom they work fully understand CalWORKs exemption and extension policies.

As they implement CalWORKs exemption and extension policies, counties strive to strike a balance between strictly enforcing regulations that determine when and how recipient-initiated exemptions and extensions are granted, and allowing workers who are familiar with their cases to make more nuanced judgments. In each of the focus counties, the majority of county staff we surveyed told us that their decisions about granting exemptions were based on clear regulations. The same was the case for extensions, with the exception of Riverside County, where 42% of staff said that their decisions about granting extensions were based on clear regulations.<sup>102</sup>

To guard against fraudulent claims, counties require recipients to verify the conditions for which they seek exemptions or extensions. For example, all focus counties require doctors to complete forms certifying medical disabilities—whether for recipients or for ill or incapacitated family members. Other verification requirements differ by county. Alameda County CalWORKs workers will grant exemptions to adult recipients caring for at-risk children only when their counterparts at the Child Welfare Office document the children’s risk status. By contrast, in some offices in Tulare County, CalWORKs workers are permitted to grant these exemptions without consulting Child Welfare Office staff.

Procedures for verifying domestic abuse are particularly challenging. Domestic abuse may be hard to recognize, and victims may be afraid to reveal their circumstances because they fear retribution by their abusers, social stigma, or county interference with their family life. This may create a dilemma for counties: On the one hand, stringent verification requirements may place an undue burden on recipients who may be reluctant to go to the police or may not be able to provide much in the way of proof. On the other hand, lax verification makes it more likely that some recipients will be granted exemptions for alleged abuse that never occurred.

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<sup>101</sup> CDSS All County Letter 02-70, September 20, 2002.

<sup>102</sup> Staff Survey data (questions A6c and A6d). Workers responded with a 1 (“Always based on clear regulations”) or 2 (“Some regulations, some judgment”) on a 7-point scale. These findings are based only on the responses of those workers involved in determining exemptions and extensions. Workers who responded “not part of my job” were excluded from this portion of the analysis.



CDSS defines domestic abuse as “assaultive or coercive behavior, which includes physical abuse, sexual abuse, psychological abuse, economic control, stalking, isolation, threats, or other types of coercive behaviors occurring within a domestic relationship.”<sup>103</sup> According to state regulations, a sworn statement by a victim of past or present domestic abuse is sufficient to establish domestic abuse unless the county documents a reason to find the applicant or recipient not credible.<sup>104</sup> However, we found that our six focus counties vary in how they address domestic abuse for purposes of granting exemptions or extensions (see box below). Three counties required some verification of domestic abuse beyond self-disclosure. Caseworkers in Los Angeles, Riverside, and Orange counties are instructed to accept recipients’ self-reports without having to obtain any additional verification of domestic abuse. This approach may help to explain why the caseworkers we interviewed in Los Angeles County say they are more likely to grant exemptions for domestic abuse than the workers we interviewed in the other focus counties.<sup>105</sup> Workers in Los Angeles County also reported that they grant domestic-abuse exemptions more frequently as recipients near their 60-month time limit.

Orange County has implemented a unique and aggressive program to address domestic abuse. When a recipient discloses abuse, a CalWORKs social worker handling initial or ongoing services refers the recipient to the Domestic Abuse Services Unit (DASU). The DASU consists of Children and Family Services senior social workers. The DASU works with a corresponding specialized unit of caseworkers at each local CalWORKs office to support victims of domestic abuse. These local units are comprised of CalWORKs case managers and employment and eligibility specialists. The senior social worker becomes the recipient’s main contact, provides counseling, and assesses the recipient’s needs.

In contrast to other focus counties, Orange County’s program requires that victims of domestic abuse participate in some activity. The DASU works with a recipient to develop a specialized welfare-to-work plan, which typically includes developing a safety plan, evaluating the safety of the children, and identifying any services the recipient needs. Work-related activities are included only when the victim’s situation becomes more stable. At that point, the recipient can participate in regular welfare-to-work activities, the case is transferred out of the DASU and back to an ongoing employment-services worker. These services are not available to recipients who have reached their 60-month CalWORKs time limit.

Research suggests that about 6% of California women have been victims of domestic abuse.<sup>106</sup> Although no statistics are available to document the percent of CalWORKs recipients who are victims of domestic abuse statewide, in a randomly selected group of recipients in Kern and Stanislaus Counties, researchers found that rates of reported

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<sup>103</sup> California Manual of Policies and Procedures, 42-701(d)(3).

<sup>104</sup> California Manual of Policies and Procedures, 42-715.12.

<sup>105</sup> Specific data on the frequency of these exemptions were unavailable for this report. These data will be available in future reports.

<sup>106</sup> California Department of Health Services, Office of Women’s Health (2002).

domestic abuse were 28% and 34%, respectively, for the most recent year of data available.<sup>107</sup>

Research indicates that many California victims of domestic abuse do not report their abuse to the police and do not participate in domestic-abuse programs.<sup>108</sup> If abused CalWORKs recipients are like most victims of domestic abuse in California, they will not qualify for the CalWORKs domestic-abuse exemption in those counties that require stringent proof of abuse (police or court records) or treatment (counseling or shelter records). This is especially true in cases where victims seek exemptions for abuse that occurred in prior years. It is difficult to file police reports *ex post facto* or to recover old evidence. Thus, a victim may be granted an exemption and/or special services in one county, but not another. Put another way, similarly situated victims could be treated differently, depending on where they happen to live.

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<sup>107</sup> Meisel, Chandler, and Rienzi (2003).

<sup>108</sup> Bugarin (2002).

**County Requirements for Verifying Domestic Abuse for Purposes of Qualifying for Exemptions and Extensions from the CalWORKs Time Limit<sup>109</sup>**

|             |   |
|-------------|---|
| Alameda     | Recipients who self-identify are sent to a domestic-abuse specialist, who recommends whether to grant the exemptions or extensions. Workers generally accept the recommendations of the specialist.   |
| Los Angeles | Recipients who self identify must sign affidavits. No other verification is required.   |
| Orange      | No verification is required beyond self-report, but recipients are referred to the Domestic Abuse Services Unit and must comply with specialized welfare-to-work plans in order to be granted exemptions.   |
| Riverside   | Recipients must provide verification from one of the following sources: police reports or court records; written statements from church officials, medical providers, battered women's shelter staff, or other professionals who have helped recipients with domestic abuse; verbal or written statements from any other individual with knowledge of the circumstances that provide the basis for the claim; or sworn statement from the victim. |
| Sacramento  | Recipients must provide police reports, proof of counseling for domestic abuse, or verify that they have entered shelters. Recipients who self-identify but cannot provide acceptable proof may meet with a county clinical team, which recommends whether to grant exemptions or extensions.   |
| Tulare      | According to staff we interviewed on site in 2003, recipients are required to provide police reports. However, the written policy we reviewed at the same time permits sworn statements, physical evidence of abuse, and other evidence. <sup>110</sup>   |

Source: Site visits to Alameda, Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, Sacramento, and Tulare counties, 2003.

***County-Initiated Exemptions and Extensions***

Most exemptions and extensions initiated by county workers are relatively straightforward. They include: an adult age 60 or older; an adult recipient who is being sanctioned for failing to meet program requirements without good cause (and whose grant has already been reduced); a case in which CalWORKs monthly benefits are offset by the collection of court-ordered child support; or a case in which the monthly cash grant is less than \$10. These circumstances are easy for county workers to detect and, if their data systems are functioning properly, they can simply enter a new status code to exempt months from counting against the 60-month time limit or extend aid past the 60-

<sup>109</sup> These verifications refer to requirements for verifying domestic abuse for purposes of CalWORKs exemptions and extensions only. Counties may have different standards for verification of abuse for the Homeless Assistance program. See MPP Section 44-211.542.

<sup>110</sup> Subsequent to our site visits, CDSS reviewed Tulare County's domestic-violence criteria, discussed our on-site findings with Tulare County staff and confirmed the existence of the broader written policy.

month time limit. In many circumstances—such as when their monthly cash grants drop below \$10 or they turn 60—recipients need take no special action (e.g., fill out forms or provide verification) to obtain applicable exemptions and extensions. However, when data systems are not working properly, recipients (and their advocates) may still have to petition their workers for applicable exemptions and extensions. To do so, they must first understand that they are eligible for such exemptions and extensions.

According to the site-visit interviews we conducted, the only county-initiated exemption that poses significant problems is the child-support exemption. As we noted in Chapter 2, properly exempting months when cash aid is offset by child-support collections has been a major struggle for counties. The state was slow to provide counties with final rules and the process required merging data from the welfare and child-support departments and their two independent data systems. We examine the child-support exemption in greater detail in the following section.

### **Child-Support Exemption**

Despite all of the attendant difficulties, county officials recognize the importance of the child-support exemption, both because of the number of recipients to whom it applies and because of the number of months exempted from qualified recipients' 60-month clocks. According to the All-County Survey, most counties (48 of 56 responding) have exempted months due to child-support collections, and approximately 25% of California's total CalWORKs caseload has had months exempted as a result of child-support collections.<sup>111</sup>

As shown in Exhibit 4.4, however, the proportion of the caseload that qualified for child-support exemptions varied widely from county to county. The estimates provided by counties ranged from less than 1% to 70%, with an average of 20%.

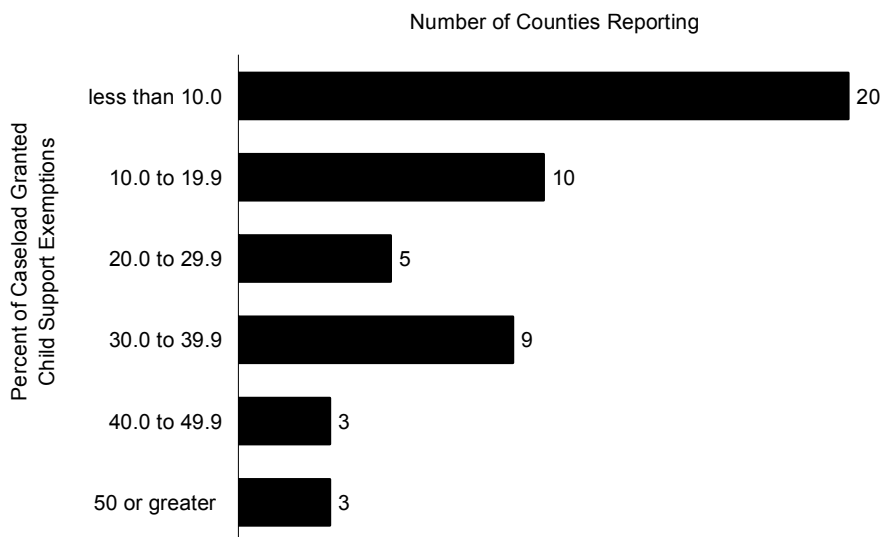
Twenty counties reported to us that at least one-fifth of their adult-headed cases had received child-support exemptions; 15 of those counties reported that 30% or more of their caseload qualified for child-support exemptions. The number of months exempted was nontrivial. As indicated in Exhibit 4.5, 40% of the counties (19 of 48 responding) that reported granting child-support exemptions reported that child-support collections "bought back" over 12 months of CalWORKs benefits on average for each recipient for whom child-support payments were collected.

At this writing, among our six focus counties, only Los Angeles and Riverside counties have created automated processes for tracking months that should be exempted due to child-support collections. Sacramento County is pilot-testing an automated system. Every focus county that has not yet automated this exemption hopes to—time and financial constraints permitting. (See box below summarizing county procedures for exempting months due to child-support collections.)

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<sup>111</sup> The counties reported the percentage of adult-headed cases that obtained child-support exemptions, which we weighted by the county's share of the state's caseload in November 2003 to calculate this statewide statistic.

**Exhibit 4.4**  
**County CalWORKs Cases Obtaining Child-Support Exemptions**



Of the 56 counties responding to the survey, 48 reported exempting months due to child-support collections. Two additional counties estimated the portion of their caseloads that would have been affected had they implemented the child-support exemption at the time of the survey.

Source: All-County Survey; 50 counties responded.

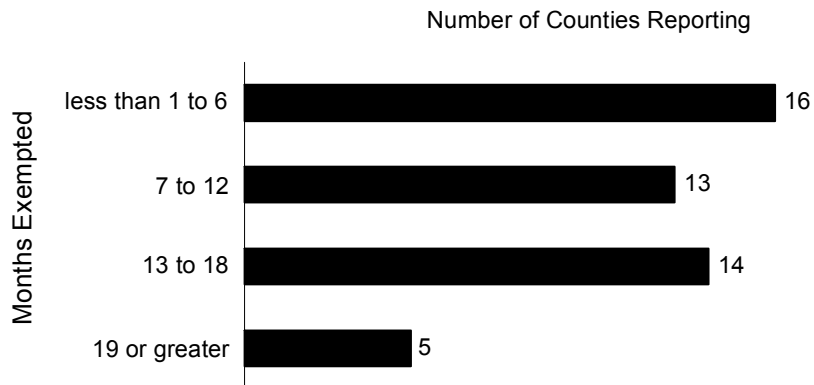
Most focus counties committed substantial personnel and resources to implement the child-support exemption. For example, Orange County set up a special child-support unit. However, not all counties in the state were able to implement this exemption by the time the first group of CalWORKs recipients timed out in January 2003. Moreover, seven counties still had not implemented the child-support exemption when they responded to the All-County Survey three to six months later.

Although CDSS instructed counties to delay imposing 60-month grant reductions until they had determined any applicable child-support exemptions, not all counties complied.<sup>112</sup> One of our focus counties, Tulare County, reported it had not yet implemented the child-support exemption due to the difficulty of developing CalWORKs and child-support data systems that can communicate with one another. Tulare County was tracking child-support collections for recipients, but was not subsequently exempting any months of their CalWORKs cash aid from their 60-month clocks. As a result, the county reduced these recipients' CalWORKs grants prematurely.

<sup>112</sup> According to a CDSS All County Welfare Department Directors letter (December 17, 2002), "Counties must do everything possible to provide adequate child-support exemptions by the legislative deadline. However, the 60-month time limit should not be applied in situations where the exemption review process has not been completed and if case records indicate there have been at least four months of aid since January 1998, in which the \$50 child-support disregard was applied."

**Exhibit 4.5**  
**Estimated Average Duration of Child-Support-Related Exemptions**

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Source: All-County Survey; 48 counties responded to the question.

Sacramento County was also unable to implement the child-support exemption prior to its first group of recipients timing out early in 2003. Sacramento County also reduced grants for all families in which the adults had received 60 months of aid. However, in April 2003, the county began a large-scale review of all the recipients who timed out between January and April 2003. The county then restored full grants to those adult recipients whose grants had been reduced in error.

Alameda County took a very different approach. It flagged cases for which the county had collected over \$200 in child-support payments (an amount often sufficient to exempt at least one month of CalWORKs aid from the 60-month time limit). Even after such households reached their 60-month limit, the county continued to pay their full cash grants until workers determined the number of months that qualified for child-support exemptions. When a county worker found an adult recipient who had been over-compensated (that is, she or he received full cash grants for months beyond what his/her child-support collections warranted), the worker reduced the family's grant by the adult's portion and, following state regulation, further reduced the children's grant by five% of the adult's overpayment per month until the overpayment was recouped by the county.<sup>113,114</sup>

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<sup>113</sup> California Manual of Policy and Procedures 42-352.411.

<sup>114</sup> Labor union and management concerns with regard to scope of work definitions played a role in delaying this process in Alameda County. As a temporary measure, the county charged one non-union management employee with the responsibility of reviewing cases with child-support payments and exempting the appropriate number of CalWORKs months. This staff member eventually moved into a different position, and the new arrangement calls for eligibility workers in a separate benefits center to assume these responsibilities.

Counties do not regularly check the number of months of CalWORKs cash aid that qualify for child-support-related exemptions. Rather, most counties begin checking whether a case has months that can be exempted when the adult nears the 60-month time limit. According to the All-County Survey, 70% of the counties (37 out of 53 responding) that granted child-support exemptions begin identifying child-support-exempt months when cases accumulate a pre-designated number of CalWORKs months, usually about 54 months.

| <b>Procedures for Exempting CalWORKs Months Due to Child-Support Collections</b> |  |
|--|--|
| Alameda  | An Access data base, which collects data from the county welfare data system and the child-support data system: calculates child-support payments for recipients who have accumulated between 54 and 60 countable months of CalWORKs cash aid, identifies months to be exempted, and records residual amounts to be applied in future months. Workers in the Benefits Center are responsible for coding the exemptions in the county data system.  |
| Los Angeles  | Los Angeles County's child-support exemption is fully automated. The county maintains a file that links child-support payment information and CalWORKs time-on-aid data. Child-support data updates monthly; CalWORKs time-on-aid data updates daily. The county's computer system automatically exempts months that are identified from this linked file. Eligibility or employment-services staff need take no additional action.  |
| Orange   | Each month a list of cases with child-support payments is delivered to a special unit dedicated to determining child-support exemptions. This Child Support/Time on Aid (CS/TOA) unit identifies the amount of child support collected by searching child support and cash aid reports, which are available on the county server. From these reports, the unit workers identify the number of months to be exempted by transferring data from the reports to an Excel spreadsheet. The worker then exempts the appropriate months in the county's CalWORKs data system. Workers also verify time on aid and child-support payments received in other California counties by calling contacts in the relevant counties. |
| Riverside  | Riverside County has fully automated its procedures for exempting CalWORKs months due to child-support collections. The county's data system manages both child-support and cash grant information, so Riverside County did not have to link or create new systems, unlike the other focus counties.   |
| Sacramento   | Sacramento County recently developed a new database with both historical and current child-support information, which was made available to all workers in mid-December 2003. The new database pulls information from the county's CalWORKs and child-support data systems. Workers access this database to determine which CalWORKs months may qualify for a child-support exemption in a particular case, and then change the code for the appropriate months in the CalWORKs tracking database.   |
| Tulare   | Tulare County had not yet implemented the child-support exemption.   |

Source: Site visits to Alameda, Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, Sacramento, and Tulare counties, 2003.

The county CalWORKs staff we interviewed told us that one particularly time-consuming aspect of implementing the child-support exemption is the state requirement to construct a complete history of child-support records back to January 1998 before granting this exemption. (Some county staff suggested that it would have been more efficient to credit recent months of child-support payments before having to reconstruct these records back to 1998, especially for recipients who moved across county lines.) To make this possible, each county must update WDTIP to reflect both months of CalWORKs cash assistance and months exempted due to child-support collections for each recipient it has aided since 1998, thereby enabling counties aiding any of these recipients now or in the future to create historically accurate records of countable months of aid.<sup>115</sup> To reconstruct accurate historical records back to 1998, counties may have to consult archival records that are stored off-site and that may not be in electronic format.

Only about half of the counties we surveyed (26 out of 53 responding) reported complying with the state's regulations to request information about child-support collections from counties of prior residence that provided CalWORKs aid.

State policymakers clearly recognized that, over time, child-support collections from absent parents offset the public cost of providing one or more months of CalWORKs cash assistance to low-income families with children. If counties do not uniformly track child-support-exempt months back to 1998 for all recipients, and do not share this information with each other, they may reduce grants prematurely for some households, and are likely treating recipients with prior child-support collections inequitably.

### **Unable to Maintain Employment Extension**

Workers in each of our six focus counties told us that they rarely extend CalWORKs assistance past the 60-month time limit, though they reported regularly exempting months of cash aid. According to the All-County Survey, 61% of the counties (34 out of 56 responding) had yet to grant an extension. Extensions may be granted only rarely because recipients may first qualify for exemptions, and never reach the point where extensions are necessary. However, 45% of the counties (25 out of 56 responding) reported that they had not yet established criteria for granting all of the extensions at the time we conducted the survey.

At the time of our All-County Survey, more than half of the counties (32 out of 50 responding) reported that they had not yet established written criteria for determining whether "an adult is cooperating with welfare-to-work requirements but is incapable of maintaining employment." Some counties may have responded in this fashion because the state Department of Social Services had already issued detailed written criteria with which counties had to comply. This is the only reason for granting an extension that is not also a reason for granting an exemption.<sup>116</sup> To assist workers with implementing this

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<sup>115</sup> CDSS All County Letter No. 02-74, October 1, 2002.

<sup>116</sup> However, the criteria for some of the reasons for exemption that are also reasons for extension are quite different. For example, disability is a reason for exemption and extension, but the criteria that defines a disability exemption are quite different than those that define a disability extension.



extension, the state recently provided a summary of the procedures that county staff should use to determine if a person qualifies. There are four basic scenarios under which an individual may be eligible for this extension:

- A recipient has a specific impairment that makes him or her incapable of maintaining employment and participating in welfare-to-work activities for 20 or more hours per week **and** has a history of participation and full cooperation with welfare-to-work requirements.
- A recipient has a specific impairment that makes him or her incapable of maintaining employment and participating in welfare-to-work activities and is maintaining his/her participation in welfare-to-work activities only through a significant modification of the individual's welfare-to-work activities **and** has a history of participation and full cooperation with welfare-to-work requirements.
- A recipient has a specific impairment that makes him or her incapable or maintaining employment and participating in welfare-to-work activities **and**, though not having a history of full participation and cooperation with welfare-to-work requirement, has maintained a period of participation of six months in the previous 24 months.
- A recipient has a documented impairment or combination of impairments that makes him or her incapable of maintaining employment and participating in welfare-to-work activities **and** due to local labor conditions, there is a lack of employers that can reasonably accommodate their physical and/or mental limitations.

For the purposes of this extension, impairments include: mental problems, substance abuse, learning disabilities, medical problems, and domestic abuse. An important distinction is that these impairments need not be as severe as the disabilities for which recipients are granted exemptions. Rather, an impairment is a condition that limits an individual's ability to perform the physical and/or mental functions necessary to maintain employment or participate in welfare-to-work activities.<sup>117</sup>

For a recipient to be eligible for this extension under any of the above reasons, all other aided adults in the household must also meet one of the extension criteria, although not necessarily this particular criterion.<sup>118, 119</sup>

County staff reported in our interviews that the "unable to maintain employment" extension is particularly challenging to implement because the criteria to qualify for it are narrow and assessing eligibility is complex. The state, however, does not agree that this provision is narrowly constructed. CDSS asserts that it "established criteria in a manner that broadens the ability for needy individuals to continue receiving aid under the extension, while at the same time maintaining the integrity of the CalWORKs 60-month

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<sup>117</sup> California Manual of Policy and Procedures, 42-302.114.

<sup>118</sup> California Manual of Policy and Procedures, 42-302.11.

<sup>119</sup> California Manual of Policy and Procedures, 42-302.114(a)(2).

time limit and reinforcing the program principle that CalWORKs cash aid is temporary.”<sup>120</sup> In addition, counties may establish additional written criteria to determine if an individual is eligible for this extension.<sup>121</sup>

In five of our six focus counties, county workers told us they have significant discretion in deciding whether to grant this extension—more so than with any of the other extensions or exemptions. In Riverside County, for example, each employment-services worker receives a list of the adult recipients in his or her caseload nearing their 60-month time limit. After consulting county-provided guidance on determining extensions, the worker decides whether to grant this extension, with supervisor approval.

Sacramento County distributes a flow chart that makes explicit the factors a worker should consider in determining whether to grant this extension (see Appendix C for a copy of this flow chart). Although the flow chart is a useful tool, ultimately the decision remains that of the individual worker. Orange County, on the other hand, limits worker discretion in determining recipient eligibility for this extension. In that county, all workers with shared responsibility for a case must first agree that such an extension is warranted. If there is agreement, the workers then make a joint recommendation to the program manager, who has the final authority to grant this extension.

### **Conclusions and Policy Recommendations**

Although simple on its face, tracking five years of cash assistance has posed challenges of varying degrees for each of our six focus counties. Counties must devote a large amount of staff time to reviewing historical case records and to verifying exemptions and extensions. As counties and individual staff members become more accustomed to these responsibilities, we can expect the burden of tracking countable time on aid to lessen. In addition, after the first group of recipients timed out in early 2003, a smaller number of recipients reach their 60-month limits in succeeding months.

The WDTIP database is still not operating reliably, although Los Angeles County’s inclusion in the system in September 2004 and Stanislaus County’s in August 2005 have substantially improved the system’s completeness. However, until WDTIP includes historical data for receipt of CalWORKs cash aid and child-support collections for all recipients in all counties (back to January 1998), and until the system’s data uploading and reporting glitches are resolved, its utility in tracking countable months of aid over time and across counties remains impaired.

The child-support exemption is perhaps the most difficult component of the time-limit policy for counties to implement. Some counties are struggling to find efficient ways to share data between their welfare and child-support agencies, and some counties have not yet implemented this exemption.

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<sup>120</sup> CDSS memo to BPA, January 2005.

<sup>121</sup> California Manual of Policy and Procedures, 42-302.114(b)(2).

In order to comply with state law and regulations, and for the sake of treating recipients equitably, regardless of where in California they live, the state should help counties resolve their remaining data-sharing problems both intracounty and statewide, with a fully operational and reliable WDTIP system. It is also important that the state work with the counties to implement uniform methods for crediting recipients with child-support collections made in counties of prior residence, just as the counties attempt to track CalWORKs benefits paid in counties of prior residence. We expect that these data collection efforts will improve over time as counties further develop and improve their procedures.

Staff and recipient understanding are critical to the fair and accurate application of certain exemptions and extensions, particularly for those conditions or situations that recipients must reveal to their caseworkers. Additional staff training and more thorough communication with recipients may be needed. In the case of the domestic-abuse exemption, additional steps may be necessary to ensure that recipients who are eligible know about and are able to obtain this exemption, regardless of where they happen to live.

***Recommendation***

Considering the difficulty many victims of domestic abuse have revealing their home situations, state policymakers should reinforce the existing requirement that counties accept self-identification as sufficient verification for the domestic-abuse exemption and extension.

***Recommendation***

The state should ensure that all counties have established written criteria in place for granting exemptions and extensions and should provide guidance for counties on particularly complex or confusing parts of the regulations concerning exemptions and extensions.

In the last year of this study, we will examine how procedures to track countable months of CalWORKs aid and exemption and extension procedures have changed over time.

## 5. SERVICES PROVIDED NEAR AND AFTER THE CALWORKS 60-MONTH TIME LIMIT

### Key Findings

- The majority of counties reported that they offer targeted services to recipients who are nearing or have reached the time limit. The kinds of services offered and who is eligible to receive them vary widely from county to county.
- Focus-group participants who were approaching the time limit were often uncertain about what services were available to them and worried about their continued eligibility for these services after timing out.<sup>122</sup>
- Most county staff are knowledgeable about post-time-limit services that counties are required to provide, but many are not fully informed about other services for timed-out recipients.
- Due to recent budget cuts, counties are scaling back or terminating optional services to former recipients in general, and to timed-out recipients in particular.

In this chapter, we discuss the benefits and services counties are providing to recipients who are nearing or have reached their 60-month time limit, and how the counties administer these services and benefits, some of which are required and some of which are optional. We begin by summarizing service options under CalWORKs. We then discuss key state- and federally mandated benefits that continue to be available to timed-out adults—child care, food stamps, and Medi-Cal. We conclude by highlighting the challenges counties face when providing services to those nearing and reaching their CalWORKs 60-month time limit. These findings will provide additional context for the second year of our study, in which we plan to analyze the utilization of services by CalWORKs recipients who are approaching the time limit and by those who have already timed out.

### **Background: Policies Governing CalWORKs Services**

In order to help current CalWORKs recipients achieve self-sufficiency, state regulations require counties to provide them with certain employment and support services (see box below). The state also permits counties to provide these CalWORKs-related services to

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<sup>122</sup> Focus groups are in-depth qualitative interviews with a select group of CalWORKs recipients nearing the 60-month time limit. These groups are not necessarily representative of the CalWORKs population. Focus-group data are qualitative and provide detailed information about patterns, themes, or perspectives on a particular issue. It is methodologically inappropriate to report focus-group data by percentage, frequencies, or statistics. See Appendix A for further details about the focus groups that we conducted for this report.

former recipients who are no longer receiving CalWORKs benefits.<sup>123</sup> Counties are given considerable flexibility in determining the type, duration, and eligibility criteria for employment and support services. However, counties must provide child-care assistance, food stamps, and Medi-Cal to current *and* former CalWORKs recipients according to federal and state regulations.

### Overview of Services for Current CalWORKs Recipients

In order to help current CalWORKs recipients obtain and keep jobs, counties are *required* to provide them with all of the following supportive services:

- Child-care assistance.
- Transportation assistance, such as bus passes, gas vouchers, and car repair.
- Ancillary expenses, which include the cost of books, tools, clothing specifically required for the job, fees and other necessary costs.
- Personal counseling to help recipients adjust to their training assignments.

Allowable activities<sup>a</sup> include:

- Mental health services, including case management and treatment.
- Substance abuse services, including evaluation, treatment, employment counseling, provision of community service jobs, or other appropriate services.
- Domestic-violence services.

In addition, the county *may* provide these same services for up to 12 months to recipients who become employed and leave assistance.

<sup>a</sup> “Allowable activities” count towards a CalWORKs recipient’s welfare-to-work hour requirement if they help recipients obtain and retain employment.

Source: California Welfare and Institution Code 11322.6, 11323.2, 11325.7, 11325.8, 11495.

The state does not require counties to provide any special or additional services to long-term recipients who are approaching their 60-month time limit, or to those whose cash aid has been extended past their 60-month limit. Like any other current recipients, they receive regular CalWORKs services. As we will discuss below, however, some counties do offer additional services to recipients nearing the time limit.

<sup>123</sup> Counties are allowed to use their CalWORKs Single Allocation to provide services to former CalWORKs recipients as long as they ensure provision of services to current CalWORKs recipients before allowing any optional services to former recipients. Source: All-County Letter 02-92, December 3, 2002.

Adult recipients who exhaust their 60 months of cash aid and whose grants are cut are treated like other former recipients, even though their children continue to receive reduced CalWORKs cash benefits.<sup>124</sup> Counties may, at their discretion, provide timed-out recipients with the same services they offer to other former CalWORKs recipients, including post-employment services (which can include education, training, and job placement assistance) and other support services like those listed in the box above. Most of these services can be provided for up to 12 months after recipients leave the program or time out and most are limited to former recipients who are employed.<sup>125</sup>

Counties have the option of providing case management and support services to timed-out recipients who are not employed.<sup>126</sup> However, should they do so, the state requires that they engage these timed-out recipients in community service activities before providing any TANF-funded services. Alternatively, counties may provide these services to unemployed timed-out recipients without engaging them in community service activities if they pay for the services out of the counties' discretionary funds, including Performance Incentive funds.<sup>127</sup> Counties interested in providing more services to this population face budget constraints that may limit their ability to do so.

Like other former recipients, timed-out recipients are guaranteed child-care subsidies for up to two years after leaving cash aid. Food stamps and Medi-Cal continue to be available to timed-out recipients as long as they remain income eligible. Exhibit 5.1 summarizes the policies governing the provision of services to recipients nearing or reaching the time limit.

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<sup>124</sup> California Welfare and Institution Code 11320.15.

<sup>125</sup> CDSS permits the counties to provide post-employment and support services to employed former recipients for up to 12 months if they are not provided by the employers, if they are unavailable from other sources, and are needed to maintain current jobs or to advance into better jobs. California Welfare and Institution Code 11500.

<sup>126</sup> CDSS All County Letter 02-92, December 3, 2002.

<sup>127</sup> The Performance Incentives Fund was created in 1997 as part of CalWORKs to reward counties that reduce grant payments because recipients leave CalWORKs for employment, increase the earnings of current recipients, and/or divert applicants from becoming recipients. Counties can spend the Performance Incentives funds on CalWORKs-related programs and services according to the TANF MOE expenditure guidelines. (CDSS County Fiscal Letter No. 98/99-54, November 20, 1998).

**Exhibit 5.1**  
**State Policies Governing Services for CalWORKs Recipients by**  
**Program Participation Status**

|   | Recipients who have not<br>timed out   | Timed-out recipients  |
|---|--|---|
| <u>County-Defined Services</u>                    |  |   |
| Welfare-to-Work Services <sup>a</sup>             | County must provide these services. The county has flexibility to design services, but must comply with state law and regulations. | County option. The state limits eligibility for these services to adults engaged in community service activities. Counties may provide these services to unemployed timed-out recipients who are not involved in community service activities if they are paid for out of counties' discretionary funds, including Performance Incentive funds. |
| Post-Employment / Retention Services <sup>b</sup> | County option. County has discretion over type and duration of services. These services are for individuals who are employed.      | County option. The state requires that counties limit eligibility for these services to those adults who are employed when they leave aid or who become employed within 12 months of leaving CalWORKs. The duration of services is limited to 12 months after date of hire. State does not require community service.                           |

**Exhibit 5.1 (continued)**  
**State Policies Governing Services for CalWORKs Recipients by Program Participation Status**

|                       | Recipients who have not<br>timed out  | Timed-out recipients   |
|-----------------------|---|--|
| <u>Other Programs</u> |   |  |
| Child Care            | Recipients with age-eligible children, who are engaged in welfare-to-work activities or other required CalWORKs-related activities, qualify to receive Stage 1 and/or 2 child care. | Eligible adults must work or participate in training/educational activities and have age-eligible children. Eligible adults are guaranteed assistance (in Stage 1 and/or Stage 2 child care) during the first 2 years after leaving CalWORKs. Eligible adults can continue to receive (Stage 3) child care beginning in month 25, so long as their earnings are below 75% of the state median income and the state appropriates sufficient funds. <sup>c</sup> |
| Food Stamps           | Must be income-eligible.  | Must be income-eligible. No certification is required until the fifth month after leaving CalWORKs.  |
| Medi-Cal              | Categorically eligible for 1931(b) Cash Assistance Medi-Cal.  | Automatically shifted to Transitional Medi-Cal Assistance. Adult's eligibility reviewed at annual recertification.   |

<sup>a</sup> Welfare-to-work services are designed to lead to work, including job readiness and training, job search assistance, skills assessment and development, and supportive services, including transportation, child care, and ancillary expenses.

<sup>b</sup> Post-employment services are intended to help adults maintain their jobs or advance to jobs with better wages and/or benefits.

<sup>c</sup> The provision of Stage 3 child care services is subject to future budget allocations.

Source: CDSS All County Letter No. 00-57, August 25, 2000.

CDSS All County Letter No. 00-72, October 11, 2000.

CDSS All County Information Notice No. I-32-01, May 10, 2001.

CDSS All County Letter No. 02-92, December 3, 2002.

CDSS All-County Welfare Director Letter No. 02-59, December 23, 2002.

Welfare and Institution Code 11323.6.

BPA-conducted interviews with CDSS and DHS program and administrative staff, 2003 and 2004.



## **County Implementation of Discretionary Services**

Across counties, there is significant variation in the discretionary services offered to CalWORKs recipients. For example, some counties choose to target discretionary services to recipients who have yet to reach their 60-month time limit, while others continue to provide services and case management to adults who have timed out of cash assistance.

### ***Services Provided to Recipients Approaching the Time Limit***

Although there is no state requirement to do so, the majority of counties reported that they offer services specially developed for long-term recipients nearing their 60-month time limit. According to the All-County Survey, nearly 60% (33 out of 56 counties) were offering such services in 2003. In most cases, these services are intended to help recipients find jobs, and include job search services, referrals to Workforce Investment Act services (provided by the Employment Development Department), job coaching, and intensive welfare-to-work activities for those close to reaching the time limit. Counties are providing most of these services to recipients who are six to nine months from reaching the time limit.

We found that all six focus counties emphasize efforts to assess and respond to the unique needs of families whose adults are about to exhaust their cash aid. During our site visits, we learned that two of the six focus counties also offer services specifically targeted to long-term recipients approaching the time limit (see box below). Consistent with the findings from our All-County Survey, these targeted services are primarily aimed at getting adult recipients jobs, and include needs assessments, job search supports, and referrals to community service providers. For example, in Alameda County, employment counselors intensify their case management and increase their level of engagement with recipients who are approaching the time limit. Additionally, specially designed Employment Information Sessions help recipients with their job search activities. In Sacramento County, social workers conduct home visits to assess families' barriers to employment and other needs, and then make appropriate referrals.

### ***Services Provided to Recipients Granted Extensions***

Adult recipients who are granted extensions are eligible to receive the same support services provided to other CalWORKs recipients. However, about one-third of the counties responding to our All-County Survey (18 of 56 counties) reported that they offer supplemental services that are specially developed for recipients who are granted extensions. These special services are similar to the services counties provide to adult recipients who are approaching the time limit. Counties most frequently mentioned providing intensive case management and job search assistance, but they also reported helping recipients apply for federal Supplemental Security Income (SSI) benefits, and referring recipients to programs aimed at those with special needs, such as disabilities or learning difficulties.<sup>128</sup>

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<sup>128</sup> The SSI Program is a federally funded cash assistance program for the poor aged 65 or older, blind, or disabled. California also provides State Supplementary Payments (SSP), which augment SSI benefits. Both

### **County Support for CalWORKs Recipients Approaching the Time Limit**

#### **Alameda County's Intensive Case Management and Employment Counseling**

In Alameda County, employment counselors provide intensive case management to recipients who are expected to reach the time limit within six months. This includes developing special welfare-to-work plans, referrals to language-specific community-based service providers, home visits by social workers, and intensive employment services called Employment Information Sessions. (EIS services are similar to Job Club services.) EIS provides optional group and one-on-one employment counseling sessions on a weekly basis, and the county sends regular job leads to email addresses that it provides to these recipients.

#### **Sacramento County's Home Visiting Program for Long-Term Recipients**

In Sacramento County, social workers visit the homes of recipients who have received 54 countable months of CalWORKs cash aid and volunteer for a home visit. The purpose of these home visits is to identify possible barriers to employment and to help recipients plan for the coming grant reductions. The social workers conduct needs assessments and make service referrals if necessary. Social workers are well trained to recognize problems, such as mental-health and drug and alcohol issues, but because they are not CalWORKs case managers, they do not assess recipients for conditions that may qualify them for exemptions or extensions. These home visits are optional; recipients may elect to forgo them.

### ***Services Provided to Timed-Out Recipients***

Counties can provide timed-out recipients with the same services they provide to other former recipients and/or they can provide special services to them. Most counties offer timed-out recipients some services allowable under CalWORKs, but because of the considerable flexibility counties have, there is wide variation across counties in the type and duration of services provided, and the extent to which timed-out recipients are eligible to receive such services.

According to our All-County Survey, 49 of the 56 counties (88%) provided some optional services to timed-out adult recipients. As shown in Exhibit 5.2, most counties (about 75%) provide domestic-abuse counseling, mental-health services, and substance-abuse treatment to their timed-out recipients. Fewer than half of the counties offer help with transportation (41%) or job-related expenses, such as purchasing tools and uniforms (39%). Several counties noted that they provide these support services only as part of a larger package of job-retention services. In these counties, if timed-out recipients are unemployed, they have access to neither job-related services nor support services.

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SSI and SSP benefits are administered by the Social Security Administration. Source: California Department of Social Services Web site: [www.dss.cahwnet.gov/cdssweb/Supplement\\_176.htm](http://www.dss.cahwnet.gov/cdssweb/Supplement_176.htm).

**Exhibit 5.2**  
**Optional Services Provided by Counties to Recipients Who Have Reached**  
**Their 60-Month Time Limits**

| Adults who have reached the time limit and whose CalWORKs cash grants have been cut remain eligible for: | Counties with Services |         |
|--|------------------------|---------|
|  | Number                 | Percent |
| Any Type of Service  | 49                     | 87.5    |
| Domestic-Abuse Counseling  | 43                     | 76.8    |
| Mental-Health Services   | 42                     | 75.0    |
| Substance-Abuse Counseling and Treatment   | 42                     | 75.0    |
| Transportation   | 23                     | 41.1    |
| Tools and Uniforms Needed for Work   | 22                     | 39.3    |
| <b>Total Number of Counties That Responded</b>   | <b>56</b>              |         |

Note: "Any Type of Service" includes job retention services and referrals. All former recipients, irrespective of their accumulated time on CalWORKs, remain eligible for food stamps, child care, and Medi-Cal as long as they meet income and other requirements.

Source: All-County Survey.

In the All-County Survey we asked if counties had developed any services specifically for timed-out recipients. Of 56 counties, 26 reported that they had, including services to help recipients apply for other public-assistance or community programs.

In field visits to our six focus counties, we found wide variation in the services provided to timed-out recipients. For example, Los Angeles County has created the Post Time Limit (PTL) program, which is specifically designed to help timed-out recipients find full-time employment. Orange, Riverside, and Sacramento counties provided timed-out recipients with the same job-retention services they offered to any former CalWORKs recipients who were employed and within 12 months of leaving the program. In Sacramento, timed-out recipients were also eligible for the Welfare-to-Work Grant Program administered by the Sacramento Employment and Training Agency (SETA), which provides employment assistance to hard-to-employ individuals. Alameda and Tulare counties offered few optional support or employment services to former recipients, including timed-out recipients, due to budget shortfalls.

While most counties were providing some optional services to timed-out recipients, budget shortfalls may constrain them from doing so in future. Even Los Angeles County is unsure whether it will be able to continue funding its PTL program beyond the current fiscal year. Given California's current fiscal difficulties, it is unlikely that many counties will expand their services to timed-out recipients in the foreseeable future. It is more likely that counties will have to eliminate or curtail some of these services.

### **Los Angeles County's Post-Time-Limit Program**

Los Angeles created the Post Time Limit (PTL) program to help timed-out adult recipients who are not working full time and need employment assistance. Enrollment is not automatic; interested individuals must sign up for the program. Enrollees are eligible for all of the employment services available under the regular CalWORKs program, including job search assistance, access to a job developer, transportation and child-care subsidies, mental-health and substance-abuse services, and assistance with job-related expenses (e.g., uniforms, tools, and professional fees). Caseworkers can also help them obtain other services in the community, including subsidized housing, eviction-prevention payments, and assistance with utilities. Participating timed-out recipients are also required to take "job internships" of at least 32 hours per month. PTL caseworkers are flexible about what activities will count toward this requirement. Some recipients participate in community work experience, while others work part-time in unsubsidized jobs or participate in training programs.

The PTL program is staffed by a special unit, and these caseworkers have smaller caseloads in order to work more intensively with these participants. Their caseloads are 50 to 60 compared to over 100 in the regular CalWORKs program. In addition, timed-out recipients who are working full time are eligible to receive post-employment services, as are other employed former recipients.

### ***Service Utilization***

In the focus-group sessions we conducted, recipients who were close to reaching the 60-month time limit told us they valued county-provided services. They said that access to employment and support services, such as job-skill training, mental health counseling, and substance abuse services, were particularly helpful, and they were concerned about losing these services after they exhaust their time on aid.

Despite the appreciation expressed by the focus-group participants, it is not clear that CalWORKs recipients who time out make much use of the services that are available to them. For example, Los Angeles County staff reported that few eligible recipients enrolled in the PTL program, even though it was widely advertised. Similarly, in Alameda County, few recipients who are approaching the time limit take advantage of the Employment Information Sessions (EIS), which are specially designed to help them find jobs.

Although we will not be able to assess the overall utilization of available services until the second year of this study, our first-year site visits suggest a number of factors that may contribute to recipients' low utilization of these services. To begin with, according to our focus groups, recipients often do not appear to know about the services available to them after they reach the time limit. This may stem from the fact that, when talking with recipients, caseworkers are less likely to mention post-time-limit services than they are

other aspects of the time-limit policy, such as the 60-month limit on aid and possible exemptions. (We discussed these findings in detail in Chapter 3.)

Additionally, when adults time out, county workers stop actively managing their cases. Prior to timing out, adult recipients are required to participate in certain welfare-to-work activities. After recipients time out and their cash grants are cut, caseworkers reported that they find it difficult to elicit cooperation from adults who now have a choice about whether to cooperate. Consequently, county staff and timed-out adults communicate infrequently, even when children remain on cash aid in the Safety Net program. Thus, former recipients are less likely to find out about any services available to them once their CalWORKs cases close.<sup>129</sup>

Another reason timed-out adults may not take full advantage of the post-time-limit services available to them is their own lack of interest. For example, in 2003, Sacramento County conducted a study that generally found that timed-out individuals do not want to maintain contact with CalWORKs officials once their benefits are cut, even when the adults remained eligible for further benefits and services.<sup>130</sup> If this is the prevailing attitude among timed-out recipients, it is not surprising that they are not making optimal use of post-time-limit services.

### **County Implementation of Child Care, Food Stamps, and Medi-Cal**

Almost all CalWORKs recipients are also enrolled in the Food Stamp and Medi-Cal programs, which provide important additional support to them and their families. Many recipients also receive subsidized child care while they work or are engaged in approved welfare-to-work activities. Counties must administer food stamps, Medi-Cal, and child-care assistance according to federal and state regulations.

Current CalWORKs recipients, and those who have been granted extensions past their 60-month time limit, remain categorically eligible for Medi-Cal, retain eligibility for food stamps so long as they meet federal income and asset tests, and continue to qualify for child-care subsidies so long as they work or participate in approved welfare-to-work activities.

Former CalWORKs recipients—including those who have exhausted their 60 months of cash aid and had their grants cut—are also likely to remain eligible for these important, non-time-limited benefits.<sup>131</sup> In the following sections, we discuss how the counties have implemented these programs for timed-out recipients.

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<sup>129</sup> Some counties are making extra efforts to inform former recipients. Los Angeles County GAIN Case Managers repeatedly mail out letters to participants beginning at 51 months of aid inviting them to Time Limit Workshops. Flyers are mailed out monthly to this population to provide them with a toll free number for additional information regarding Post Time Limit Services.

<sup>130</sup> County of Sacramento (2003). Internal policy memo.

<sup>131</sup> Congress deliberately chose not to impose time limits on receipt of food stamps or Medicaid. So long as individuals or families meet the federal income and assets tests, they retain eligibility for these programs, regardless of their eligibility for TANF or CalWORKs. At this writing, California provides child care to

### ***Subsidized Child Care for Timed-Out Recipients***

According to our interviews, state officials regard child-care assistance as essential to helping CalWORKs recipients achieve self-sufficiency through work. Current recipients are eligible for subsidized child care when they work or participate in approved welfare-to-work activities. Former recipients automatically retain eligibility for child-care assistance for up to two years after leaving CalWORKs.<sup>132</sup> Timed-out recipients whose cash grants are cut are treated as former CalWORKs recipients, and they remain eligible for child care under the same rules.

According to the All-County Survey, 71% of California's counties (40 of the 56 responding) reported that recipients who reach their 60-month time limit automatically retain eligibility for child care. Other counties redetermine eligibility, but the process does not require recipients to reapply for the assistance and is handled by the agencies or by Alternative Payment Program contractors.<sup>133</sup> In our six focus counties, staff reported that the transition to post-time-limit child-care assistance was seamless and problem-free for timed-out recipients.

However, implementing the transition to post-time-limit child-care assistance is not entirely problem-free for the responsible county staff. To begin with, there is administrative complexity. County staff noted that two state departments (CDSS and the California Department of Education) and, in some counties, outside contractors, are involved in administering different stages of child-care assistance.

Staff also worried about recent reductions in child care funding at the state level, including the rates at which child-care providers are reimbursed. Staff voiced concern that lower reimbursement rates will discourage some providers from accepting the children of parents relying on state subsidies. Fewer providers will make it more difficult for current and former recipients to secure stable child care. Under funding arrangements to date, CalWORKs recipients who remain income-eligible for child care may receive up to two years of Stage 2 child care subsidies after they leave cash aid. Thereafter, they remain eligible for Stage 3 child care subsidies, without time limit, so long as funds are available. In the event that Stage 3 child care appropriations are insufficient, these former recipients may apply for child care subsidies through the Alternative Payment Program (APP). APP funds are appropriated annually and, to date, these appropriations have not been sufficient to accommodate all those who apply and are eligible to receive

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low-income families who meet state-set income tests and are in a work activity, so long as state appropriations are available.

<sup>132</sup> CDSS requires counties to provide child-care subsidies to former CalWORKs recipients whether they are timed out or their cases close for other reasons. Within the first two years of leaving CalWORKs, former recipients who need child care to work or attend employment-training or education programs and who earn less than 75% of the state median income are automatically eligible to receive subsidized child care through so-called "Stage 3" child-care assistance, as long as state funding is available. Up until now, Stage 3 funding has been available. California Welfare and Institution Code 11323.2(1).

<sup>133</sup> The Alternative Payment Program (APP) is a child care subsidy program that is funded by the California Department of Education and is administered by its contractors. These contractors do not provide child care themselves but pay for the child care of eligible families in licensed family child care homes, centers, or exempt child care situations. APP contractors serve specific geographic areas. Kelch (2002).

subsidies.<sup>134</sup> Taken together, reductions in child-care spending, reductions in provider rates, and continual budget woes may limit the future availability of child-care assistance for welfare leavers, particularly timed-out recipients.

Although counties are required to provide child-care subsidies to former CalWORKs recipients, including timed-out recipients, for up to two years after they leave CalWORKs cash aid, focus-group participants were confused about their eligibility for child care after they reach the time limit. They did not understand key aspects of child care policies for former recipients, such as eligibility criteria or potential co-payments. In many recipients' eyes, child care is one of the most significant supports they receive, and their uncertainty about the availability of child-care subsidies beyond the time limit helps to explain their concern about the future.

### ***Food Stamps for Timed-Out Adults***

Food stamps provide an important supplement to CalWORKs cash assistance. When timed-out adults lose their cash grants, most of them remain eligible for food stamps. In fact, Food Stamp benefits usually increase as a household's cash income declines. (Chapter 2 presents income simulations showing how Food Stamp benefits compensate, in part, for losses in CalWORKs cash grants for timed-out adults.) About 60% of counties (34 of 56 responding) we surveyed in the All-County Survey reported that timed-out adults' eligibility for food stamps is presumptive and automatic, at least through the end of their certification periods. Other counties re-evaluate eligibility for food stamps when recipients reach their 60-month time limit. Recent state regulations, which were issued after our All-County Survey was conducted, clarify that all CalWORKs recipients should continue receiving Food Stamp benefits for the first five months after they leave CalWORKs, regardless of their previous annual recertification dates.<sup>135</sup>

Staff in our six focus counties said they had little trouble ensuring continued Food Stamp benefits to families with timed-out adults. This is usually because the same CalWORKs eligibility workers continue to handle timed-out cases as these families are shifted from the regular CalWORKs program to the Safety Net program. In those instances where the entire family loses its CalWORKs cash grant, the case becomes a "Non-Assistance Food Stamps" case (food stamps for non-CalWORKs recipients), which may cause it to be transferred to another caseworker. Although former CalWORKs recipients do not need to initiate the transfer themselves, the transition often involves a new caseworker and, in some counties, additional paperwork. In Los Angeles County, former recipients may be required to reapply for food stamps at different offices when their recertification date comes up, depending on the services offered at particular offices. The additional steps

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<sup>134</sup> Among other changes to child care funding, in his fiscal year 2005-2006 budget, the governor proposed to limit former CalWORKs recipients to a total of three years of child care subsidies (funded through a combination of Stage 2 and Stage 3 funds). Thereafter, these former recipients could seek APP funding or other child care subsidies for which they may be eligible. However, all other sources of child care funding are limited appropriations that are unlikely to meet the growing demand. This proposal was dropped from the final approved budget for FY 05-06, but may reappear in the future.

<sup>135</sup> CDSS All County Letter No. 03-66, December 30, 2003. The state changed its regulation in order to take advantage of this provision permitted by federal law.

required to transfer to Non-Assistance Food Stamps could potentially create disruptions in receipt of food stamps for those families leaving CalWORKs cash aid altogether. However, staff in our six focus counties did not report any such problems.

### ***Medi-Cal for Timed-Out Recipients***

Current CalWORKs recipients are categorically eligible for Medi-Cal (California's Medicaid program), which provides health care services for low-income families and is funded by federal and state funds. Medi-Cal eligibility determination can be cumbersome for county staff. Most CalWORKs households receive Medi-Cal under the "Section 1931(b)" Cash Assistance Medi-Cal program.<sup>136</sup> If those families leave cash assistance, they may continue to receive Medi-Cal benefits through the 1931(b) Medi-Cal Only program, so long as they remain income-eligible, or through the Transitional Medi-Cal program for one year, if they leave the program because of increased earnings.<sup>137</sup>

The process for continuing Medi-Cal eligibility for the families of timed-out recipients is similar to that for food stamps, and is even more likely to be automatic. About 86% of the counties we surveyed (48 of 56 responding) reported that Medi-Cal eligibility for the families of timed-out recipients is presumptive and automatic. We also found from our site-visit interviews that Medi-Cal coverage for Safety Net program families is seamless. As with food stamps, if timed-out recipients lose all cash assistance, their cases are transferred to different workers. In either event, however, the county staff we interviewed reported that timed-out recipients and their families are retaining eligibility for Medi-Cal, as intended, without any notable problems.

When CalWORKs was first implemented, there was widespread concern among policymakers and advocates that eligible former recipients would be inadvertently dropped from the Medi-Cal and Food Stamp programs when time limits on their cash aid took effect. To address this concern, CDSS directed counties to ensure that timed-out recipients continued to receive Medi-Cal and Food Stamp benefits so long as they remained income eligible. These early efforts appear to have paid off. In a forthcoming report, using county and state administrative records, we will confirm whether eligible timed-out recipients continue to receive Food Stamp and Medi-Cal benefits as intended.<sup>138</sup>

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<sup>136</sup> Section 1931(b) refers to a section of the federal Medicaid statute contained in Title XIX of the Social Security Act. Established by the 1996 federal welfare overhaul and implemented in 1998, this program provides Medi-Cal eligibility to those who are currently eligible for CalWORKs or who would have been eligible for AFDC (using that program's rules as they were in effect on July 16, 1996), regardless of whether they receive cash aid.

<sup>137</sup> The Transitional Medi-Cal (TMC) program extends Medi-Cal eligibility for 12 months to individuals losing AFDC/CalWORKs or 1931(b) benefits because of increased earnings. In 1998, the state supplemented the federally mandated TMC with an additional 12 months for adults. However, in September 2003 the state cut back the extra year of Medi-Cal benefits, offering only the federally mandated 12-month extension.

<sup>138</sup> Recent studies of former recipients' use of Medi-Cal and food stamps include MaCurdy, Marrufo, and O'Brien-Strain, 2003; Gresenz and Klerman, 2002.



## **Implementation Challenges**

In analyzing the results from our All-County Survey, Staff Survey, and six focus county site-visit interviews and focus groups, we identified three key areas of concern: (1) county staff confusion about some of the optional services available to timed-out recipients, (2) recipients' confusion about the benefits and services available to them after they exhaust their cash aid, and (3) the effect of budget cuts on the counties' ability to provide services to welfare leavers, particularly those who time out. We discuss each, in turn, below.

### ***Staff Knowledge***

The Staff Survey reveals that, on average, staff in the focus counties are well briefed about the required post-time-limit benefits available to recipients (i.e., food stamps, Medi-Cal, and child care benefits). As shown in Exhibit 5.3, staff in the focus counties were well informed about recipients' continued eligibility for these benefits.

Staff are less knowledgeable, however, about the optional transportation services available to timed-out recipients. Transportation services are not available in every county: According to our interviews with administrators in the focus counties, transportation services for recipients who time out are only available in Los Angeles and Sacramento Counties. However, fewer than 50% of staff in Sacramento, Riverside, and Orange Counties correctly understood their counties' respective policies with regard to transportation services for timed-out adults. This lack of knowledge may have been due to changing policies in these counties. Unlike Medi-Cal, child care, and food stamps, which are required, counties may choose whether or not to provide transportation services to timed-out individuals. As discussed below, focus counties may be changing their policies about optional services in the face of budget constraints. This uncertainty may lead to confusion about the availability of these services among recipients and staff.

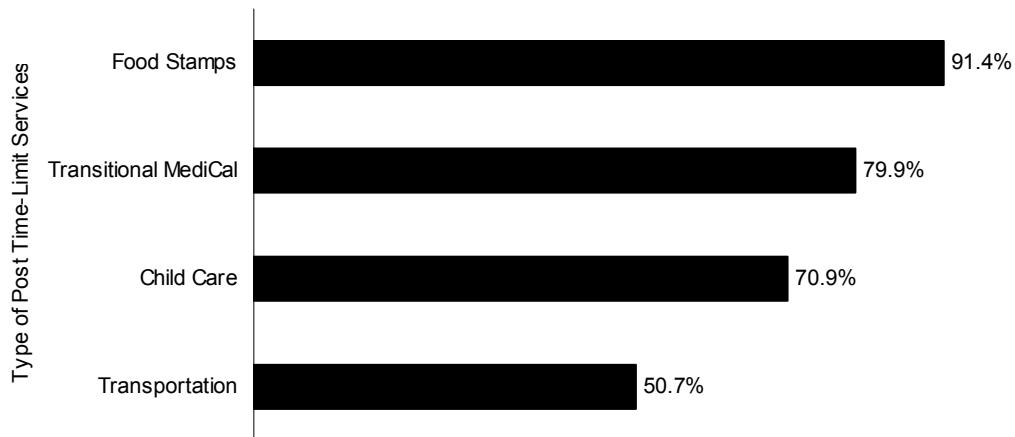
### ***Lack of Information Among Recipients***

Recipients approaching the time limit are often unaware of the benefits and support services that might be available to them after they exhaust their CalWORKs cash aid. Recipients in our focus groups who were within six months of the time limit commonly assumed that once they exhausted their time on aid and their cash benefits were reduced, they would lose access to other CalWORKs-related services, such as child care. Many of them were also unsure about their continued eligibility for food stamps and Medi-Cal. They reported that they did not know if these benefits and services would continue, or how they would fill the void if they did not.

Recipient confusion about post-time-limit benefits and services was consistent throughout our focus groups. Their confusion may be explained, in part, by what county workers communicate to them. For example, the county staff we interviewed told us that they spend a lot of time discussing how much time on aid remains, and how recipients can make the best use of that time with welfare-to-work activities. By contrast, they spend relatively little time talking about post-time-limit benefits and services. Some counties have created special informational meetings for recipients nearing the time limit,

at which post-time-limit benefits and services are more carefully reviewed, but these programs are voluntary, and few recipients participate.

**Exhibit 5.3**  
**Percent of County Staff Correctly Identifying Post-Time-Limit Services**



Source: Staff Survey in six focus counties. Questions A4 a, b, c, d.

Note: Staff were deemed correct when they properly identified available services and did not express uncertainty.

### ***Financial Constraints***

Although the state gives counties considerable flexibility to design services for recipients approaching or reaching their 60-month time limit, the counties' ability to take advantage of this flexibility is severely constrained by limited resources. County officials and caseworkers told us that services are critical for timed-out adults, many of whom require continued assistance to address their hard-to-solve barriers to employment and self-sufficiency. However, the state mandates that counties serve current CalWORKs recipients first. In the present resource-strained environment, after serving their active CalWORKs cases, many counties may be unable to afford the cost of providing optional services to timed-out adults. The staff we interviewed in several counties told us they were worried about the future of services for timed-out individuals.

Indeed, budget cuts have already led some counties, such as Tulare, to stop providing special services for both timed-out recipients and those approaching the time limit. If the fiscal situation worsens, more counties may be forced to cancel or scale back the services they now provide to timed-out recipients. Given these circumstances, it is all the more critical that counties help recipients as much as possible before they reach the time limit.

## **Summary of Chapter Findings and Policy Implications**

State policy does not promote more intensive services for adults nearing their time limit or for those who have already timed out. However, some counties opt to provide special services targeted to adults nearing the time limit or timed-out adults, usually aimed at helping these individuals obtain employment. A majority of counties reported offering special services targeted to current CalWORKs recipients who are nearing the end of their time on aid. Eligibility for those services, and the types of services offered, varies widely from county to county.

Adults who have timed out, or are close to doing so, often do not take advantage of special services even in those counties that offer them. Low utilization rates are puzzling given that recipients close to reaching the time limit repeatedly told us in focus groups that they greatly value such services and worry about losing them when they reach the time limit.

In general, county staff are knowledgeable about the required post-time-limit programs and services, such as Medi-Cal, food stamps, and child care, but are less clear about optional services, such as transportation. Because service-related policies can change frequently and can be confusing, counties may want to provide more frequent training (both formal and informal) to staff. If workers are better informed, they should be better able to convey these policies to recipients, who may, in turn, be better able to prepare for their grant reductions.

As counties have cut their budgets, some county welfare departments have had to cut or scale back services for former recipients in general and timed-out adults in particular. In an ideal world, counties should maintain and extend the services they make available to recipients who exhaust their 60 months of cash aid. In these tight fiscal times, however, expanding services to timed-out recipients or those approaching the time limit may not be feasible. After we complete the second wave of our recipient survey, we will examine whether timed-out recipients are using available services, which services they most value, and whether they are able to find new sources of income and/or services to replace the CalWORKs cash benefits and services they lost.

## 6. CONCLUSIONS AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS

With limited exceptions, the 1996 Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (PRWORA) restricts federal government cash assistance to low-income parents and their children to a lifetime maximum of 60 months. The federal law permits states to use federal dollars to extend aid past 60 months to families experiencing significant hardships, but only for up to 20% of their TANF caseloads. If states extend cash assistance to low-income families beyond the 20% of the caseload permitted by federal law, they must do so entirely at state expense.

In California, lawmakers decided that most adults receiving CalWORKs cash benefits for 60 countable months would be denied further cash aid, but that their children could remain eligible for state-funded cash benefits. They created the Safety Net program to protect children, at least in part, from the fiscal consequences of their parents reaching the 60-month time limit. Thus, in practice, California does not end all cash benefits to households in which adults exhaust their 60 months of aid, but rather provides such families with reduced grants paid entirely with state funds.

For a family of three in California with one unemployed adult and two children, the estimated CalWORKs grant reduction is \$139 per month. This loss of cash aid is partially offset by an increase in federally funded food stamps, so the net reduction in monthly assistance in this example is \$97 (or an 11% reduction in net income). For a single-parent household in which the adult is working 20 hours per week at the minimum wage (\$6.75 per hour in California), the parent's net loss of assistance is also \$97, but because of the parent's earnings, the family experiences only an 8% decline in total income. If the same parent were working 35 hours per week, the net reduction in the family's income declines further, to 7%.

Thus, as California lawmakers intended, poor children whose parents time out of CalWORKs continue to receive reduced cash aid, and the loss of CalWORKs income to timed-out families is partially offset by modest increases in federally funded Food Stamp benefits. If these parents increase their hours of work or obtain a better job, their increased earnings will also offset the reduction in CalWORKs aid.

During 2003, a relatively small percentage of the CalWORKs caseload (ranging from 0.6 to 1.4% per month) reached the 60-month time limit and was transferred to the Safety Net program.<sup>139</sup> The total number of cases that reached the time limit in 2003 was smaller than policymakers had expected.<sup>140</sup> There are several reasons for this: First, a number of

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<sup>139</sup> Source: California Department of Social Services, Research and Development Division, CA 253. January to November 2003. <http://www.dss.cahwnet.gov/research/default.htm>. Since 1995, the California caseload has been declining. Klerman et al. (2002).

<sup>140</sup> California Department of Social Services, Estimates Branch and Financial Planning Branch, May 2002. Revise. The Legislative Analyst Office's 2002 Analysis of the Budget Bill cites the governor's estimate of 100,000 reaching the CalWORKs time limit in SFY 2002-2003. See [www.lao.ca.gov/analysis\\_2002/health\\_ss/healthss\\_15\\_calWORKs\\_an102.htm](http://www.lao.ca.gov/analysis_2002/health_ss/healthss_15_calWORKs_an102.htm).

adults qualify for exemptions, which effectively stop their 60-month clocks from ticking. The child-support exemption appears to have extended the time limit for a substantial proportion of the caseload in 2003. Second, a number of adults are subject to fiscal sanctions before they exhaust their cash aid. A sanction reduces a household's grant by the noncomplying adult's share and, therefore, also stops that adult's 60-month clock from running.

Third, many CalWORKs recipients do not receive assistance continuously. Rather, they move on and off assistance as their needs and circumstances change. Many recipients who enrolled in CalWORKs, including probably some of those who had been on AFDC before 1998, left the program long before they reached their 60-month time limit. However, many recipients who left CalWORKs will, at some point, return to the program as they lose their jobs or encounter other hardships. When they re-enroll, such former recipients will begin their next spells on CalWORKs with fewer than 60 months of eligibility remaining. In future reports we will explore the dynamics of moving on and off CalWORKs, and how it affects the numbers of recipients who reach the 60-month limit over time.

In this report we describe the early implementation of the 60-month CalWORKs time limit. Our findings draw on data we collected from June through December 2003, including surveys and interviews with welfare department staff in six focus counties (Alameda, Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, Sacramento, and Tulare), a statewide survey of CalWORKs program administrators (56 of California's 58 counties responded), interviews with state program administrators and staff, and focus groups with CalWORKs recipients nearing their 60-month time limits.<sup>141</sup>

### **Implementation of the Time Limit: Accomplishments and Remaining Challenges**

The California Department of Social Services (CDSS) and county welfare departments across the state made a strong effort to implement the 60-month CalWORKs time limit in a timely fashion. The new program took effect in 1998, and the first cohorts of recipients reached the 60-month time limit in January 2003.

Beginning in 1999 through December 2002, the state provided the counties with guidance about how to implement the CalWORKs 60-month time limit through its All County Letters (ACLs) and All County Information Notices (ACINs). The state also developed a statewide data system, the Welfare Data Tracking Implementation Project, or WDTIP, intended to track recipients' time on aid across county lines.

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<sup>141</sup> Focus groups are in-depth qualitative interviews with a select group of CalWORKs recipients nearing the 60-month time limit. These groups are not necessarily representative of the CalWORKs population. Focus-group data are qualitative and provide detailed information about patterns, themes, or perspectives on a particular issue. It is methodologically inappropriate to report focus-group data by percentage, frequencies or statistics. See Appendix A for further details about the focus groups that we conducted for this report.

In our research, we found that counties provided extensive training to caseworkers about how to inform CalWORKs recipients about the time limit, and what services to provide to them both before and after they reach the time limit. Both the state and the counties used various means to inform recipients about the time limit, including official notices, application and orientation sessions, informational letters and brochures, discussions during annual meetings with caseworkers, and town hall meetings. In several counties, officials worked with local advocacy organizations to reach out to CalWORKs recipients about the time limit.

However, the CalWORKs time limit is a very complex policy to implement. State and county officials faced (and still face) several key challenges. In our report, we highlight three: (a) accurately counting time on aid, (b) equitably administering exemptions and extensions, and (c) ensuring that recipients understand the 60-month time limit and the services available to them before and after they reach it.

First and foremost, the state and counties had to acquire, compile, and update the administrative data needed to accurately count recipients' time on aid. Meeting these new data requirements was, and still is, technically complicated, time-consuming, and costly.

Second, state and county program officials have to equitably administer the exemptions and extensions to the 60-month time limit specified by state law. Months of CalWORKs assistance can be *exempted* from counting against the 60-month time limit for 12 different reasons, one of which—unique to California—requires months of CalWORKs cash aid to be exempt if the cost of the benefits is offset by the collection of court-ordered child-support payments. Exemptions also apply when adults lose their cash grants due to sanctions for noncompliance with program requirements, and when adults face verifiable hardships, such as illness, disability, or domestic abuse.

Cash aid can also be *extended* past 60 months for six reasons, five of which also serve as reasons for exemption, and a sixth, which is somewhat more complicated: It requires adults to be in substantial compliance with program rules over time, to be unable to maintain employment, and to have an impairment (mental health, physical health, or learning disabilities) that limits their ability to work.

To implement these exemption and extension policies, the counties had to develop new procedures and rules, train county caseworkers, generally inform recipients about the array of exemptions and extensions, collect necessary data to verify recipients' specific claims, and ensure that recipients are granted any exemptions or extensions for which they qualify.

Third, county caseworkers must inform adult recipients about the benefits and services for which they and their children may be eligible—both before and after they exhaust their 60 months of cash assistance. Not all caseworkers are responsible for advising recipients on such matters, but for those who are, this knowledge is important. Such information is crucial to adults nearing their 60-month time limit, especially regarding

benefits that Congress deliberately chose not to time limit (Medicaid, food stamps, and child care), and support services that counties provide at their option.

We discuss each of these challenges in the body of the report. Below, we summarize our key findings and their policy implications.

## **Key Findings, Policy Implications, and Recommendations**

### ***State and County Roles in Implementation***

Following CalWORKs' enactment into law in August 1997, CDSS developed specific state-level policies to make the 60-month time limit operational. These policies, transmitted periodically to the counties in All County Letters and All County Information Notices, instructed counties on when to notify recipients about the 60-month time limit, how to keep recipients informed about their specific number of months remaining, when to send Notices of Action (NOAs) to adult recipients regarding the termination of their cash grants, how to reduce grants when adults accumulated 60 countable months of cash aid, and how to ensure eligible recipients' continued access to other, non-time-limited benefits, such as Medi-Cal, food stamps, and child care.

California has long relied on counties to administer major state programs because county agencies are generally thought to be more responsive to local needs and circumstances than a centrally run state bureaucracy. Consequently, state law permits, and even encourages, counties to exercise some local discretion when implementing programs such as CalWORKs. Thus, we expected counties to vary in how they convey information about the time limit to recipients, how they instruct their caseworkers to motivate recipients to respond to the time limit, and how they provide services to recipients who have reached or are approaching the time limit.

Although the CalWORKs statute permits counties administrative discretion, the statute and regulations also set forth eligibility and benefit payment standards that lawmakers intended to be administered consistently and equitably across counties. That is, with respect to eligibility criteria and benefit payments, similarly situated CalWORKs recipients should be treated the same regardless of where they live.

The data we collected in 2003, through the All-County Survey, the Staff Survey, and site visits to our six focus counties, reveal considerable variation in how counties implemented the 60-month time limit. Much of this variation involved efforts to best adapt the state legislation to local county circumstances.

In some cases, however, we found variation in the application of key program rules, most notably how counties track and count months on aid, including the application of exemptions and extensions. For example, some counties went to great lengths to implement the child-support exemption in a timely fashion, while others did not. Some counties make a systematic effort to check prior receipt of CalWORKs in other counties, while others do not. Some counties take a more lenient approach to exempting months of aid because of domestic violence, while others may require more rigorous verification.

And while the criteria for extending aid past 60 months are narrowly drawn in state regulations, we found that 34 counties had not granted a single extension, and that 25 counties had yet to establish the criteria for granting extensions. Taken together, these variations likely caused some similarly situated CalWORKs recipients to be treated differently depending on where they happened to live.

It is important to note that our findings are based on data we collected in 2003. In the intervening months since we collected these data, it is likely that the state and the counties have moved to address a number of these issues. However, given the substantial differences we observed in 2003, there is reason to believe that variation persists, both on an inter- and intra-county basis, in how months of aid are counted and in how exemptions and extensions are granted.

### ***WDTIP and Counting Months on Aid***

Accurate tracking of recipients' time on aid is important because it ensures that adult recipients are neither discontinued from aid prematurely nor aided for longer than the 60 months permitted by state law. Accurate time-keeping is also important for county caseworkers: They can devise more realistic welfare-to-work plans for the time recipients have remaining and help recipients obtain necessary support services.

The state worked with counties to develop WDTIP, a statewide database, to help counties track recipients' time on aid regardless of where they live in the state. At the time of our interviews, however, state and county officials found this database unreliable and incomplete for three major reasons. First, three counties—Los Angeles, Modoc, and Stanislaus—were not importing county administrative data into WDTIP. The addition of Los Angeles County in September 2004 and Stanislaus County in August 2005 substantially improved the system's completeness. Second, although 57 counties are entering data into WDTIP, their data (reflecting both CalWORKs payment data *and* child-support collection data) may not be entirely complete and accurate back to January 1998. Third, when we conducted our research, the WDTIP system was experiencing data uploading and reporting problems.

Until all of these difficulties are resolved, WDTIP's utility in tracking countable months of aid over time and across counties remains impaired. Absent a fully operational WDTIP system, it is labor-intensive and costly for counties to verify countable months of CalWORKs cash aid.<sup>142</sup>

### ***Tracking and Counting Prior Months of TANF and/or CalWORKs Aid***

Federal and state law impose 60-month *lifetime* limits on receipt of cash aid (starting from the time that states' TANF programs were implemented). In California, the federal 60-month time limit became effective in December 1996, but the CalWORKs time limit

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<sup>142</sup> We also note that, absent reliable WDTIP data, some of the analyses that we anticipated completing for the state will not be possible. Most importantly, a statewide analysis of the characteristics of those who have reached 60 countable months will not be possible, although we will complete such an analysis for the six focus counties, relying on county administrative data.



did not take effect until January 1998. Consequently, for each adult recipient, a California county must track and count months of CalWORKs benefits paid by *any* California county back to January 1998.<sup>143</sup> At the same time, however, for purposes of counting time on aid toward the federal TANF time limit, California counties must also track and count months of benefits paid in California back to December 1996.<sup>144</sup> California counties are also supposed to track and count months of TANF benefits paid in other states.

Although counties are complying with the state requirement to track months of CalWORKs cash assistance, we found some variation in the extent to which counties track benefits paid with TANF funds in other states. According to information from our interviews, some counties rely entirely on the statewide WDTIP system, which is intended to record CalWORKs payments since January 1998, but does not provide data on TANF benefits paid in other states or on benefits paid by other counties prior to 1998.

To the extent that some counties attempt to track cash benefits paid prior to January 1998 and others do not, depending on where they happen to live, some recipients' prior aid history will be subject to stricter scrutiny than others. As a result, some will have a more accurate record of prior aid than others, which could affect their continued eligibility for federal TANF benefits.

Finally, for purposes of tracking *countable* months of CalWORKs cash aid, counties must be able to exempt months of aid that are offset by child-support collections. WDTIP does not presently include accurate child-support collection data across counties and over time.

Given the importance of obtaining accurate counts of time on aid, it is important that the state expand both the scope and the accuracy of the WDTIP data it provides to the counties. Having a central statewide database of time on aid (that also reflects child-support collections) would significantly increase the accuracy and efficiency of CalWORKs program operations. This is especially true in smaller counties, which often lack the resources to create such systems on their own.

### ***Child-Support Exemption***

California is the only state to exempt a month of cash aid from counting toward an adult's 60-month time limit when the state collects sufficient court-ordered child support on her behalf, thereby recouping the cost of the welfare payment.<sup>145</sup>

This unique provision appears to have made a difference to recipients: According to the All-County Survey we conducted, this child-support exemption affected approximately

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<sup>143</sup> California Manual of Policies and Procedures, 40-107.141.

<sup>144</sup> Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act, P.L. 104-193, Sec. 408(7)(A).

<sup>145</sup> CLASP, CBPP (June 2000).

25 % of counties' adult-headed CalWORKs cases in early 2003 and, on average, exempted 12 months for families for whom the counties collected any child support.<sup>146</sup>

To assess recipients' eligibility for this important exemption, county CalWORKs agency personnel must work with their counterparts in the child-support agencies, obtain historical and confidential records regarding court-ordered child-support collections, and match these data to their own agencies' records of CalWORKs benefit payments. These efforts are complicated, technically difficult, and costly.

Although CDSS first began discussing this complicated provision with the counties as early as October 1997,<sup>147</sup> final state instructions were not forthcoming until October 2002, just three months before the first families exhausted their 60 months of cash aid. At the time of the All-County Survey, at least seven counties had not implemented this child-support exemption.

Three of our focus counties were unable to calculate the child-support exemption by January 2003, when the first recipients reached the time limit. Although CDSS instructed the counties to delay imposing 60-month grant reductions until they had determined any applicable child-support exemptions,<sup>148</sup> two of the focus counties reduced grants prematurely, at least for a time. In accord with the state's instructions, the third county continued to provide cash aid to adults after they reached the 60-month limit, allowing the county time to properly determine any months subject to the child-support exemption before it reduced grant payments.

Only two of our six focus counties, Los Angeles and Riverside, successfully integrated their child-support and CalWORKs payment data in advance of implementing grant reductions. At the time of our site visit, Sacramento County was pilot-testing a program to achieve the same result.

### ***Verifying Domestic Abuse***

County policies vary in how they verify reasons to exempt months from counting against the 60-month limit and in how they extend aid past the time limit. In order to discourage unfounded claims of domestic abuse, some focus counties require more of CalWORKs recipients than others. In accord with state policy, all of our focus counties initially accept self reports of domestic violence. However, some counties take additional steps before granting exemptions or extensions based on self-reports. For example, two counties

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<sup>146</sup> All-County Survey; 56 counties responded. The county reported the percentage of adult-headed families on the caseload that received child-support exemptions. The average number of months exempted for child support was weighted by the county's caseload size in November 2003 in calculating the statewide statistic.

<sup>147</sup> See All County Letter 97-65, October 29, 1997. ACL 98-44, dated July 1, 1998, released the CalWORKs time-limit regulations, including further description of the child-support exemption.

<sup>148</sup> According to All County Welfare Department Directors letter (December 17, 2002), "Counties must do everything possible to provide adequate child-support exemptions by the legislative deadline. However, the 60-month time limit should not be applied in situations where the exemption review process has not been completed and if case records indicate there have been at least four months of aid since January 1998, in which the \$50 child-support disregard was applied."

require recipients who report domestic abuse to meet with program specialists before granting exemptions. One county requires victims to enroll in a special program. In another county, some staff we interviewed said that victims must provide a police report in order to qualify for this exemption. Their county's written policy, does, however, permit a recipient's self-report to be sufficient evidence of domestic abuse.

Research suggests that many CalWORKs recipients experience domestic abuse,<sup>149</sup> but that many victims do not report the abuse to the police and do not participate in related programs.<sup>150</sup> Given the difficulty many victims have in reporting abuse, especially to the police, counties requiring police reports or evidence of treatment may make it very difficult for these domestic-violence victims to get months exempted. This is especially true in cases of past abuse, when it is far more difficult for victims to file police reports or obtain other satisfactory evidence after the fact. As a result of this variation across counties, depending on where they happen to live, some domestic-violence victims may be able to qualify for exemptions more easily than their counterparts in counties with more rigorous verification requirements. These sorts of exemptions can affect ongoing eligibility for CalWORKs benefits.

We also note that this is one area where counties have linked eligibility to service delivery. That is, according to interviews, at least one of our focus counties requires recipients to enroll in a special service program as a condition for qualifying for domestic-abuse exemptions, while other counties do not.

### ***Hardship Extensions***

The federal Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (PRWORA) permits states to use federal TANF dollars to pay benefits past 60 months to households experiencing significant hardships, so long as such hardship cases do not exceed 20% of the state's average federally funded caseload. States may extend benefits past 60 months to additional households (beyond the 20% of caseload permitted by federal law), but only at state expense.<sup>151</sup>

At this writing, California, like most other states, is granting few hardship extensions.<sup>152</sup> California defined "hardship" to include the six reasons for which California also grants extensions: the adult recipient is over age 60, disabled (and qualifies for federal or state disability benefits), caring for an ill or incapacitated person in the home, caring for a child at risk of foster care placement, the victim of domestic abuse, unable to maintain employment due to an impairment (while fully complying with program rules).<sup>153</sup>

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<sup>149</sup> Meisel, Chandler, and Rienzi (2003).

<sup>150</sup> Bugarin (2002).

<sup>151</sup> Bloom et al. (2002, p. 3).

<sup>152</sup> California was one of 16 states that did not report this information to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, but the state and county officials we interviewed estimated that extensions for purposes of hardship have been granted in fewer than 10% of California's federally funded cases.

<sup>153</sup> As we note in Chapter 2, adults who have exhausted their federal, but not state, time limit also qualify for an extension.

Since five of the six reasons for extension are also reasons for exemption, it makes sense that the counties first focused on granting exemptions. Over time, as increasing numbers of CalWORKs households exhaust their time on aid, extensions are likely to become more important. However, the 2003 All-County Survey revealed that 25 out of 56 counties responding had not yet developed criteria for granting all types of extensions, and 32 had not developed their own written criteria for identifying eligible individuals for the “unable to maintain employment” extension (which is not a reason for exemption).

In addition, based on our understanding of state and federal policies, there can be adverse consequences for both the affected families and the state budget if counties do not make greater use of the federal 20% hardship provision. When eligible families are denied federally allowed hardship extensions for which they might qualify, they will lose both their federally subsidized full-family grants and their eligibility for welfare-to-work and other support services. Moreover, if the state extends reduced (child-only) Safety Net benefits to these households, it does so entirely at state expense, even if it is able to cover these expenses within its required Maintenance of Effort spending.<sup>154</sup>

To the extent there are surplus federal TANF dollars now or in the future, the state should encourage counties to use all appropriate exemptions and extensions, allowing such cases to fall under the federal 20% hardship rule. CalWORKs recipients who receive such extensions will remain eligible not only for full cash grants (that can be paid with available federal dollars), but for CalWORKs welfare-to-work services. By the same token, adults who remain fully engaged in CalWORKs can be sanctioned should they fail to comply with the program’s work and program participation requirements.

Making maximum use of federal TANF funds (by shifting eligible Safety Net cases to the 20% federal hardship caseload) may not save the state any money now, but it is probably a sound budgetary strategy in the long run. Federal TANF dollars are best used for core TANF purposes, reserving state-only Maintenance of Effort funds for other state objectives. Congress may be less likely to reduce the TANF block grant when states can prove that federal TANF dollars are fully committed to core TANF program expenditures, and are not being diverted to other permissible, but non-TANF expenditures (such as In-Home Supportive Services, to name one example).

### ***Staff Knowledge of Time-Limit Policies***

Although staff in all six focus counties had a good grasp of the CalWORKs 60-month time limit in general, many did not fully understand policies governing exemptions, extensions, and/or post-time-limit services. To some extent, this is to be expected given that counties have only recently begun imposing time limits. Although all staff we surveyed communicate directly with recipients, not all of them were responsible for administering exemptions and extensions. For those staff who do have such

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<sup>154</sup> Because of the state’s ability to pay for the Safety Net program out of Maintenance of Effort funds (see Chapter 1), there are no immediate fiscal consequences associated with not maximizing the 20% hardship threshold. However, this might change in the future if CalWORKs caseloads increase, larger numbers of recipients reach time limits, or federal TANF funds are reduced.

responsibilities, however, it is very important that they be able to clearly communicate the conditions under which recipients might qualify for exemptions or extensions. These rules affect the most vulnerable families, including those with serious health problems, disabilities, and domestic violence.

Given the importance of correctly conveying information about the time limit and its rules, counties should continue their staff training, provide ongoing coaching on exemption and extension policies, and develop user-friendly ways to keep staff abreast of these policies. Sacramento County developed a particularly helpful flow chart to explain to staff how to grant extensions when adult recipients are “unable to maintain employment.” We include this flow chart as Appendix C.

### ***Post-Time-Limit Services***

Federal and state policymakers intended that certain benefits and services for which CalWORKs recipients are typically eligible, including Medi-Cal, food stamps, and child-care assistance, continue uninterrupted when otherwise eligible families reach their 60-month time limit.

County officials generally said they had little trouble ensuring that families with timed-out adults continued to receive Food Stamp and Medi-Cal benefits. This is because the same CalWORKs eligibility workers usually assist families when they shift from the regular CalWORKs program to the Safety Net program. Focus-county staff reported that the child care transition was also generally seamless, but they noted that the complexity of administering child care (with different state agencies and contractors responsible for different phases of the state’s child care program) increases the likelihood of disruptions in service.

State regulation permits counties to provide optional services (e.g., mental-health, substance-abuse, and domestic-abuse counseling) to those who exit the CalWORKs program. Of 56 counties, 49 reported providing some optional services to former recipients generally, and 26 of these reported providing some services specifically designed for adults who had reached their time limit. According to our interviews, counties offering optional services reported that current and future state budget cuts may cause them to scale back such services for all former welfare recipients, especially for timed-out recipients. Resources permitting, the state and the counties should try to continue providing welfare-to-work and related support services to timed-out adults in order to help them enter the work force.

Finally, our research uncovered two remaining issues regarding the availability of support services for adults who have timed out. First, there is considerable confusion among CalWORKs recipients about their continued eligibility for support services and other benefits following their time-limit-triggered grant reductions. The state and counties should consider how they can better inform recipients about post-time-limit services and benefits.

Second, CalWORKs recipients who reach the 60-month time limit and have their grants cut will no longer be required to seek employment. As funding for optional support services dries up, counties will be less able to induce such adults to make the transition to work and leave the Safety Net program altogether. Essentially, this reduces the post-time-limit CalWORKs experience to a pre-CalWORKs AFDC program with a somewhat lower grant. The main difference is that the CalWORKs Safety Net program is funded entirely with state funds. In the long run, such a service-poor program is unlikely to benefit recipients, their children, or state taxpayers.



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## Appendix A

### METHODOLOGY FOR THE STUDY COMPONENTS

#### **Field Research Visits to Six Study Counties**

Researchers conducted two- to three-day site visits in six counties—Alameda, Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, Sacramento, and Tulare—to meet with various levels of program staff and policymakers. The visits provide a description of policies, procedures, and implementation experiences, as well as an understanding of contextual factors, such as the county labor market, the availability of low-cost good-quality child care, and transportation issues. The field research documents information, outreach and case management provided to families approaching time limits; management/staff messages delivered to recipients; supports and services available to families after time limits are reached; and the application of exemption policies and procedures. Discussions with county staff were not conducted as surveys but rather as open-ended interviews.

The six counties were chosen because as a group they are roughly representative of California's diversity and because 55.6% of California's welfare caseload is found in these counties.

#### **Participant Focus Groups**

To obtain a participant perspective on the implementation of time limits, researchers conducted focus groups in all six study counties. Invitations were sent to participants each county had identified as being within six months of the CalWORKs time limit. Focus groups are in-depth qualitative interviews with a select group of CalWORKs recipients, generally comprising six to ten participants each. The groups were conducted in English with the exception of two focus groups conducted in Spanish in Los Angeles County. Focus group results are not representative of the CalWORKs population but rather offer the perspectives of a select group of participants near the 60-month time limit. Focus groups are not conducted as surveys. Rather, researchers pose open-ended questions and record the responses of respondents.

#### **Staff Survey**

An anonymous staff survey was administered in the six study counties. The respondents in each county were sampled from the universe of eligibility and employment services workers that carried an *ongoing* caseload of participants who were subject to the time limit. We excluded workers that handle intake cases only, because many of the survey questions ask about ongoing contact and communication with participants. The survey collected information on workers' understanding of the time limit rules; practices with regard to informing participants about the time limit; how, if at all, the time limit influences the kind of activities they recommend for participants; and their opinions about the time-limit policy in general.

Our goal was to field approximately 150 surveys in each of the study counties. Since the total staff in both Tulare and Alameda numbered close to 150 people, we sampled the universe in those counties. In Los Angeles County, because of its size, we drew a random sample of 150 workers from each of the three GAIN Regions serving the largest number of participants (Regions 1, 4, and 5). In the other three counties (Orange, Riverside, and Sacramento), we sampled 150 staff. We often received staff lists that were slightly out-of-date; therefore, final sample sizes were slightly lower because some of the selected workers were no longer in the same job. The response rates in each of the study counties are as follows:

| <b>County</b> | <b>Response Rate</b> | <b>Sample Size</b> |
|---------------|----------------------|--------------------|
| Alameda       | 67%                  | 139                |
| Los Angeles   | 93%                  | 343                |
| Orange        | 99%                  | 136                |
| Riverside     | 95%                  | 127                |
| Sacramento    | 90%                  | 133                |
| Tulare        | 95%                  | 122                |
| <b>Total</b>  | <b>90%</b>           | <b>1000</b>        |

**Interviews with State Officials**

Interviewed officials at the California Department of Social Services and former legislators provided the study with the context in which to understand the written rules and regulations. From these interviews researchers learned the legislative intent and the department’s goals for the program.

**All-County Survey**

All 58 counties were sent a survey regarding county time-limit implementation; county directors or other high-ranking staff in 56 counties responded. The survey covered the following topics: planning and training; data systems; notification to participants; services to recipients; exemptions and extensions; the appeals process; the message of CalWORKs time limits and the overall implementation successes and difficulties.

**Appendix B**  
**CASH ASSISTANCE AND FOOD STAMP CALCULATIONS FOR**  
**REGION I AND REGION II**

**Cash Grant and Food Stamp Calculations<sup>1</sup>**

| <b>Unemployed</b>   | <i>Region I<sup>2</sup></i> |                        |                  |               | <i>Region II<sup>3</sup></i> |                     |                  |               |
|---|-----------------------------|------------------------|------------------|---------------|------------------------------|---------------------|------------------|---------------|
|   | Before<br>Time Limit        | After<br>Time<br>Limit | \$ Change        | %<br>Change   | Before<br>Time<br>Limit      | After Time<br>Limit | \$ Change        | %<br>Change   |
| <b>Family of Two (Single Parent)</b>  |                             |                        |                  |               |                              |                     |                  |               |
| <b>Earned Income</b>  | <b>\$0.00</b>               | <b>\$0.00</b>          |                  |               | <b>\$0.00</b>                | <b>\$0.00</b>       |                  |               |
| <b>TANF</b>   |                             |                        |                  |               |                              |                     |                  |               |
| Maximum Benefit   | \$584.00                    | \$359.00               |                  |               | \$555.00                     | \$340.00            |                  |               |
| Countable Earnings after Disregard<br>(\$225 plus 50% of remainder)           | \$0.00                      | \$0.00                 |                  |               | \$0.00                       | \$0.00              |                  |               |
| TANF Grant  | <b>\$584.00</b>             | <b>\$359.00</b>        | <b>-\$225.00</b> | <b>-38.5%</b> | <b>\$555.00</b>              | <b>\$340.00</b>     | <b>-\$215.00</b> | <b>-38.7%</b> |
| <b>Food Stamps</b>  |                             |                        |                  |               |                              |                     |                  |               |
| Maximum Benefit   | \$259.00                    | \$259.00               |                  |               | \$259.00                     | \$259.00            |                  |               |
| Countable Income after Earned Income<br>Deduction (20% of earned income)      | \$584.00                    | \$359.00               |                  |               | \$555.00                     | \$340.00            |                  |               |
| Countable Income after Standard<br>Deduction of \$134 (Net Monthly<br>Income) | \$450.00                    | \$225.00               |                  |               | \$421.00                     | \$206.00            |                  |               |
| Household Contribution to Food Budget<br>(30% of Net Monthly Income)          | \$135.00                    | \$67.50                |                  |               | \$126.30                     | \$61.80             |                  |               |
| Food Stamp Grant (Maximum Benefit<br>less Household Contribution)             | <b>\$124.00</b>             | <b>\$191.50</b>        | <b>\$67.50</b>   | <b>54.4%</b>  | <b>\$132.70</b>              | <b>\$197.20</b>     | <b>\$64.50</b>   | <b>48.6%</b>  |
| <b>Total Assistance (TANF + FS)</b>   | <b>\$708.00</b>             | <b>\$550.50</b>        | <b>-\$157.50</b> | <b>-22.2%</b> | <b>\$687.70</b>              | <b>\$537.20</b>     | <b>-\$150.50</b> | <b>-21.9%</b> |
| <b>Total Household Income</b>   | <b>\$708.00</b>             | <b>\$550.50</b>        | <b>-\$157.50</b> | <b>-22.2%</b> | <b>\$687.70</b>              | <b>\$537.20</b>     | <b>-\$150.50</b> | <b>-21.9%</b> |
| <b>Family of Three (Single Parent)</b>  |                             |                        |                  |               |                              |                     |                  |               |
| <b>Earned Income</b>  | <b>\$0.00</b>               | <b>\$0.00</b>          |                  |               | <b>\$0.00</b>                | <b>\$0.00</b>       |                  |               |
| <b>TANF</b>   |                             |                        |                  |               |                              |                     |                  |               |
| Maximum Benefit   | \$723.00                    | \$584.00               |                  |               | \$689.00                     | \$555.00            |                  |               |
| Countable Earnings after Disregard<br>(\$225 plus 50% of remainder)           | \$0.00                      | \$0.00                 |                  |               | \$0.00                       | \$0.00              |                  |               |
| TANF Grant  | <b>\$723.00</b>             | <b>\$584.00</b>        | <b>-\$139.00</b> | <b>-19.2%</b> | <b>\$689.00</b>              | <b>\$555.00</b>     | <b>-\$134.00</b> | <b>-19.4%</b> |
| <b>Food Stamps</b>  |                             |                        |                  |               |                              |                     |                  |               |
| Maximum Benefit   | \$371.00                    | \$371.00               |                  |               | \$371.00                     | \$371.00            |                  |               |
| Countable Income after Earned Income<br>Deduction (20% of earned income)      | \$723.00                    | \$584.00               |                  |               | \$689.00                     | \$555.00            |                  |               |
| Countable Income after Standard<br>Deduction of \$134 (Net Monthly<br>Income) | \$589.00                    | \$450.00               |                  |               | \$555.00                     | \$421.00            |                  |               |
| Household Contribution to Food Budget<br>(30% of Net Monthly Income)          | \$176.70                    | \$135.00               |                  |               | \$166.50                     | \$126.30            |                  |               |
| Food Stamp Grant (Maximum Benefit<br>less Household Contribution)             | <b>\$194.30</b>             | <b>\$236.00</b>        | <b>\$41.70</b>   | <b>21.5%</b>  | <b>\$204.50</b>              | <b>\$244.70</b>     | <b>\$40.20</b>   | <b>19.7%</b>  |
| <b>Total Assistance (TANF + FS)</b>   | <b>\$917.30</b>             | <b>\$820.00</b>        | <b>-\$97.30</b>  | <b>-10.6%</b> | <b>\$893.50</b>              | <b>\$799.70</b>     | <b>-\$93.80</b>  | <b>-10.5%</b> |
| <b>Total Household Income</b>   | <b>\$917.30</b>             | <b>\$820.00</b>        | <b>-\$97.30</b>  | <b>-10.6%</b> | <b>\$893.50</b>              | <b>\$799.70</b>     | <b>-\$93.80</b>  | <b>-10.5%</b> |

**CASH ASSISTANCE AND FOOD STAMP CALCULATIONS FOR  
REGION I AND REGION II (continued)**

| <b>Unemployed</b>   | <i>Region I<sup>2</sup></i> |                        |                  |               | <i>Region II<sup>3</sup></i> |                        |                  |               |
|---|-----------------------------|------------------------|------------------|---------------|------------------------------|------------------------|------------------|---------------|
|   | Before<br>Time<br>Limit     | After<br>Time<br>Limit | \$<br>Change     | %<br>Change   | Before<br>Time<br>Limit      | After<br>Time<br>Limit | \$<br>Change     | %<br>Change   |
| <b>Family of Four (Single Parent)</b>   |                             |                        |                  |               |                              |                        |                  |               |
| <b>Earned Income</b>  | <b>\$0.00</b>               | <b>\$0.00</b>          |                  |               | <b>\$0.00</b>                | <b>\$0.00</b>          |                  |               |
| <b>TANF</b>   |                             |                        |                  |               |                              |                        |                  |               |
| Maximum Benefit   | \$862.00                    | \$723.00               |                  |               | \$821.00                     | \$689.00               |                  |               |
| Countable Earnings after Disregard<br>((\$225 plus 50% of remainder)          | \$0.00                      | \$0.00                 |                  |               | \$0.00                       | \$0.00                 |                  |               |
| <b>TANF Grant</b>   | <b>\$862.00</b>             | <b>\$723.00</b>        | <b>-\$139.00</b> | <b>-16.1%</b> | <b>\$821.00</b>              | <b>\$689.00</b>        | <b>-\$132.00</b> | <b>-16.1%</b> |
| <b>Food Stamps</b>  |                             |                        |                  |               |                              |                        |                  |               |
| Maximum Benefit   | \$471.00                    | \$471.00               |                  |               | \$471.00                     | \$471.00               |                  |               |
| Countable Income after Earned Income<br>Deduction (20% of earned income)      | \$862.00                    | \$723.00               |                  |               | \$821.00                     | \$689.00               |                  |               |
| Countable Income after Standard<br>Deduction of \$134 (Net Monthly<br>Income) | \$728.00                    | \$589.00               |                  |               | \$687.00                     | \$555.00               |                  |               |
| Household Contribution to Food<br>Budget (30% of Net Monthly Income)          | \$218.40                    | \$176.70               |                  |               | \$206.10                     | \$166.50               |                  |               |
| <b>Food Stamp Grant (Maximum Benefit<br/>less Household Contribution)</b>     | <b>\$252.60</b>             | <b>\$294.30</b>        | <b>\$41.70</b>   | <b>16.5%</b>  | <b>\$264.90</b>              | <b>\$304.50</b>        | <b>\$39.60</b>   | <b>14.9%</b>  |
| <b>Total Assistance (TANF + FS)</b>   | <b>\$1,114.60</b>           | <b>\$1,017.30</b>      | <b>-\$97.30</b>  | <b>-8.7%</b>  | <b>\$1,085.90</b>            | <b>\$993.50</b>        | <b>-\$92.40</b>  | <b>-8.5%</b>  |
| <b>Total Household Income</b>   | <b>\$1,114.60</b>           | <b>\$1,017.30</b>      | <b>-\$97.30</b>  | <b>-8.7%</b>  | <b>\$1,085.90</b>            | <b>\$993.50</b>        | <b>-\$92.40</b>  | <b>-8.5%</b>  |
| <b>Family of Five (Single Parent)</b>   |                             |                        |                  |               |                              |                        |                  |               |
| <b>Earned Income</b>  | <b>\$0.00</b>               | <b>\$0.00</b>          |                  |               | <b>\$0.00</b>                | <b>\$0.00</b>          |                  |               |
| <b>TANF</b>   |                             |                        |                  |               |                              |                        |                  |               |
| Maximum Benefit   | \$980.00                    | \$862.00               |                  |               | \$934.00                     | \$821.00               |                  |               |
| Countable Earnings after Disregard<br>((\$225 plus 50% of remainder)          | \$0.00                      | \$0.00                 |                  |               | \$0.00                       | \$0.00                 |                  |               |
| <b>TANF Grant</b>   | <b>\$980.00</b>             | <b>\$862.00</b>        | <b>-\$118.00</b> | <b>-12.0%</b> | <b>\$934.00</b>              | <b>\$821.00</b>        | <b>-\$113.00</b> | <b>-12.1%</b> |
| <b>Food Stamps</b>  |                             |                        |                  |               |                              |                        |                  |               |
| Maximum Benefit   | \$560.00                    | \$560.00               |                  |               | \$560.00                     | \$560.00               |                  |               |
| Countable Income after Earned Income<br>Deduction (20% of earned income)      | \$980.00                    | \$862.00               |                  |               | \$934.00                     | \$821.00               |                  |               |
| Countable Income after Standard<br>Deduction of \$147 (Net Monthly<br>Income) | \$833.00                    | \$715.00               |                  |               | \$787.00                     | \$674.00               |                  |               |
| Household Contribution to Food<br>Budget (30% of Net Monthly Income)          | \$249.90                    | \$214.50               |                  |               | \$236.10                     | \$202.20               |                  |               |
| <b>Food Stamp Grant (Maximum Benefit<br/>less Household Contribution)</b>     | <b>\$310.10</b>             | <b>\$345.50</b>        | <b>\$35.40</b>   | <b>11.4%</b>  | <b>\$323.90</b>              | <b>\$357.80</b>        | <b>\$33.90</b>   | <b>10.5%</b>  |
| <b>Total Assistance (TANF + FS)</b>   | <b>\$1,290.10</b>           | <b>\$1,207.50</b>      | <b>-\$82.60</b>  | <b>-6.4%</b>  | <b>\$1,257.90</b>            | <b>\$1,178.80</b>      | <b>-\$79.10</b>  | <b>-6.3%</b>  |
| <b>Total Household Income</b>   | <b>\$1,290.10</b>           | <b>\$1,207.50</b>      | <b>-\$82.60</b>  | <b>-6.4%</b>  | <b>\$1,257.90</b>            | <b>\$1,178.80</b>      | <b>-\$79.10</b>  | <b>-6.3%</b>  |

**CASH ASSISTANCE AND FOOD STAMP CALCULATIONS FOR  
REGION I AND REGION II (continued)**

| <b>Unemployed</b>   | <i>Region I<sup>2</sup></i> |                     |                  |               | <i>Region II<sup>3</sup></i> |                     |                  |               |
|---|-----------------------------|---------------------|------------------|---------------|------------------------------|---------------------|------------------|---------------|
|   | Before<br>Time<br>Limit     | After Time<br>Limit | \$ Change        | %<br>Change   | Before<br>Time Limit         | After Time<br>Limit | \$ Change        | %<br>Change   |
| <b>Family of Six (Single Parent)</b>  |                             |                     |                  |               |                              |                     |                  |               |
| <b>Earned Income</b>  |                             | <b>\$0.00</b>       | <b>\$0.00</b>    |               | <b>\$0.00</b>                | <b>\$0.00</b>       |                  |               |
| <b>TANF</b>   |                             |                     |                  |               |                              |                     |                  |               |
| Maximum Benefit   | \$1,101.00                  | \$980.00            |                  |               | \$1,049.00                   | \$934.00            |                  |               |
| Countable Earnings after Disregard<br>((\$225 plus 50% of remainder)          | \$0.00                      | \$0.00              |                  |               | \$0.00                       | \$0.00              |                  |               |
| TANF Grant  | <b>\$1,101.00</b>           | <b>\$980.00</b>     | <b>-\$121.00</b> | <b>-11.0%</b> | <b>\$1,049.00</b>            | <b>\$934.00</b>     | <b>-\$115.00</b> | <b>-11.0%</b> |
| <b>Food Stamps</b>  |                             |                     |                  |               |                              |                     |                  |               |
| Maximum Benefit   | \$672.00                    | \$672.00            |                  |               | \$672.00                     | \$672.00            |                  |               |
| Countable Income after Earned<br>Income Deduction (20% of earned<br>income)   | \$1,101.00                  | \$980.00            |                  |               | \$1,049.00                   | \$934.00            |                  |               |
| Countable Income after Standard<br>Deduction of \$168 (Net Monthly<br>Income) | \$933.00                    | \$812.00            |                  |               | \$881.00                     | \$766.00            |                  |               |
| Household Contribution to Food<br>Budget (30% of Net Monthly<br>Income)       | \$279.90                    | \$243.60            |                  |               | \$264.30                     | \$229.80            |                  |               |
| Food Stamp Grant (Maximum<br>Benefit less Household<br>Contribution)          | <b>\$392.10</b>             | <b>\$428.40</b>     | <b>\$36.30</b>   | <b>9.3%</b>   | <b>\$407.70</b>              | <b>\$442.20</b>     | <b>\$34.50</b>   | <b>8.5%</b>   |
| <b>Total Assistance (TANF + FS)</b>   | <b>\$1,493.10</b>           | <b>\$1,408.40</b>   | <b>-\$84.70</b>  | <b>-5.7%</b>  | <b>\$1,456.70</b>            | <b>\$1,376.20</b>   | <b>-\$80.50</b>  | <b>-5.5%</b>  |
| <b>Total Household Income</b>   | <b>\$1,493.10</b>           | <b>\$1,408.40</b>   | <b>-\$84.70</b>  | <b>-5.7%</b>  | <b>\$1,456.70</b>            | <b>\$1,376.20</b>   | <b>-\$80.50</b>  | <b>-5.5%</b>  |

<sup>1</sup> These calculations assume the family has no income other than earnings and TANF (including in-kind payments), their child-care payments are covered by CalWORKs, and they do not incur any excess shelter costs.

<sup>2</sup> Region I counties are Alameda, Contra Costa, Los Angeles, Marin, Monterey, Napa, Orange, San Diego, San Francisco, San Luis Obispo, San Mateo, Santa Barbara, Santa Clara, Solano, Sonoma, and Ventura.

<sup>3</sup> Region II counties are Alpine, Amador, Butte, Calaveras, Colusa, Del Norte, El Dorado, Fresno, Glenn, Humboldt, Imperial, Inyo, Kern, Kings, Lake, Lassen, Madera, Mariposa, Mendocino, Merced, Modoc, Mono, Nevada, Placer, Plumas, Riverside, Sacramento, San Benito, San Bernardino, San Joaquin, Shasta, Sierra, Siskiyou, Stanislaus, Sutter, Tehama, Trinity, Tulare, Yolo, and Yuba.

Sources: Western Center on Law and Poverty "A Comprehensive Guide to Welfare and Related Medi-Cal Issues for California Families"; www.fns.usda.gov "Fact Sheet on Resources, Income, and Benefits for the Food Stamp Program"



**CASH ASSISTANCE AND FOOD STAMP CALCULATIONS FOR  
REGION I AND REGION II (continued)**

**Cash Grant and Food Stamp Calculations<sup>1</sup>**

| <b>Working 20 Hours<sup>4</sup></b>   | <i>Region I<sup>2</sup></i> |                        |                  |               | <i>Region II<sup>3</sup></i> |                        |                  |               |
|---|-----------------------------|------------------------|------------------|---------------|------------------------------|------------------------|------------------|---------------|
|   | Before<br>Time<br>Limit     | After<br>Time<br>Limit | \$ Change        | % Change      | Before<br>Time<br>Limit      | After<br>Time<br>Limit | \$ Change        | %<br>Change   |
| <b>Family of Two (Single Parent)</b>  |                             |                        |                  |               |                              |                        |                  |               |
| <b>Earned Income</b>  | <b>\$560.25</b>             | <b>\$560.25</b>        |                  |               | <b>\$560.25</b>              | <b>\$560.25</b>        |                  |               |
| <b>TANF</b>   |                             |                        |                  |               |                              |                        |                  |               |
| Maximum Benefit   | \$584.00                    | \$359.00               |                  |               | \$555.00                     | \$340.00               |                  |               |
| Countable Earnings after Disregard<br>(\$225 plus 50% of remainder)           | \$167.63                    | \$167.63               |                  |               | \$167.63                     | \$167.63               |                  |               |
| <b>TANF Grant</b>   | <b>\$416.38</b>             | <b>\$191.38</b>        | <b>-\$225.00</b> | <b>-54.0%</b> | <b>\$387.38</b>              | <b>\$172.38</b>        | <b>-\$215.00</b> | <b>-55.5%</b> |
| <b>Food Stamps</b>  |                             |                        |                  |               |                              |                        |                  |               |
| Maximum Benefit   | \$259.00                    | \$259.00               |                  |               | \$259.00                     | \$259.00               |                  |               |
| Countable Income after Earned Income<br>Deduction (20% of earned income)      | \$864.58                    | \$639.58               |                  |               | \$835.58                     | \$620.58               |                  |               |
| Countable Income after Standard<br>Deduction of \$134 (Net Monthly<br>Income) | \$730.58                    | \$505.58               |                  |               | \$701.58                     | \$486.58               |                  |               |
| Household Contribution to Food<br>Budget (30% of Net Monthly Income)          | \$219.17                    | \$151.67               |                  |               | \$210.47                     | \$145.97               |                  |               |
| <b>Food Stamp Grant (Maximum Benefit<br/>less Household Contribution)</b>     | <b>\$39.83</b>              | <b>\$107.33</b>        | <b>\$67.50</b>   | <b>169.5%</b> | <b>\$48.53</b>               | <b>\$113.03</b>        | <b>\$64.50</b>   | <b>132.9%</b> |
| <b>Total Assistance (TANF + FS)</b>   | <b>\$456.20</b>             | <b>\$298.70</b>        | <b>-\$157.50</b> | <b>-34.5%</b> | <b>\$435.90</b>              | <b>\$285.40</b>        | <b>-\$150.50</b> | <b>-34.5%</b> |
| <b>Total Household Income</b>   | <b>\$1,016.45</b>           | <b>\$858.95</b>        | <b>-\$157.50</b> | <b>-15.5%</b> | <b>\$996.15</b>              | <b>\$845.65</b>        | <b>-\$150.50</b> | <b>-15.1%</b> |
| <b>Family of Three (Single Parent)</b>  |                             |                        |                  |               |                              |                        |                  |               |
| <b>Earned Income</b>  | <b>\$560.25</b>             | <b>\$560.25</b>        |                  |               | <b>\$560.25</b>              | <b>\$560.25</b>        |                  |               |
| <b>TANF</b>   |                             |                        |                  |               |                              |                        |                  |               |
| Maximum Benefit   | \$723.00                    | \$584.00               |                  |               | \$689.00                     | \$555.00               |                  |               |
| Countable Earnings after Disregard<br>(\$225 plus 50% of remainder)           | \$167.63                    | \$167.63               |                  |               | \$167.63                     | \$167.63               |                  |               |
| <b>TANF Grant</b>   | <b>\$555.38</b>             | <b>\$416.38</b>        | <b>-\$139.00</b> | <b>-25.0%</b> | <b>\$521.38</b>              | <b>\$387.38</b>        | <b>-\$134.00</b> | <b>-25.7%</b> |
| <b>Food Stamps</b>  |                             |                        |                  |               |                              |                        |                  |               |
| Maximum Benefit   | \$371.00                    | \$371.00               |                  |               | \$371.00                     | \$371.00               |                  |               |
| Countable Income after Earned Income<br>Deduction (20% of earned income)      | \$1,003.58                  | \$864.58               |                  |               | \$969.58                     | \$835.58               |                  |               |
| Countable Income after Standard<br>Deduction of \$134 (Net Monthly<br>Income) | \$869.58                    | \$730.58               |                  |               | \$835.58                     | \$701.58               |                  |               |
| Household Contribution to Food<br>Budget (30% of Net Monthly Income)          | \$260.87                    | \$219.17               |                  |               | \$250.67                     | \$210.47               |                  |               |
| <b>Food Stamp Grant (Maximum Benefit<br/>less Household Contribution)</b>     | <b>\$110.13</b>             | <b>\$151.83</b>        | <b>\$41.70</b>   | <b>37.9%</b>  | <b>\$120.33</b>              | <b>\$160.53</b>        | <b>\$40.20</b>   | <b>33.4%</b>  |
| <b>Total Assistance (TANF + FS)</b>   | <b>\$665.50</b>             | <b>\$568.20</b>        | <b>-\$97.30</b>  | <b>-14.6%</b> | <b>\$641.70</b>              | <b>\$547.90</b>        | <b>-\$93.80</b>  | <b>-14.6%</b> |
| <b>Total Household Income</b>   | <b>\$1,225.75</b>           | <b>\$1,128.45</b>      | <b>-\$97.30</b>  | <b>-7.9%</b>  | <b>\$1,201.95</b>            | <b>\$1,108.15</b>      | <b>-\$93.80</b>  | <b>-7.8%</b>  |

**CASH ASSISTANCE AND FOOD STAMP CALCULATIONS FOR  
REGION I AND REGION II (continued)**

| <b>Working 20 Hours<sup>4</sup></b>   | <i>Region I<sup>2</sup></i> |                        |                  |               | <i>Region II<sup>3</sup></i> |                        |                  |               |
|---|-----------------------------|------------------------|------------------|---------------|------------------------------|------------------------|------------------|---------------|
|   | Before<br>Time<br>Limit     | After<br>Time<br>Limit | \$ Change        | % Change      | Before<br>Time<br>Limit      | After<br>Time<br>Limit | \$ Change        | %<br>Change   |
| <b>Family of Four (Single Parent)</b>   |                             |                        |                  |               |                              |                        |                  |               |
| <b>Earned Income</b>  | <b>\$560.25</b>             | <b>\$560.25</b>        |                  |               | <b>\$560.25</b>              | <b>\$560.25</b>        |                  |               |
| <b>TANF</b>   |                             |                        |                  |               |                              |                        |                  |               |
| Maximum Benefit   | \$862.00                    | \$723.00               |                  |               | \$821.00                     | \$689.00               |                  |               |
| Countable Earnings after Disregard<br>(\$225 plus 50% of remainder)           | \$167.63                    | \$167.63               |                  |               | \$167.63                     | \$167.63               |                  |               |
| TANF Grant  | <b>\$694.38</b>             | <b>\$555.38</b>        | <b>-\$139.00</b> | <b>-20.0%</b> | <b>\$653.38</b>              | <b>\$521.38</b>        | <b>-\$132.00</b> | <b>-20.2%</b> |
| <b>Food Stamps</b>  |                             |                        |                  |               |                              |                        |                  |               |
| Maximum Benefit   | \$471.00                    | \$471.00               |                  |               | \$471.00                     | \$471.00               |                  |               |
| Countable Income after Earned Income<br>Deduction (20% of earned income)      | \$1,142.58                  | \$1,003.58             |                  |               | \$1,101.58                   | \$969.58               |                  |               |
| Countable Income after Standard<br>Deduction of \$134 (Net Monthly<br>Income) | \$1,008.58                  | \$869.58               |                  |               | \$967.58                     | \$835.58               |                  |               |
| Household Contribution to Food<br>Budget (30% of Net Monthly Income)          | \$302.57                    | \$260.87               |                  |               | \$290.27                     | \$250.67               |                  |               |
| Food Stamp Grant (Maximum Benefit<br>less Household Contribution)             | <b>\$168.43</b>             | <b>\$210.13</b>        | <b>\$41.70</b>   | <b>24.8%</b>  | <b>\$180.73</b>              | <b>\$220.33</b>        | <b>\$39.60</b>   | <b>21.9%</b>  |
| <b>Total Assistance (TANF + FS)</b>   | <b>\$862.80</b>             | <b>\$765.50</b>        | <b>-\$97.30</b>  | <b>-11.3%</b> | <b>\$834.10</b>              | <b>\$741.70</b>        | <b>-\$92.40</b>  | <b>-11.1%</b> |
| <b>Total Household Income</b>   | <b>\$1,423.05</b>           | <b>\$1,325.75</b>      | <b>-\$97.30</b>  | <b>-6.8%</b>  | <b>\$1,394.35</b>            | <b>\$1,301.95</b>      | <b>-\$92.40</b>  | <b>-6.6%</b>  |
| <b>Family of Five (Single Parent)</b>   |                             |                        |                  |               |                              |                        |                  |               |
| <b>Earned Income</b>  | <b>\$560.25</b>             | <b>\$560.25</b>        |                  |               | <b>\$560.25</b>              | <b>\$560.25</b>        |                  |               |
| <b>TANF</b>   |                             |                        |                  |               |                              |                        |                  |               |
| Maximum Benefit   | \$980.00                    | \$862.00               |                  |               | \$934.00                     | \$821.00               |                  |               |
| Countable Earnings after Disregard<br>(\$225 plus 50% of remainder)           | \$167.63                    | \$167.63               |                  |               | \$167.63                     | \$167.63               |                  |               |
| TANF Grant  | <b>\$812.38</b>             | <b>\$694.38</b>        | <b>-\$118.00</b> | <b>-14.5%</b> | <b>\$766.38</b>              | <b>\$653.38</b>        | <b>-\$113.00</b> | <b>-14.7%</b> |
| <b>Food Stamps</b>  |                             |                        |                  |               |                              |                        |                  |               |
| Maximum Benefit   | \$560.00                    | \$560.00               |                  |               | \$560.00                     | \$560.00               |                  |               |
| Countable Income after Earned Income<br>Deduction (20% of earned income)      | \$1,260.58                  | \$1,142.58             |                  |               | \$1,214.58                   | \$1,101.58             |                  |               |
| Countable Income after Standard<br>Deduction of \$147 (Net Monthly<br>Income) | \$1,113.58                  | \$995.58               |                  |               | \$1,067.58                   | \$954.58               |                  |               |
| Household Contribution to Food<br>Budget (30% of Net Monthly Income)          | \$334.07                    | \$298.67               |                  |               | \$320.27                     | \$286.37               |                  |               |
| Food Stamp Grant (Maximum Benefit<br>less Household Contribution)             | <b>\$225.93</b>             | <b>\$261.33</b>        | <b>\$35.40</b>   | <b>15.7%</b>  | <b>\$239.73</b>              | <b>\$273.63</b>        | <b>\$33.90</b>   | <b>14.1%</b>  |
| <b>Total Assistance (TANF + FS)</b>   | <b>\$1,038.30</b>           | <b>\$955.70</b>        | <b>-\$82.60</b>  | <b>-8.0%</b>  | <b>\$1,006.10</b>            | <b>\$927.00</b>        | <b>-\$79.10</b>  | <b>-7.9%</b>  |
| <b>Total Household Income</b>   | <b>\$1,598.55</b>           | <b>\$1,515.95</b>      | <b>-\$82.60</b>  | <b>-5.2%</b>  | <b>\$1,566.35</b>            | <b>\$1,487.25</b>      | <b>-\$79.10</b>  | <b>-5.0%</b>  |

**CASH ASSISTANCE AND FOOD STAMP CALCULATIONS FOR  
REGION I AND REGION II (continued)**

| <b>Working 20 Hours<sup>4</sup></b>   | <i>Region I<sup>2</sup></i> |                     |                  |               | <i>Region II<sup>3</sup></i> |                     |                  |               |
|---|-----------------------------|---------------------|------------------|---------------|------------------------------|---------------------|------------------|---------------|
|   | Before<br>Time<br>Limit     | After Time<br>Limit | \$ Change        | % Change      | Before<br>Time<br>Limit      | After Time<br>Limit | \$ Change        | %<br>Change   |
| <b>Family of Six (Single Parent)</b>  |                             |                     |                  |               |                              |                     |                  |               |
| <b>Earned Income</b>  | <b>\$560.25</b>             | <b>\$560.25</b>     |                  |               | <b>\$560.25</b>              | <b>\$560.25</b>     |                  |               |
| <b>TANF</b>   |                             |                     |                  |               |                              |                     |                  |               |
| Maximum Benefit   | \$1,101.00                  | \$980.00            |                  |               | \$1,049.00                   | \$934.00            |                  |               |
| Countable Earnings after Disregard<br>((\$225 plus 50% of remainder)          | \$167.63                    | \$167.63            |                  |               | \$167.63                     | \$167.63            |                  |               |
| TANF Grant  | <b>\$933.38</b>             | <b>\$812.38</b>     | <b>-\$121.00</b> | <b>-13.0%</b> | <b>\$881.38</b>              | <b>\$766.38</b>     | <b>-\$115.00</b> | <b>-13.0%</b> |
| <b>Food Stamps</b>  |                             |                     |                  |               |                              |                     |                  |               |
| Maximum Benefit   | \$672.00                    | \$672.00            |                  |               | \$672.00                     | \$672.00            |                  |               |
| Countable Income after Earned Income<br>Deduction (20% of earned income)      | \$1,381.58                  | \$1,260.58          |                  |               | \$1,329.58                   | \$1,214.58          |                  |               |
| Countable Income after Standard<br>Deduction of \$168 (Net Monthly<br>Income) | \$1,213.58                  | \$1,092.58          |                  |               | \$1,161.58                   | \$1,046.58          |                  |               |
| Household Contribution to Food<br>Budget (30% of Net Monthly Income)          | \$364.07                    | \$327.77            |                  |               | \$348.47                     | \$313.97            |                  |               |
| Food Stamp Grant (Maximum Benefit<br>less Household Contribution)             | <b>\$307.93</b>             | <b>\$344.23</b>     | <b>\$36.30</b>   | <b>11.8%</b>  | <b>\$323.53</b>              | <b>\$358.03</b>     | <b>\$34.50</b>   | <b>10.7%</b>  |
| <b>Total Assistance (TANF + FS)</b>   | <b>\$1,241.30</b>           | <b>\$1,156.60</b>   | <b>-\$84.70</b>  | <b>-6.8%</b>  | <b>\$1,204.90</b>            | <b>\$1,124.40</b>   | <b>-\$80.50</b>  | <b>-6.7%</b>  |
| <b>Total Household Income</b>   | <b>\$1,801.55</b>           | <b>\$1,716.85</b>   | <b>-\$84.70</b>  | <b>-4.7%</b>  | <b>\$1,765.15</b>            | <b>\$1,684.65</b>   | <b>-\$80.50</b>  | <b>-4.6%</b>  |

<sup>1</sup> These calculations assume the family has no income other than earnings and TANF (including in-kind payments), their child-care payments are covered by CalWORKs, and they do not incur any excess shelter costs.

<sup>2</sup> Region I counties are Alameda, Contra Costa, Los Angeles, Marin, Monterey, Napa, Orange, San Diego, San Francisco, San Luis Obispo, San Mateo, Santa Barbara, Santa Clara, Solano, Sonoma, and Ventura.

<sup>3</sup> Region II counties are Alpine, Amador, Butte, Calaveras, Colusa, Del Norte, El Dorado, Fresno, Glenn, Humboldt, Imperial, Inyo, Kern, Kings, Lake, Lassen, Madera, Mariposa, Mendocino, Merced, Modoc, Mono, Nevada, Placer, Plumas, Riverside, Sacramento, San Benito, San Bernardino, San Joaquin, Shasta, Sierra, Siskiyou, Stanislaus, Sutter, Tehama, Trinity, Tulare, Yolo, and Yuba.

<sup>4</sup> Minimum wage is \$6.75 in California.

Sources: Western Center on Law and Poverty "A Comprehensive Guide to Welfare and Related Medi-Cal Issues for California Families"; www.fns.usda.gov "Fact Sheet on Resources, Income, and Benefits for the Food Stamp Program"

**CASH ASSISTANCE AND FOOD STAMP CALCULATIONS FOR  
REGION I AND REGION II (continued)**

**Cash Grant and Food Stamp Calculations<sup>1</sup>**

| <b>Working 25 Hours<sup>4</sup></b>                                     | <i>Region I<sup>2</sup></i> |                     |                  |               | <i>Region II<sup>3</sup></i> |                     |                  |               |
|---|-----------------------------|---------------------|------------------|---------------|------------------------------|---------------------|------------------|---------------|
|   | Before<br>Time<br>Limit     | After Time<br>Limit | \$ Change        | % Change      | Before<br>Time<br>Limit      | After Time<br>Limit | \$ Change        | %<br>Change   |
| <b>Family of Two (Single Parent)</b>                                    |                             |                     |                  |               |                              |                     |                  |               |
| <b>Earned Income</b>  | <b>\$700.31</b>             | <b>\$700.31</b>     |                  |               | <b>\$700.31</b>              | <b>\$700.31</b>     |                  |               |
| <b>TANF</b>   |                             |                     |                  |               |                              |                     |                  |               |
| Maximum Benefit   | \$584.00                    | \$359.00            |                  |               | \$555.00                     | \$340.00            |                  |               |
| Countable Earnings after Disregard (\$225 plus 50% of remainder)        | \$237.66                    | \$237.66            |                  |               | \$237.66                     | \$237.66            |                  |               |
| TANF Grant  | <b>\$346.34</b>             | <b>\$121.34</b>     | <b>-\$225.00</b> | <b>-65.0%</b> | <b>\$317.34</b>              | <b>\$102.34</b>     | <b>-\$215.00</b> | <b>-67.7%</b> |
| <b>Food Stamps</b>  |                             |                     |                  |               |                              |                     |                  |               |
| Maximum Benefit   | \$259.00                    | \$259.00            |                  |               | \$259.00                     | \$259.00            |                  |               |
| Countable Income after Earned Income Deduction (20% of earned income)   | \$906.59                    | \$681.59            |                  |               | \$877.59                     | \$662.59            |                  |               |
| Countable Income after Standard Deduction of \$134 (Net Monthly Income) | \$772.59                    | \$547.59            |                  |               | \$743.59                     | \$528.59            |                  |               |
| Household Contribution to Food Budget (30% of Net Monthly Income)       | \$231.78                    | \$164.28            |                  |               | \$223.08                     | \$158.58            |                  |               |
| Food Stamp Grant (Maximum Benefit less Household Contribution)          | <b>\$27.22</b>              | <b>\$94.72</b>      | <b>\$67.50</b>   | <b>248.0%</b> | <b>\$35.92</b>               | <b>\$100.42</b>     | <b>\$64.50</b>   | <b>179.6%</b> |
| <b>Total Assistance (TANF + FS)</b>                                     | <b>\$373.57</b>             | <b>\$216.07</b>     | <b>-\$157.50</b> | <b>-42.2%</b> | <b>\$353.27</b>              | <b>\$202.77</b>     | <b>-\$150.50</b> | <b>-42.6%</b> |
| <b>Total Household Income</b>   | <b>\$1,073.88</b>           | <b>\$916.38</b>     | <b>-\$157.50</b> | <b>-14.7%</b> | <b>\$1,053.58</b>            | <b>\$903.08</b>     | <b>-\$150.50</b> | <b>-14.3%</b> |
| <b>Family of Three (Single Parent)</b>                                  |                             |                     |                  |               |                              |                     |                  |               |
| <b>Earned Income</b>  | <b>\$700.31</b>             | <b>\$700.31</b>     |                  |               | <b>\$700.31</b>              | <b>\$700.31</b>     |                  |               |
| <b>TANF</b>   |                             |                     |                  |               |                              |                     |                  |               |
| Maximum Benefit   | \$723.00                    | \$584.00            |                  |               | \$689.00                     | \$555.00            |                  |               |
| Countable Earnings after Disregard (\$225 plus 50% of remainder)        | \$237.66                    | \$237.66            |                  |               | \$237.66                     | \$237.66            |                  |               |
| TANF Grant  | <b>\$485.34</b>             | <b>\$346.34</b>     | <b>-\$139.00</b> | <b>-28.6%</b> | <b>\$451.34</b>              | <b>\$317.34</b>     | <b>-\$134.00</b> | <b>-29.7%</b> |
| <b>Food Stamps</b>  |                             |                     |                  |               |                              |                     |                  |               |
| Maximum Benefit   | \$371.00                    | \$371.00            |                  |               | \$371.00                     | \$371.00            |                  |               |
| Countable Income after Earned Income Deduction (20% of earned income)   | \$1,045.59                  | \$906.59            |                  |               | \$1,011.59                   | \$877.59            |                  |               |
| Countable Income after Standard Deduction of \$134 (Net Monthly Income) | \$911.59                    | \$772.59            |                  |               | \$877.59                     | \$743.59            |                  |               |
| Household Contribution to Food Budget (30% of Net Monthly Income)       | \$273.48                    | \$231.78            |                  |               | \$263.28                     | \$223.08            |                  |               |
| Food Stamp Grant (Maximum Benefit less Household Contribution)          | <b>\$97.52</b>              | <b>\$139.22</b>     | <b>\$41.70</b>   | <b>42.8%</b>  | <b>\$107.72</b>              | <b>\$147.92</b>     | <b>\$40.20</b>   | <b>37.3%</b>  |
| <b>Total Assistance (TANF + FS)</b>                                     | <b>\$582.87</b>             | <b>\$485.57</b>     | <b>-\$97.30</b>  | <b>-16.7%</b> | <b>\$559.07</b>              | <b>\$465.27</b>     | <b>-\$93.80</b>  | <b>-16.8%</b> |
| <b>Total Household Income</b>   | <b>\$1,283.18</b>           | <b>\$1,185.88</b>   | <b>-\$97.30</b>  | <b>-7.6%</b>  | <b>\$1,259.38</b>            | <b>\$1,165.58</b>   | <b>-\$93.80</b>  | <b>-7.4%</b>  |

**CASH ASSISTANCE AND FOOD STAMP CALCULATIONS FOR  
REGION I AND REGION II (continued)**

| <b>Working 25 Hours<sup>4</sup></b>                                     | <i>Region I<sup>2</sup></i> |                     |                  |               | <i>Region II<sup>3</sup></i> |                     |                  |               |
|---|-----------------------------|---------------------|------------------|---------------|------------------------------|---------------------|------------------|---------------|
|   | Before<br>Time<br>Limit     | After Time<br>Limit | \$ Change        | % Change      | Before<br>Time<br>Limit      | After Time<br>Limit | \$ Change        | %             |
| <b>Family of Four (Single Parent)</b>                                   |                             |                     |                  |               |                              |                     |                  |               |
| <b>Earned Income</b>  | <b>\$700.31</b>             | <b>\$700.31</b>     |                  |               | <b>\$700.31</b>              | <b>\$700.31</b>     |                  |               |
| <b>TANF</b>   |                             |                     |                  |               |                              |                     |                  |               |
| Maximum Benefit   | \$862.00                    | \$723.00            |                  |               | \$821.00                     | \$689.00            |                  |               |
| Countable Earnings after Disregard (\$225 plus 50% of remainder)        | \$237.66                    | \$237.66            |                  |               | \$237.66                     | \$237.66            |                  |               |
| TANF Grant  | <b>\$624.34</b>             | <b>\$485.34</b>     | <b>-\$139.00</b> | <b>-22.3%</b> | <b>\$583.34</b>              | <b>\$451.34</b>     | <b>-\$132.00</b> | <b>-22.6%</b> |
| <b>Food Stamps</b>  |                             |                     |                  |               |                              |                     |                  |               |
| Maximum Benefit   | \$471.00                    | \$471.00            |                  |               | \$471.00                     | \$471.00            |                  |               |
| Countable Income after Earned Income Deduction (20% of earned income)   | \$1,184.59                  | \$1,045.59          |                  |               | \$1,143.59                   | \$1,011.59          |                  |               |
| Countable Income after Standard Deduction of \$134 (Net Monthly Income) | \$1,050.59                  | \$911.59            |                  |               | \$1,009.59                   | \$877.59            |                  |               |
| Household Contribution to Food Budget (30% of Net Monthly Income)       | \$315.18                    | \$273.48            |                  |               | \$302.88                     | \$263.28            |                  |               |
| Food Stamp Grant (Maximum Benefit less Household Contribution)          | <b>\$155.82</b>             | <b>\$197.52</b>     | <b>\$41.70</b>   | <b>26.8%</b>  | <b>\$168.12</b>              | <b>\$207.72</b>     | <b>\$39.60</b>   | <b>23.6%</b>  |
| <b>Total Assistance (TANF + FS)</b>                                     | <b>\$780.17</b>             | <b>\$682.87</b>     | <b>-\$97.30</b>  | <b>-12.5%</b> | <b>\$751.47</b>              | <b>\$659.07</b>     | <b>-\$92.40</b>  | <b>-12.3%</b> |
| <b>Total Household Income</b>   | <b>\$1,480.48</b>           | <b>\$1,383.18</b>   | <b>-\$97.30</b>  | <b>-6.6%</b>  | <b>\$1,451.78</b>            | <b>\$1,359.38</b>   | <b>-\$92.40</b>  | <b>-6.4%</b>  |
| <b>Family of Five (Single Parent)</b>                                   |                             |                     |                  |               |                              |                     |                  |               |
| <b>Earned Income</b>  | <b>\$700.31</b>             | <b>\$700.31</b>     |                  |               | <b>\$700.31</b>              | <b>\$700.31</b>     |                  |               |
| <b>TANF</b>   |                             |                     |                  |               |                              |                     |                  |               |
| Maximum Benefit   | \$980.00                    | \$862.00            |                  |               | \$934.00                     | \$821.00            |                  |               |
| Countable Earnings after Disregard (\$225 plus 50% of remainder)        | \$237.66                    | \$237.66            |                  |               | \$237.66                     | \$237.66            |                  |               |
| TANF Grant  | <b>\$742.34</b>             | <b>\$624.34</b>     | <b>-\$118.00</b> | <b>-15.9%</b> | <b>\$696.34</b>              | <b>\$583.34</b>     | <b>-\$113.00</b> | <b>-16.2%</b> |
| <b>Food Stamps</b>  |                             |                     |                  |               |                              |                     |                  |               |
| Maximum Benefit   | \$560.00                    | \$560.00            |                  |               | \$560.00                     | \$560.00            |                  |               |
| Countable Income after Earned Income Deduction (20% of earned income)   | \$1,302.59                  | \$1,184.59          |                  |               | \$1,256.59                   | \$1,143.59          |                  |               |
| Countable Income after Standard Deduction of \$147 (Net Monthly Income) | \$1,155.59                  | \$1,037.59          |                  |               | \$1,109.59                   | \$996.59            |                  |               |
| Household Contribution to Food Budget (30% of Net Monthly Income)       | \$346.68                    | \$311.28            |                  |               | \$332.88                     | \$298.98            |                  |               |
| Food Stamp Grant (Maximum Benefit less Household Contribution)          | <b>\$213.32</b>             | <b>\$248.72</b>     | <b>\$35.40</b>   | <b>16.6%</b>  | <b>\$227.12</b>              | <b>\$261.02</b>     | <b>\$33.90</b>   | <b>14.9%</b>  |
| <b>Total Assistance (TANF + FS)</b>                                     | <b>\$955.67</b>             | <b>\$873.07</b>     | <b>-\$82.60</b>  | <b>-8.6%</b>  | <b>\$923.47</b>              | <b>\$844.37</b>     | <b>-\$79.10</b>  | <b>-8.6%</b>  |
| <b>Total Household Income</b>   | <b>\$1,655.98</b>           | <b>\$1,573.38</b>   | <b>-\$82.60</b>  | <b>-5.0%</b>  | <b>\$1,623.78</b>            | <b>\$1,544.68</b>   | <b>-\$79.10</b>  | <b>-4.9%</b>  |

**CASH ASSISTANCE AND FOOD STAMP CALCULATIONS FOR  
REGION I AND REGION II (continued)**

| <b>Working 25 Hours<sup>4</sup></b>                                     | <i>Region I<sup>2</sup></i> |                     |                  |               | <i>Region II<sup>3</sup></i> |                     |                  |               |
|---|-----------------------------|---------------------|------------------|---------------|------------------------------|---------------------|------------------|---------------|
|   | Before<br>Time<br>Limit     | After Time<br>Limit | \$ Change        | % Change      | Before<br>Time<br>Limit      | After Time<br>Limit | \$ Change        | %<br>Change   |
| <b>Family of Six (Single Parent)</b>                                    |                             |                     |                  |               |                              |                     |                  |               |
| <b>Earned Income</b>  | <b>\$700.31</b>             | <b>\$700.31</b>     |                  |               | <b>\$700.31</b>              | <b>\$700.31</b>     |                  |               |
| <b>TANF</b>   |                             |                     |                  |               |                              |                     |                  |               |
| Maximum Benefit   | \$1,101.00                  | \$980.00            |                  |               | \$1,049.00                   | \$934.00            |                  |               |
| Countable Earnings after Disregard (\$225 plus 50% of remainder)        | \$237.66                    | \$237.66            |                  |               | \$237.66                     | \$237.66            |                  |               |
| TANF Grant  | <b>\$863.34</b>             | <b>\$742.34</b>     | <b>-\$121.00</b> | <b>-14.0%</b> | <b>\$811.34</b>              | <b>\$696.34</b>     | <b>-\$115.00</b> | <b>-14.2%</b> |
| <b>Food Stamps</b>  |                             |                     |                  |               |                              |                     |                  |               |
| Maximum Benefit   | \$672.00                    | \$672.00            |                  |               | \$672.00                     | \$672.00            |                  |               |
| Countable Income after Earned Income Deduction (20% of earned income)   | \$1,423.59                  | \$1,302.59          |                  |               | \$1,371.59                   | \$1,256.59          |                  |               |
| Countable Income after Standard Deduction of \$168 (Net Monthly Income) | \$1,255.59                  | \$1,134.59          |                  |               | \$1,203.59                   | \$1,088.59          |                  |               |
| Household Contribution to Food Budget (30% of Net Monthly Income)       | \$376.68                    | \$340.38            |                  |               | \$361.08                     | \$326.58            |                  |               |
| Food Stamp Grant (Maximum Benefit less Household Contribution)          | <b>\$295.32</b>             | <b>\$331.62</b>     | <b>\$36.30</b>   | <b>12.3%</b>  | <b>\$310.92</b>              | <b>\$345.42</b>     | <b>\$34.50</b>   | <b>11.1%</b>  |
| <b>Total Assistance (TANF + FS)</b>                                     | <b>\$1,158.67</b>           | <b>\$1,073.97</b>   | <b>-\$84.70</b>  | <b>-7.3%</b>  | <b>\$1,122.27</b>            | <b>\$1,041.77</b>   | <b>-\$80.50</b>  | <b>-7.2%</b>  |
| <b>Total Household Income</b>   | <b>\$1,858.98</b>           | <b>\$1,774.28</b>   | <b>-\$84.70</b>  | <b>-4.6%</b>  | <b>\$1,822.58</b>            | <b>\$1,742.08</b>   | <b>-\$80.50</b>  | <b>-4.4%</b>  |

<sup>1</sup> These calculations assume the family has no income other than earnings and TANF (including in-kind payments), their child-care payments are covered by CalWORKs, and they do not incur any excess shelter costs.

<sup>2</sup> Region I counties are Alameda, Contra Costa, Los Angeles, Marin, Monterey, Napa, Orange, San Diego, San Francisco, San Luis Obispo, San Mateo, Santa Barbara, Santa Clara, Solano, Sonoma, and Ventura.

<sup>3</sup> Region II counties are Alpine, Amador, Butte, Calaveras, Colusa, Del Norte, El Dorado, Fresno, Glenn, Humboldt, Imperial, Inyo, Kern, Kings, Lake, Lassen, Madera, Mariposa, Mendocino, Merced, Modoc, Mono, Nevada, Placer, Plumas, Riverside, Sacramento, San Benito, San Bernardino, San Joaquin, Shasta, Sierra, Siskiyou, Stanislaus, Sutter, Tehama, Trinity, Tulare, Yolo, and Yuba.

<sup>4</sup> Minimum wage is \$6.75 in California.

Sources: Western Center on Law and Poverty "A Comprehensive Guide to Welfare and Related Medi-Cal Issues for California Families"; www.fns.usda.gov "Fact Sheet on Resources, Income, and Benefits for the Food Stamp Program"

**CASH ASSISTANCE AND FOOD STAMP CALCULATIONS FOR  
REGION I AND REGION II (continued)**

**Cash Grant and Food Stamp Calculations<sup>1</sup>**

|   | <i>Region I<sup>2</sup></i> |                     |                  |               | <i>Region II<sup>3</sup></i> |                     |                  |               |
|---|-----------------------------|---------------------|------------------|---------------|------------------------------|---------------------|------------------|---------------|
|   | Before<br>Time<br>Limit     | After Time<br>Limit | \$ Change        | %<br>Change   | Before<br>Time<br>Limit      | After Time<br>Limit | \$ Change        | %<br>Change   |
| <b>Working 30 Hours<sup>4</sup></b>                                     |                             |                     |                  |               |                              |                     |                  |               |
| <b>Family of Two (Single Parent)</b>                                    |                             |                     |                  |               |                              |                     |                  |               |
| <b>Earned Income</b>  | <b>\$840.38</b>             | <b>\$840.38</b>     |                  |               | <b>\$840.38</b>              | <b>\$840.38</b>     |                  |               |
| <b>TANF</b>   |                             |                     |                  |               |                              |                     |                  |               |
| Maximum Benefit   | \$584.00                    | \$359.00            |                  |               | \$555.00                     | \$340.00            |                  |               |
| Countable Earnings after Disregard (\$225 plus 50% of remainder)        | \$307.69                    | \$307.69            |                  |               | \$307.69                     | \$307.69            |                  |               |
| TANF Grant  | <b>\$276.31</b>             | <b>\$51.31</b>      | <b>-\$225.00</b> | <b>-81.4%</b> | <b>\$247.31</b>              | <b>\$32.31</b>      | <b>-\$215.00</b> | <b>-86.9%</b> |
| <b>Food Stamps</b>  |                             |                     |                  |               |                              |                     |                  |               |
| Maximum Benefit   | \$259.00                    | \$259.00            |                  |               | \$259.00                     | \$259.00            |                  |               |
| Countable Income after Earned Income Deduction (20% of earned income)   | \$948.61                    | \$723.61            |                  |               | \$919.61                     | \$704.61            |                  |               |
| Countable Income after Standard Deduction of \$134 (Net Monthly Income) | \$814.61                    | \$589.61            |                  |               | \$785.61                     | \$570.61            |                  |               |
| Household Contribution to Food Budget (30% of Net Monthly Income)       | \$244.38                    | \$176.88            |                  |               | \$235.68                     | \$171.18            |                  |               |
| Food Stamp Grant (Maximum Benefit less Household Contribution)          | <b>\$14.62</b>              | <b>\$82.12</b>      | <b>\$67.50</b>   | <b>461.8%</b> | <b>\$23.32</b>               | <b>\$87.82</b>      | <b>\$64.50</b>   | <b>276.6%</b> |
| <b>Total Assistance (TANF + FS)</b>                                     | <b>\$290.93</b>             | <b>\$133.43</b>     | <b>-\$157.50</b> | <b>-54.1%</b> | <b>\$270.63</b>              | <b>\$120.13</b>     | <b>-\$150.50</b> | <b>-55.6%</b> |
| <b>Total Household Income</b>   | <b>\$1,131.30</b>           | <b>\$973.80</b>     | <b>-\$157.50</b> | <b>-13.9%</b> | <b>\$1,111.00</b>            | <b>\$960.50</b>     | <b>-\$150.50</b> | <b>-13.5%</b> |
| <b>Family of Three (Single Parent)</b>                                  |                             |                     |                  |               |                              |                     |                  |               |
| <b>Earned Income</b>  | <b>\$840.38</b>             | <b>\$840.38</b>     |                  |               | <b>\$840.38</b>              | <b>\$840.38</b>     |                  |               |
| <b>TANF</b>   |                             |                     |                  |               |                              |                     |                  |               |
| Maximum Benefit   | \$723.00                    | \$584.00            |                  |               | \$689.00                     | \$555.00            |                  |               |
| Countable Earnings after Disregard (\$225 plus 50% of remainder)        | \$307.69                    | \$307.69            |                  |               | \$307.69                     | \$307.69            |                  |               |
| TANF Grant  | <b>\$415.31</b>             | <b>\$276.31</b>     | <b>-\$139.00</b> | <b>-33.5%</b> | <b>\$381.31</b>              | <b>\$247.31</b>     | <b>-\$134.00</b> | <b>-35.1%</b> |
| <b>Food Stamps</b>  |                             |                     |                  |               |                              |                     |                  |               |
| Maximum Benefit   | \$371.00                    | \$371.00            |                  |               | \$371.00                     | \$371.00            |                  |               |
| Countable Income after Earned Income Deduction (20% of earned income)   | \$1,087.61                  | \$948.61            |                  |               | \$1,053.61                   | \$919.61            |                  |               |
| Countable Income after Standard Deduction of \$134 (Net Monthly Income) | \$953.61                    | \$814.61            |                  |               | \$919.61                     | \$785.61            |                  |               |
| Household Contribution to Food Budget (30% of Net Monthly Income)       | \$286.08                    | \$244.38            |                  |               | \$275.88                     | \$235.68            |                  |               |
| Food Stamp Grant (Maximum Benefit less Household Contribution)          | <b>\$84.92</b>              | <b>\$126.62</b>     | <b>\$41.70</b>   | <b>49.1%</b>  | <b>\$95.12</b>               | <b>\$135.32</b>     | <b>\$40.20</b>   | <b>42.3%</b>  |
| <b>Total Assistance (TANF + FS)</b>                                     | <b>\$500.23</b>             | <b>\$402.93</b>     | <b>-\$97.30</b>  | <b>-19.5%</b> | <b>\$476.43</b>              | <b>\$382.63</b>     | <b>-\$93.80</b>  | <b>-19.7%</b> |
| <b>Total Household Income</b>   | <b>\$1,340.60</b>           | <b>\$1,243.30</b>   | <b>-\$97.30</b>  | <b>-7.3%</b>  | <b>\$1,316.80</b>            | <b>\$1,223.00</b>   | <b>-\$93.80</b>  | <b>-7.1%</b>  |

**CASH ASSISTANCE AND FOOD STAMP CALCULATIONS FOR  
REGION I AND REGION II (continued)**

| <b>Working 30 Hours<sup>4</sup></b>                                     | <i>Region I<sup>2</sup></i> |                     |                  |               | <i>Region II<sup>3</sup></i> |                     |                  |               |
|---|-----------------------------|---------------------|------------------|---------------|------------------------------|---------------------|------------------|---------------|
|   | Before<br>Time<br>Limit     | After Time<br>Limit | \$ Change        | % Change      | Before<br>Time<br>Limit      | After Time<br>Limit | \$ Change        | %             |
| <b>Family of Four (Single Parent)</b>                                   |                             |                     |                  |               |                              |                     |                  |               |
| <b>Earned Income</b>  | <b>\$840.38</b>             | <b>\$840.38</b>     |                  |               | <b>\$840.38</b>              | <b>\$840.38</b>     |                  |               |
| <b>TANF</b>   |                             |                     |                  |               |                              |                     |                  |               |
| Maximum Benefit   | \$862.00                    | \$723.00            |                  |               | \$821.00                     | \$689.00            |                  |               |
| Countable Earnings after Disregard (\$225 plus 50% of remainder)        | \$307.69                    | \$307.69            |                  |               | \$307.69                     | \$307.69            |                  |               |
| TANF Grant  | <b>\$554.31</b>             | <b>\$415.31</b>     | <b>-\$139.00</b> | <b>-25.1%</b> | <b>\$513.31</b>              | <b>\$381.31</b>     | <b>-\$132.00</b> | <b>-25.7%</b> |
| <b>Food Stamps</b>  |                             |                     |                  |               |                              |                     |                  |               |
| Maximum Benefit   | \$471.00                    | \$471.00            |                  |               | \$471.00                     | \$471.00            |                  |               |
| Countable Income after Earned Income Deduction (20% of earned income)   | \$1,226.61                  | \$1,087.61          |                  |               | \$1,185.61                   | \$1,053.61          |                  |               |
| Countable Income after Standard Deduction of \$134 (Net Monthly Income) | \$1,092.61                  | \$953.61            |                  |               | \$1,051.61                   | \$919.61            |                  |               |
| Household Contribution to Food Budget (30% of Net Monthly Income)       | \$327.78                    | \$286.08            |                  |               | \$315.48                     | \$275.88            |                  |               |
| Food Stamp Grant (Maximum Benefit less Household Contribution)          | <b>\$143.22</b>             | <b>\$184.92</b>     | <b>\$41.70</b>   | <b>29.1%</b>  | <b>\$155.52</b>              | <b>\$195.12</b>     | <b>\$39.60</b>   | <b>25.5%</b>  |
| <b>Total Assistance (TANF + FS)</b>                                     | <b>\$697.53</b>             | <b>\$600.23</b>     | <b>-\$97.30</b>  | <b>-13.9%</b> | <b>\$668.83</b>              | <b>\$576.43</b>     | <b>-\$92.40</b>  | <b>-13.8%</b> |
| <b>Total Household Income</b>   | <b>\$1,537.90</b>           | <b>\$1,440.60</b>   | <b>-\$97.30</b>  | <b>-6.3%</b>  | <b>\$1,509.20</b>            | <b>\$1,416.80</b>   | <b>-\$92.40</b>  | <b>-6.1%</b>  |
| <b>Family of Five (Single Parent)</b>                                   |                             |                     |                  |               |                              |                     |                  |               |
| <b>Earned Income</b>  | <b>\$840.38</b>             | <b>\$840.38</b>     |                  |               | <b>\$840.38</b>              | <b>\$840.38</b>     |                  |               |
| <b>TANF</b>   |                             |                     |                  |               |                              |                     |                  |               |
| Maximum Benefit   | \$980.00                    | \$862.00            |                  |               | \$934.00                     | \$821.00            |                  |               |
| Countable Earnings after Disregard (\$225 plus 50% of remainder)        | \$307.69                    | \$307.69            |                  |               | \$307.69                     | \$307.69            |                  |               |
| TANF Grant  | <b>\$672.31</b>             | <b>\$554.31</b>     | <b>-\$118.00</b> | <b>-17.6%</b> | <b>\$626.31</b>              | <b>\$513.31</b>     | <b>-\$113.00</b> | <b>-18.0%</b> |
| <b>Food Stamps</b>  |                             |                     |                  |               |                              |                     |                  |               |
| Maximum Benefit   | \$560.00                    | \$560.00            |                  |               | \$560.00                     | \$560.00            |                  |               |
| Countable Income after Earned Income Deduction (20% of earned income)   | \$1,344.61                  | \$1,226.61          |                  |               | \$1,298.61                   | \$1,185.61          |                  |               |
| Countable Income after Standard Deduction of \$147 (Net Monthly Income) | \$1,197.61                  | \$1,079.61          |                  |               | \$1,151.61                   | \$1,038.61          |                  |               |
| Household Contribution to Food Budget (30% of Net Monthly Income)       | \$359.28                    | \$323.88            |                  |               | \$345.48                     | \$311.58            |                  |               |
| Food Stamp Grant (Maximum Benefit less Household Contribution)          | <b>\$200.72</b>             | <b>\$236.12</b>     | <b>\$35.40</b>   | <b>17.6%</b>  | <b>\$214.52</b>              | <b>\$248.42</b>     | <b>\$33.90</b>   | <b>15.8%</b>  |
| <b>Total Assistance (TANF + FS)</b>                                     | <b>\$873.03</b>             | <b>\$790.43</b>     | <b>-\$82.60</b>  | <b>-9.5%</b>  | <b>\$840.83</b>              | <b>\$761.73</b>     | <b>-\$79.10</b>  | <b>-9.4%</b>  |
| <b>Total Household Income</b>   | <b>\$1,713.40</b>           | <b>\$1,630.80</b>   | <b>-\$82.60</b>  | <b>-4.8%</b>  | <b>\$1,681.20</b>            | <b>\$1,602.10</b>   | <b>-\$79.10</b>  | <b>-4.7%</b>  |



**CASH ASSISTANCE AND FOOD STAMP CALCULATIONS FOR  
REGION I AND REGION II (continued)**

| <b>Working 30 Hours<sup>4</sup></b>                                     | <i>Region I<sup>2</sup></i> |                     |                  |               | <i>Region II<sup>3</sup></i> |                     |                  |               |
|---|-----------------------------|---------------------|------------------|---------------|------------------------------|---------------------|------------------|---------------|
|   | Before<br>Time<br>Limit     | After Time<br>Limit | \$ Change        | % Change      | Before<br>Time<br>Limit      | After Time<br>Limit | \$ Change        | %             |
| <b>Family of Six (Single Parent)</b>                                    |                             |                     |                  |               |                              |                     |                  |               |
| <b>Earned Income</b>  | <b>\$840.38</b>             | <b>\$840.38</b>     |                  |               | <b>\$840.38</b>              | <b>\$840.38</b>     |                  |               |
| <b>TANF</b>   |                             |                     |                  |               |                              |                     |                  |               |
| Maximum Benefit   | \$1,101.00                  | \$980.00            |                  |               | \$1,049.00                   | \$934.00            |                  |               |
| Countable Earnings after Disregard (\$225 plus 50% of remainder)        | \$307.69                    | \$307.69            |                  |               | \$307.69                     | \$307.69            |                  |               |
| TANF Grant  | <b>\$793.31</b>             | <b>\$672.31</b>     | <b>-\$121.00</b> | <b>-15.3%</b> | <b>\$741.31</b>              | <b>\$626.31</b>     | <b>-\$115.00</b> | <b>-15.5%</b> |
| <b>Food Stamps</b>  |                             |                     |                  |               |                              |                     |                  |               |
| Maximum Benefit   | \$672.00                    | \$672.00            |                  |               | \$672.00                     | \$672.00            |                  |               |
| Countable Income after Earned Income Deduction (20% of earned income)   | \$1,465.61                  | \$1,344.61          |                  |               | \$1,413.61                   | \$1,298.61          |                  |               |
| Countable Income after Standard Deduction of \$168 (Net Monthly Income) | \$1,297.61                  | \$1,176.61          |                  |               | \$1,245.61                   | \$1,130.61          |                  |               |
| Household Contribution to Food Budget (30% of Net Monthly Income)       | \$389.28                    | \$352.98            |                  |               | \$373.68                     | \$339.18            |                  |               |
| Food Stamp Grant (Maximum Benefit less Household Contribution)          | <b>\$282.72</b>             | <b>\$319.02</b>     | <b>\$36.30</b>   | <b>12.8%</b>  | <b>\$298.32</b>              | <b>\$332.82</b>     | <b>\$34.50</b>   | <b>11.6%</b>  |
| <b>Total Assistance (TANF + FS)</b>                                     | <b>\$1,076.03</b>           | <b>\$991.33</b>     | <b>-\$84.70</b>  | <b>-7.9%</b>  | <b>\$1,039.63</b>            | <b>\$959.13</b>     | <b>-\$80.50</b>  | <b>-7.7%</b>  |
| <b>Total Household Income</b>   | <b>\$1,916.40</b>           | <b>\$1,831.70</b>   | <b>-\$84.70</b>  | <b>-4.4%</b>  | <b>\$1,880.00</b>            | <b>\$1,799.50</b>   | <b>-\$80.50</b>  | <b>-4.3%</b>  |

<sup>1</sup> These calculations assume the family has no income other than earnings and TANF (including in-kind payments), their child-care payments are covered by CalWORKs, and they do not incur any excess shelter costs.

<sup>2</sup> Region I counties are Alameda, Contra Costa, Los Angeles, Marin, Monterey, Napa, Orange, San Diego, San Francisco, San Luis Obispo, San Mateo, Santa Barbara, Santa Clara, Solano, Sonoma, and Ventura.

<sup>3</sup> Region II Counties are Alpine, Amador, Butte, Calaveras, Colusa, Del Norte, El Dorado, Fresno, Glenn, Humboldt, Imperial, Inyo, Kern, Kings, Lake, Lassen, Madera, Mariposa, Mendocino, Merced, Modoc, Mono, Nevada, Placer, Plumas, Riverside, Sacramento, San Benito, San Bernardino, San Joaquin, Shasta, Sierra, Siskiyou, Stanislaus, Sutter, Tehama, Trinity, Tulare, Yolo, and Yuba.

<sup>4</sup> Minimum wage is \$6.75 in California.

Sources: Western Center on Law and Poverty "A Comprehensive Guide to Welfare and Related Medi-Cal Issues for California Families"; [www.fns.usda.gov](http://www.fns.usda.gov) "Fact Sheet on Resources, Income, and Benefits for the Food Stamp Program"

**CASH ASSISTANCE AND FOOD STAMP CALCULATIONS FOR  
REGION I AND REGION II (continued)**

**Cash Grant and Food Stamp Calculations<sup>1</sup>**

|   | <i>Region I<sup>2</sup></i> |                     |                  |                | <i>Region II<sup>3</sup></i> |                     |                  |                |
|---|-----------------------------|---------------------|------------------|----------------|------------------------------|---------------------|------------------|----------------|
|   | Before Time<br>Limit        | After Time<br>Limit | \$ Change        | %<br>Change    | Before Time<br>Limit         | After Time<br>Limit | \$ Change        | %<br>Change    |
| <b>Working 35 Hours<sup>4</sup></b>   |                             |                     |                  |                |                              |                     |                  |                |
| <b>Family of Two (Single Parent)</b>  |                             |                     |                  |                |                              |                     |                  |                |
| <b>Earned Income</b>  | <b>\$980.44</b>             | <b>\$980.44</b>     |                  |                | <b>\$980.44</b>              | <b>\$980.44</b>     |                  |                |
| <b>TANF</b>   |                             |                     |                  |                |                              |                     |                  |                |
| Maximum Benefit   | \$584.00                    | \$359.00            |                  |                | \$555.00                     | \$340.00            |                  |                |
| Countable Earnings after Disregard<br>((\$225 plus 50% of remainder))         | \$377.72                    | \$377.72            |                  |                | \$377.72                     | \$377.72            |                  |                |
| TANF Grant  | <b>\$206.28</b>             | <b>\$0.00</b>       | <b>-\$206.28</b> | <b>-100.0%</b> | <b>\$177.28</b>              | <b>\$0.00</b>       | <b>-\$177.28</b> | <b>-100.0%</b> |
| <b>Food Stamps</b>  |                             |                     |                  |                |                              |                     |                  |                |
| Maximum Benefit   | \$259.00                    | \$259.00            |                  |                | \$259.00                     | \$259.00            |                  |                |
| Countable Income after Earned Income<br>Deduction (20% of earned income)      | \$990.63                    | \$784.35            |                  |                | \$961.63                     | \$784.35            |                  |                |
| Countable Income after Standard<br>Deduction of \$134 (Net Monthly<br>Income) | \$856.63                    | \$650.35            |                  |                | \$827.63                     | \$650.35            |                  |                |
| Household Contribution to Food<br>Budget (30% of Net Monthly Income)          | \$256.99                    | \$195.11            |                  |                | \$248.29                     | \$195.11            |                  |                |
| Food Stamp Grant (Maximum Benefit<br>less Household Contribution)             | <b>\$2.01</b>               | <b>\$63.90</b>      | <b>\$61.88</b>   | <b>3077.9%</b> | <b>\$10.71</b>               | <b>\$63.90</b>      | <b>\$53.18</b>   | <b>496.6%</b>  |
| <b>Total Assistance (TANF + FS)</b>   | <b>\$208.29</b>             | <b>\$63.90</b>      | <b>-\$144.40</b> | <b>-69.3%</b>  | <b>\$187.99</b>              | <b>\$63.90</b>      | <b>-\$124.10</b> | <b>-66.0%</b>  |
| <b>Total Household Income</b>   | <b>\$1,188.73</b>           | <b>\$1,044.33</b>   | <b>-\$144.40</b> | <b>-12.1%</b>  | <b>\$1,168.43</b>            | <b>\$1,044.33</b>   | <b>-\$124.10</b> | <b>-10.6%</b>  |
| <b>Family of Three (Single Parent)</b>  |                             |                     |                  |                |                              |                     |                  |                |
| <b>Earned Income</b>  | <b>\$980.44</b>             | <b>\$980.44</b>     |                  |                | <b>\$980.44</b>              | <b>\$980.44</b>     |                  |                |
| <b>TANF</b>   |                             |                     |                  |                |                              |                     |                  |                |
| Maximum Benefit   | \$723.00                    | \$584.00            |                  |                | \$689.00                     | \$555.00            |                  |                |
| Countable Earnings after Disregard<br>((\$225 plus 50% of remainder))         | \$377.72                    | \$377.72            |                  |                | \$377.72                     | \$377.72            |                  |                |
| TANF Grant  | <b>\$345.28</b>             | <b>\$206.28</b>     | <b>-\$139.00</b> | <b>-40.3%</b>  | <b>\$311.28</b>              | <b>\$177.28</b>     | <b>-\$134.00</b> | <b>-43.0%</b>  |
| <b>Food Stamps</b>  |                             |                     |                  |                |                              |                     |                  |                |
| Maximum Benefit   | \$371.00                    | \$371.00            |                  |                | \$371.00                     | \$371.00            |                  |                |
| Countable Income after Earned Income<br>Deduction (20% of earned income)      | \$1,129.63                  | \$990.63            |                  |                | \$1,095.63                   | \$961.63            |                  |                |
| Countable Income after Standard<br>Deduction of \$134 (Net Monthly<br>Income) | \$995.63                    | \$856.63            |                  |                | \$961.63                     | \$827.63            |                  |                |
| Household Contribution to Food<br>Budget (30% of Net Monthly Income)          | \$298.69                    | \$256.99            |                  |                | \$288.49                     | \$248.29            |                  |                |
| Food Stamp Grant (Maximum Benefit<br>less Household Contribution)             | <b>\$72.31</b>              | <b>\$114.01</b>     | <b>\$41.70</b>   | <b>57.7%</b>   | <b>\$82.51</b>               | <b>\$122.71</b>     | <b>\$40.20</b>   | <b>48.7%</b>   |
| <b>Total Assistance (TANF + FS)</b>   | <b>\$417.59</b>             | <b>\$320.29</b>     | <b>-\$97.30</b>  | <b>-23.3%</b>  | <b>\$393.79</b>              | <b>\$299.99</b>     | <b>-\$93.80</b>  | <b>-23.8%</b>  |
| <b>Total Household Income</b>   | <b>\$1,398.03</b>           | <b>\$1,300.73</b>   | <b>-\$97.30</b>  | <b>-7.0%</b>   | <b>\$1,374.23</b>            | <b>\$1,280.43</b>   | <b>-\$93.80</b>  | <b>-6.8%</b>   |

**CASH ASSISTANCE AND FOOD STAMP CALCULATIONS FOR  
REGION I AND REGION II (continued)**

| <b>Working 35 Hours<sup>4</sup></b>   | <i>Region I<sup>2</sup></i> |                     |                  |               | <i>Region II<sup>3</sup></i> |                     |                  |               |
|---|-----------------------------|---------------------|------------------|---------------|------------------------------|---------------------|------------------|---------------|
|   | Before<br>Time<br>Limit     | After Time<br>Limit | \$ Change        | % Change      | Before<br>Time<br>Limit      | After Time<br>Limit | \$ Change        | %<br>Change   |
| <b>Family of Four (Single Parent)</b>   |                             |                     |                  |               |                              |                     |                  |               |
| <b>Earned Income</b>  | <b>\$980.44</b>             | <b>\$980.44</b>     |                  |               | <b>\$980.44</b>              | <b>\$980.44</b>     |                  |               |
| <b>TANF</b>   |                             |                     |                  |               |                              |                     |                  |               |
| Maximum Benefit   | \$862.00                    | \$723.00            |                  |               | \$821.00                     | \$689.00            |                  |               |
| Countable Earnings after Disregard<br>(\$225 plus 50% of remainder)           | \$377.72                    | \$377.72            |                  |               | \$377.72                     | \$377.72            |                  |               |
| TANF Grant  | <b>\$484.28</b>             | <b>\$345.28</b>     | <b>-\$139.00</b> | <b>-28.7%</b> | <b>\$443.28</b>              | <b>\$311.28</b>     | <b>-\$132.00</b> | <b>-29.8%</b> |
| <b>Food Stamps</b>  |                             |                     |                  |               |                              |                     |                  |               |
| Maximum Benefit   | \$471.00                    | \$471.00            |                  |               | \$471.00                     | \$471.00            |                  |               |
| Countable Income after Earned Income<br>Deduction (20% of earned income)      | \$1,268.63                  | \$1,129.63          |                  |               | \$1,227.63                   | \$1,095.63          |                  |               |
| Countable Income after Standard<br>Deduction of \$134 (Net Monthly<br>Income) | \$1,134.63                  | \$995.63            |                  |               | \$1,093.63                   | \$961.63            |                  |               |
| Household Contribution to Food<br>Budget (30% of Net Monthly Income)          | \$340.39                    | \$298.69            |                  |               | \$328.09                     | \$288.49            |                  |               |
| Food Stamp Grant (Maximum Benefit<br>less Household Contribution)             | <b>\$130.61</b>             | <b>\$172.31</b>     | <b>\$41.70</b>   | <b>31.9%</b>  | <b>\$142.91</b>              | <b>\$182.51</b>     | <b>\$39.60</b>   | <b>27.7%</b>  |
| <b>Total Assistance (TANF + FS)</b>   | <b>\$614.89</b>             | <b>\$517.59</b>     | <b>-\$97.30</b>  | <b>-15.8%</b> | <b>\$586.19</b>              | <b>\$493.79</b>     | <b>-\$92.40</b>  | <b>-15.8%</b> |
| <b>Total Household Income</b>   | <b>\$1,595.33</b>           | <b>\$1,498.03</b>   | <b>-\$97.30</b>  | <b>-6.1%</b>  | <b>\$1,566.63</b>            | <b>\$1,474.23</b>   | <b>-\$92.40</b>  | <b>-5.9%</b>  |
| <b>Family of Five (Single Parent)</b>   |                             |                     |                  |               |                              |                     |                  |               |
| <b>Earned Income</b>  | <b>\$980.44</b>             | <b>\$980.44</b>     |                  |               | <b>\$980.44</b>              | <b>\$980.44</b>     |                  |               |
| <b>TANF</b>   |                             |                     |                  |               |                              |                     |                  |               |
| Maximum Benefit   | \$980.00                    | \$862.00            |                  |               | \$934.00                     | \$821.00            |                  |               |
| Countable Earnings after Disregard<br>(\$225 plus 50% of remainder)           | \$377.72                    | \$377.72            |                  |               | \$377.72                     | \$377.72            |                  |               |
| TANF Grant  | <b>\$602.28</b>             | <b>\$484.28</b>     | <b>-\$118.00</b> | <b>-19.6%</b> | <b>\$556.28</b>              | <b>\$443.28</b>     | <b>-\$113.00</b> | <b>-20.3%</b> |
| <b>Food Stamps</b>  |                             |                     |                  |               |                              |                     |                  |               |
| Maximum Benefit   | \$560.00                    | \$560.00            |                  |               | \$560.00                     | \$560.00            |                  |               |
| Countable Income after Earned Income<br>Deduction (20% of earned income)      | \$1,386.63                  | \$1,268.63          |                  |               | \$1,340.63                   | \$1,227.63          |                  |               |
| Countable Income after Standard<br>Deduction of \$147 (Net Monthly<br>Income) | \$1,239.63                  | \$1,121.63          |                  |               | \$1,193.63                   | \$1,080.63          |                  |               |
| Household Contribution to Food<br>Budget (30% of Net Monthly Income)          | \$371.89                    | \$336.49            |                  |               | \$358.09                     | \$324.19            |                  |               |
| Food Stamp Grant (Maximum Benefit<br>less Household Contribution)             | <b>\$188.11</b>             | <b>\$223.51</b>     | <b>\$35.40</b>   | <b>18.8%</b>  | <b>\$201.91</b>              | <b>\$235.81</b>     | <b>\$33.90</b>   | <b>16.8%</b>  |
| <b>Total Assistance (TANF + FS)</b>   | <b>\$790.39</b>             | <b>\$707.79</b>     | <b>-\$82.60</b>  | <b>-10.5%</b> | <b>\$758.19</b>              | <b>\$679.09</b>     | <b>-\$79.10</b>  | <b>-10.4%</b> |
| <b>Total Household Income</b>   | <b>\$1,770.83</b>           | <b>\$1,688.23</b>   | <b>-\$82.60</b>  | <b>-4.7%</b>  | <b>\$1,738.63</b>            | <b>\$1,659.53</b>   | <b>-\$79.10</b>  | <b>-4.5%</b>  |

**CASH ASSISTANCE AND FOOD STAMP CALCULATIONS FOR  
REGION I AND REGION II (continued)**

| <b>Working 35 Hours<sup>4</sup></b>                                     | <i>Region I<sup>2</sup></i> |                     |                  |               | <i>Region II<sup>3</sup></i> |                     |                  |               |
|---|-----------------------------|---------------------|------------------|---------------|------------------------------|---------------------|------------------|---------------|
|   | Before Time<br>Limit        | After Time<br>Limit | \$ Change        | %<br>Change   | Before Time<br>Limit         | After Time<br>Limit | \$ Change        | %<br>Change   |
| <b>Family of Six (Single Parent)</b>                                    |                             |                     |                  |               |                              |                     |                  |               |
| <b>Earned Income</b>  | <b>\$980.44</b>             | <b>\$980.44</b>     |                  |               | <b>\$980.44</b>              | <b>\$980.44</b>     |                  |               |
| <b>TANF</b>   |                             |                     |                  |               |                              |                     |                  |               |
| Maximum Benefit   | \$1,101.00                  | \$980.00            |                  |               | \$1,049.00                   | \$934.00            |                  |               |
| Countable Earnings after Disregard (\$225 plus 50% of remainder)        | \$377.72                    | \$377.72            |                  |               | \$377.72                     | \$377.72            |                  |               |
| TANF Grant  | <b>\$723.28</b>             | <b>\$602.28</b>     | <b>-\$121.00</b> | <b>-16.7%</b> | <b>\$671.28</b>              | <b>\$556.28</b>     | <b>-\$115.00</b> | <b>-17.1%</b> |
| <b>Food Stamps</b>  |                             |                     |                  |               |                              |                     |                  |               |
| Maximum Benefit   | \$672.00                    | \$672.00            |                  |               | \$672.00                     | \$672.00            |                  |               |
| Countable Income after Earned Income Deduction (20% of earned income)   | \$1,507.63                  | \$1,386.63          |                  |               | \$1,455.63                   | \$1,340.63          |                  |               |
| Countable Income after Standard Deduction of \$168 (Net Monthly Income) | \$1,339.63                  | \$1,218.63          |                  |               | \$1,287.63                   | \$1,172.63          |                  |               |
| Household Contribution to Food Budget (30% of Net Monthly Income)       | \$401.89                    | \$365.59            |                  |               | \$386.29                     | \$351.79            |                  |               |
| Food Stamp Grant (Maximum Benefit less Household Contribution)          | <b>\$270.11</b>             | <b>\$306.41</b>     | <b>\$36.30</b>   | <b>13.4%</b>  | <b>\$285.71</b>              | <b>\$320.21</b>     | <b>\$34.50</b>   | <b>12.1%</b>  |
| <b>Total Assistance (TANF + FS)</b>                                     | <b>\$993.39</b>             | <b>\$908.69</b>     | <b>-\$84.70</b>  | <b>-8.5%</b>  | <b>\$956.99</b>              | <b>\$876.49</b>     | <b>-\$80.50</b>  | <b>-8.4%</b>  |
| <b>Total Household Income</b>   | <b>\$1,973.83</b>           | <b>\$1,889.13</b>   | <b>-\$84.70</b>  | <b>-4.3%</b>  | <b>\$1,937.43</b>            | <b>\$1,856.93</b>   | <b>-\$80.50</b>  | <b>-4.2%</b>  |

<sup>1</sup> These calculations assume the family has no income other than earnings and TANF (including in-kind payments), their child-care payments are covered by CalWORKs, and they do not incur any excess shelter costs.

<sup>2</sup> Region I counties are Alameda, Contra Costa, Los Angeles, Marin, Monterey, Napa, Orange, San Diego, San Francisco, San Luis Obispo, San Mateo, Santa Barbara, Santa Clara, Solano, Sonoma, and Ventura.

<sup>3</sup> Region II counties are Alpine, Amador, Butte, Calaveras, Colusa, Del Norte, El Dorado, Fresno, Glenn, Humboldt, Imperial, Inyo, Kern, Kings, Lake, Lassen, Madera, Mariposa, Mendocino, Merced, Modoc, Mono, Nevada, Placer, Plumas, Riverside, Sacramento, San Benito, San Bernardino, San Joaquin, Shasta, Sierra, Siskiyou, Stanislaus, Sutter, Tehama, Trinity, Tulare, Yolo, and Yuba.

<sup>4</sup> Minimum wage is \$6.75 in California.

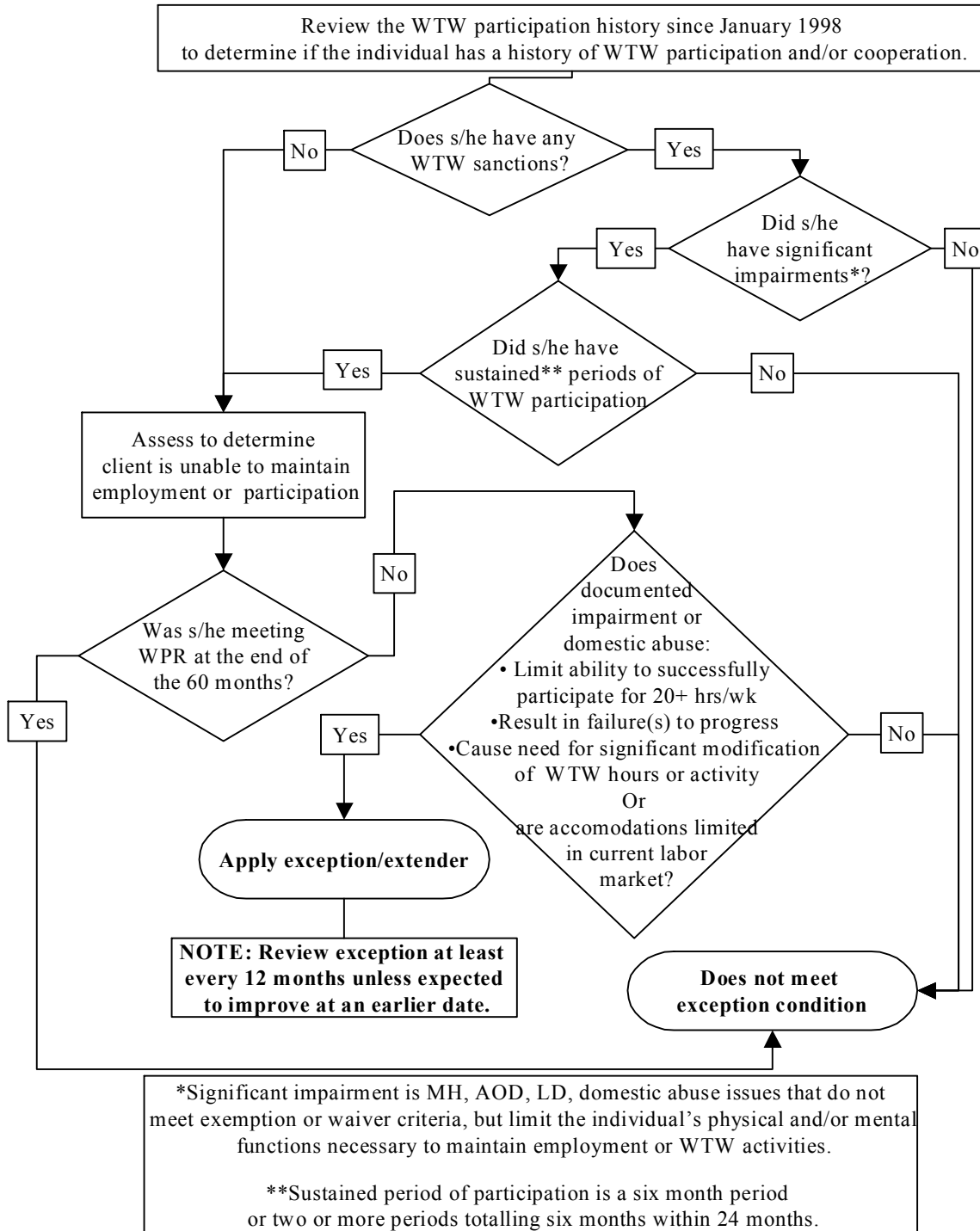
Sources: Western Center on Law and Poverty "A Comprehensive Guide to Welfare and Related Medi-Cal Issues for California Families"; www.fns.usda.gov "Fact Sheet on Resources, Income, and Benefits for the Food Stamp Program"



## Appendix C

### SACRAMENTO COUNTY FLOWCHART TO DETERMINE IF PARTICIPANT MEETS EXCEPTION CONDITION AS UNABLE TO MAINTAIN EMPLOYMENT OR PARTICIPATION

The flowchart below shows the decision-making process for determining if a timed-out adult is unable to maintain employment or welfare-to-work participation.





Appendix D

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Los Angeles County Guide:  
The People's Guide to  
the CalWORKs 60 Month Time Limit



# **The People's Guide To The CalWORKs 60-month Limit**

Information about the opportunities you need to help you get through hard times

**February 2003—A revised special edition of  
The People's Guide to  
Welfare, Health & Other Services  
Los Angeles County**



# To Get More Help

## Good Advice, Legal Services, Credits

On January 1, 1998 the welfare program called "AFDC" changed to a job preparation and welfare program called "CalWORKs." Among the many changes made by Congress is a rule that most adults can receive "cash aid" [welfare checks] for only 60 months in their lifetime. In Los Angeles County, thousands of adults are at or near their 60-month [5 year] limit. This information is for you.

### For free case advice about the 60-month limit:

**(800) 399-4529 Legal Aid Foundation of Los Angeles** for the southern parts of Los Angeles County, including Central, South Central, Eastside, Westside, Los Angeles, South Bay, Montebello, Pico Rivera, South-East Cities. LAFLA has a direct intake line: 213-640-3883 extension #5327.

**(800) 433-6251 Neighborhood Legal Services** for Pasadena, Glendale, Burbank and the Pomona, San Gabriel, Antelope, Santa Clarita, & San Fernando Valleys.

**(800) 520-2356** For Chinese speakers, both Mandarin and Cantonese. **Asian Pacific American Legal Center.**

**(800) 267-7395** For Vietnamese speakers. **Asian Pacific American Legal Center.**

**(877) 481-1044** For assistance from the **County Department of Public Social Services**

On pages 7 and 8 in each language there is a form you can give to your GAIN worker at DPSS to have your case reviewed. The review may qualify you for more months of cash aid. Page 7 is easier but they have 30 days to respond. They must respond to page 8 within 15 days. You do not have to fill out both forms.

### The People's Guide to the 60-month Limit & CalWORKs

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A wealth of advocacy news, discussion forums and resources for community organizations, homeless people and social change activists. We also send out email and fax alerts on request.

### **Info-Line**

**(800) 339-6993, INFO-LINE.** A 24 hour per day 7 day a week telephone information and referral service. Operators are available in many languages. They can help you find emergency food and shelter, legal and financial assistance, counseling and many other resources. INFO-LINE is very busy, but each caller receives good service. Be prepared to wait for the phone to answer. Other Info-Line numbers:

L.A. Airport area (310) 671-7464

Los Angeles (323) 686-0950

San Gabriel Valley (626) 350-6833

San Fernando Valley (818) 501-4447

Burbank/Glendale (818) 956-1100 .

West Los Angeles (310) 551-2929

Long Beach/South Bay (562)-603-8962

**Editorial Committee:** Yolanda Arias, Karla Barrow, Nancy Berlin, Bob Erlenbusch, Kathleen Esperas-Nemeth, Yolanda James, Dennis Kao, Jody Kent, Kate Meiss, Frank Tamborello, Nu Usaha.

**Editor:** Gene Boutilier

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### The People's Guide to Welfare, Health & Other Services in Los Angeles County, 2003

For much more information on CalWORKs see the Chapter on CalWORKs in our 2003 publication. Other chapters cover income, jobs, education, food, health care, and housing programs. Chapters on hearings and complaints, good advice, and lists of welfare offices and benefits outlets are included. The book covers benefits and calculations, who is eligible, limits and rules and additional benefits, application steps, and much more. There is a separate section on how each program is affected by your immigration status.

Copies are available in several languages. To order, either use the order form on our web site or mail a letter with the following information:

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6 copies or more \$1 each plus shipping, we send an invoice. Discounts for 100 copies or more with prompt payment.

# What Is the 60-month Limit?

## Is CalWORKs Cutting Off My Grant?

Cash Aid [CalWORKs “Welfare Checks”] is limited to 60 months for adults. Children still get aid.

The 60 months include any month after January 1, 1998 anywhere in the United States. \*\*

### BUT there are:

**Extenders or “Exceptions”**—In many cases there is a good reason why the 60-month limit should not apply to you. This Guide explains how to apply for an exception to continue receiving a CalWORKs check after the 60-month limit if you are eligible. [see page 4]

**Clock-stoppers or “Exemptions”**—In many cases certain months should not have been counted in the 60 month limit, but were. This Guide has a form on page 7 and instructions for you to appeal to Los Angeles County to “get those months back.” We call this “stopping the clock.” As a result you could have a longer time before you reach your lifetime 60 month limit. [see page 5]

**Other Benefits That May Continue**—This Guide offers information to help you get or keep those other benefits. You and your children are still eligible for Medi-Cal and Food Stamps. [see page 6]

\*\*Each state uses its own name for the program that California calls “CalWORKs.” The federal government calls the program “TANF,” [Temporary Aid for Needy Families]

### How much will I lose after the 60-month limit?

**For an AU [Assistance Unit] with no other income:** [“assistance unit” is a technical term for those members of the family who are getting aid.]

| Number of people | Before the 60-month limit | After the 60-month limit |
|------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1 adult          | \$336                     | \$0                      |
| 2 people         | \$548                     | \$336                    |
| 3                | \$679                     | \$548                    |
| 4                | \$809                     | \$679                    |
| 5                | \$920                     | \$809                    |
| 6                | \$1033                    | \$920                    |

The California state legislature is debating a reduction in these grant levels starting in July, 2003, rather than the needed increase for the

The “after 60-month limit” column assumes there was only one adult in the Assistance Unit [AU.] If there were two or more adults in the unit, the amount lost is greater. An AU of 5 persons with two adults and no other income would receive \$679 after the 60-month limit.

*For an AU with other income, how much you lose depends on your income from work or other sources; as well as your relationship to the aided child.*

Some adults have self-employment “earned income.” To report that income, you can either count 40% of the gross revenue of your business as earned income, or you can deduct actual proven business expenses from gross revenue.

After the 60-month limit you are not eligible to apply for General Relief [GR] benefits until your youngest child turns 18.

### Parent of the aided child

If you are the **parent** of the child getting CalWORKs, your other income is “counted” and will reduce the grant for your child or children. If your income is high enough, the child will no longer get any cash aid. Your expenses will not be considered as part of the “AU.” **Example:**

**Before 60-month limit:** A single mother with two children worked part-time and earned a gross earned income of \$425 per month, before payroll deductions. Count her wages, which includes any sick pay or commissions. From her earned income of \$425 subtract the Standard Earned Income Deduction of \$225. This leaves \$200. Half the remaining earned income [\$100] is subtracted from the current maximum aid payment for an AU of three, which is \$679. [see chart.] Total grant, \$579.

**After 60-month limit**—the family gets the maximum grant for a family of two, \$548, minus the same \$100 countable earned income. Total grant, \$448.

### Caretaking Relative of the aided child

If you are a **non-parent caretaker relative**, your other income is not “counted” and will not reduce the child’s grant.

### Step-parent of the aided child

If you are a **stepparent** you have a choice. If you choose to be in the AU, your other income and needs **are** “counted.” If you choose not to be in the AU, your income and needs are **not** counted.

Even when your income is considered, some of it may still be disregarded, or not counted, if it is earned or it is insurance or aid paid because of a disability.

# Clock-stoppers or “Exemptions”—

## Some Months Should Not Count Against Your 60-month Limit

**Sanctioned**—Any month you were sanctioned.

**Disabled**—Any month in which all parents or caretaker relatives in the home of the aided child were disabled and receiving State Disability Insurance, Workers’ Compensation, In-Home Supportive Services, or SSI.

**Caring For a Family Member**—Any month you were caring for an ill or disabled person living in the home and that responsibility interfered with regular employment or participation in GAIN activities.

**Risk of Foster Child Placement**—Any month you were a non-parent relative taking care of a child “at risk of foster care placement” and that responsibility interfered with regular employment or participation in GAIN activities. This can exempt, for example, a grandparent under age 60 who could not both be regularly employed and care for the child.

**Domestic Violence**—Any month you could not participate in CalWORKs as a result of domestic abuse. You did not have to currently be in the violent situation, you also qualified if you were suffering from the effects of past abuse. You only need to tell your worker [“self-declare”] to qualify; no other proof, not even a police report, is required.

**Child Support Repaid**—All child support paid to the county by an absent parent can take time off your clock. Ask your GAIN worker or fill out and submit an exemption form (see page 7) to find out how many months of credit you get for the child support that was paid.

**Teen Parent**—Any month you were a teen parent or pregnant, did not yet have a GED or high school diploma, and either participated in or were excused from Cal Learn or another teen parent program approved by the county. You can be excused in any month in which you can show the County you did not have necessary childcare or transportation, you were sick or disabled or you expelled and an alternative school program was not available. You can not use Cal Learn as an exemption after you get the GED or diploma.

**No Check**—Any month you did not get a CalWORKs check for your support even if you received various supportive services like child-care or job training or counseling. If the check would have been less than \$10 or if you were caring for an aided child but were not aided yourself, no check would have been issued for you that month. The month does not count against the 60-month Limit.

Apply for an exemption to “stop the clock” for any months which should not have been counted in your 60-month limit.

Your request should be in writing, but can be verbal. They will accept the forms on page 7 or 8. The County has to send you a written decision within 15 days of the request [unless something happens that is beyond the County's control]. If you disagree with the county decision you may request a state fair hearing. See the back of the denial form. The County is required to research your available case records before asking you to provide information or documentation which they already have in the files.

---

# Extenders—“Exceptions”

## You May Continue to Get Aid After the 60-month Limit

**Disabled**—If all parents or caretaker relatives in the home of the aided child are disabled and receiving State Disability Insurance, Workers' Compensation, In-Home Supportive Services or SSI.

**Caring For a Family Member**—Any month you were caring for an ill or disabled person living in the home and that responsibility interfered with regular employment or participation in GAIN activities..

**Risk of Foster Care Placement**— If you are a non-parent relative taking care of a child “at risk of foster care placement” and that responsibility restricts your ability to go to GAIN or employment. [Example, if you are a grandparent under age 60 who cannot both be regularly employed and care for the child, the county can continue your CalWORKs aid rather than having the child enter foster care.

**Over 60**— If all parents or caretaker relatives in the home of the aided child are 60 years or older.

**Domestic Violence**—If you are a domestic abuse survivor who cannot participate in CalWORKs because of the abuse. You do not have to currently be in a violent situation. You will also qualify if you are suffering from the effects of abuse in the past and that responsibility restricts your ability to go to GAIN or employment.

You only need to tell your worker [“self-declare”] to qualify; no other proof, not even a police report, is required. Your time will be extended for as long as you continue to suffer from the effects of the abuse or are in danger of more violence.

**Not Able to Work**— If the County has determined you are not able to go to GAIN or employment because of a significant “impairment,” for example a learning disability or chronic mental illness. You must have a history of “full cooperation” in GAIN for a sustained period. Full cooperation means no sanctions and satisfactory attendance.

However, even with a sanction this exemption can be granted if you were ever in GAIN for 6 months straight, or if you were in GAIN for two periods within a two year period that are equal to six or more months. The county can also grant you an exception if you can't work because there are no jobs in the local labor market that accommodate your disabilities

**Native American**—You live in “Indian Country,” on a reservation or in an Alaskan village, if 50% or more of the adults there are unemployed.

## Apply for an exception to continue CalWORKs checks

Your request should be in writing, but can be verbal. They will accept the form on page 7 or 8. The County has to send you a written decision within 15 days of the request [unless something happens that is beyond the County's control]. If you disagree with the county decision you may request a state fair hearing. See the back of the denial form for information on how and where to file for a state fair hearing.

The County is required to research your available case records before asking you to provide information or documentation which they already have in the files.

# Other Benefits Should Continue

## To Help After the 60-month Limit is Reached

Some of the housing, employment and supportive services listed here are only funded until June 30, 2003. Their future depends on the new state and county budgets that are scheduled to begin July 1. **The County has provided this publication and a variety of workshops, career assessments, enhanced services and housing relocation funds specifically for time-limited families. You will be reassigned to a GAIN services worker specializing in services that continue after reaching your 60-month limit.**

### A Job

After the 60-month Limit you have a top priority for programs to put you in a job. Several programs will give you a paycheck and experience for a limited time. Contact your GAIN worker [or RITE worker for those with limited English] about new programs specifically for “timed out” participants [those who are beyond the 60-month limit:]

**County Apprenticeships—** with On the Job Training [OJT] and a paycheck [currently grounds & maintenance work.]

**Wage-based Community Service and Transitional Subsidized Employment—**

Instead of a benefit check, the grant is included as part of a paycheck from a government or non-profit organization. This increases Food Stamps, should qualify you for an Earned Income Tax Credit, and helps a resume.

**Employment –Based training—**

**Skill Upgrade Training with Intensive Vocational**

**English—** in which you learn English and job skills at the same time. This includes a new program at the Housing Authority.

### Supportive Services Help You Get & Keep a Job

Separate from cash aid [CalWORKs checks,] CalWORKs can help you pay for work-related and training-related costs both before and after the 60-month limit. These supportive services include:

#### Child care

**Transportation money—** bus fare, mileage payment, or funds to fix a car to allow people to get to work or school

**Taxi vouchers--** are available from your worker if you have safety problems because of domestic violence.

**Tools, books, uniforms—** if needed for work or training.

### The County will pay for counseling and related help, making hard lives better

**These services are available both before and after the 60-month limit:**

#### Job Search and Placement —

**Domestic violence—** protection and recovery services

**Substance abuse—** treatment and recovery services

**Mental health—** counseling, prescription medicines, and related services

### The Child's Portion of the Grant

Only your part of the grant is cut. Your children will still get their part of the family grant. In other words, the check is less but continues monthly, unless your earnings or your other income reduce the grant to \$10 or less.

### Medi-Cal, Food Stamps, General Relief

**Medi-Cal—** You and your dependent children are still eligible for Medi-Cal.

**Food Stamps—** You do not lose your Food Stamp eligibility. In fact if your income is lower, your food stamp benefit will increase.

#### General Relief—

If you have reached the 60-month limit you may apply for County General Relief after your youngest child reaches 18.

### Money for Shelter and Move-in Costs

**Relocation Grants—** Up to \$1,500 to help you move closer to work, child-care or public transportation; get more affordable housing; buy a stove and refrigerator.

### Eviction Prevention & Utility Payments—

Payment of past due rent or overdue utilities made directly to the landlord or utility company. Requires a good reason for the rent or utilities to be unpaid.

**Section 8—** If you have a Section 8 certificate or voucher or live in Housing Authority-owned housing, your rent will go down if your income goes down. After the 60-month limit you move up the waiting lists for these programs.

**Homeless Assistance—** One-time prompt payment for temporary housing [up to 16 days of shelter or motel costs] and then move-in payment of the actual cost of the security deposit, “last month’s rent” and utility deposits if you find affordable housing.

Tear out or photo-copy this form and give it to your GAIN worker

Request to the Los Angeles County Department of Public Social Services for a review of months I got cash aid or for exclusion from the 60-month Limit

Mark a checkmark in ALL boxes that apply to you. If you can, fill in months & years

- I think that County DPSS did not correctly count the months which should be applied to my 60-month limit. I think you counted months that should not count. I request a written Notice of Action regarding the exempt months I have listed.
- I think I should not have my cash aid stopped by the 60-month limit and have marked my reasons .

I did not get a check [cash aid] because I was sanctioned during these months:

I turned 60 years old on:

I was [or I am] disabled and unable to work during these months:

I am not able to work, and I did my GAIN activities for 6 months.

I was [or I am] the caretaker relative of a sick or disabled person living in my home during these months:

I was [I am] a teen parent or pregnant, and did not have my GED or diploma yet in these months:

I was [or I am] caring for a child that was at risk of being placed in foster care during these months:

I was [or I am] living in Indian Country, a reservation, or an Alaskan village with 50% or more unemployment in these months:

I was a victim of [or I am still hurt by] domestic violence and abuse during these months:

I did not get a check in these months:

I know that the County received child support from the absent parent for the following child or children:

.....

.....

I want the county to provide me with an accounting of the child support money so we can calculate the months that do not count against my 60-month limit.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ DPSS Office: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Worker: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Case #: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Please respond within 30 days from the date of receipt of this request pursuant to MPP § 40-107.143.

# **La Guía Popular del Límite de 60 meses de CalWORKs**

Información sobre las oportunidades necesarias para ayudarle a sobrellevar tiempos difíciles

**Febrero 2003—Edición especial de La Guía Popular de Asistencia Social, Servicios Médicos y Otros Servicios del Condado de Los Angeles**



# Para Recibir Mas Ayuda

## Buenos Consejos, Servicios Legales, Créditos

En enero 1 de 1998 el programa de asistencia social llamado "AFDC" fue cambiado a un programa de asistencia y preparación para trabajar llamado "CalWORKs". Dentro de los cambios impuestos por el Congreso existe una ley que indica que muchos de los adultos pueden recibir asistencia monetaria (cheques de asistencia) for solo 60 meses en toda su vida. En el Condado de Los Angeles, miles de adultos están ya en el límite o están a punto de llegar a ese límite. Esta información es para usted.

### Asesoramiento gratuito sobre el límite de los 60 meses:

**(800) 399-4529 Fundación Legal Aid de Los Angeles ("LAFLA")** para las partes del sur del condado de Los Angeles incluyendo Centro, Sur Central, Eastside, Westside, Los Angeles, South Bay, Montebello, Pico Rivera y las ciudades del Sur-Este. LAFLA tiene una línea directa: 213-640-3883 extensión #5327.

**(800) 433-6251 Servicios Legales** para Pasadena, Glendale, Burbank y los Valles de Pomona, San Gabriel, Antelope, Santa Clara y San Fernando.

**(800) 520-2356** Número para gente que habla Chino, incluyendo Mandarín y Cantonés. Este es el número del **Centro Legal Asiático Pacífico Americano**.

**(800) 267-7395** Número para la gente que habla Vietnamita. **Centro Legal Asiático Pacífico Americano**.

**(877) 481-1044** Para asistencia del **Departamento de Servicios Sociales del Condado**.

*En la página siete (7) de esta guía existe un formulario que le puede dar a su trabajador de ~~CALW~~ de la oficina de asistencia social (DPSS) para que le revisen el caso. La revisión puede mostrar que usted califica para mas meses de ayuda monetaria. La página 7 es mas fácil pero tienen 30 días para responder. Tienen que responder a la página 8 en 15 días. No tiene que llenar ambos formularios.*

### La Guía Popular para el Límite de 60 Meses y CalWORKs

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**520 South Virgil Avenue #300, Los Angeles, CA 90020**

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[www.peoplesguide.org](http://www.peoplesguide.org)

Las diversas versiones e idiomas de ~~estas Guías~~ están disponibles gratuitamente en el internet.

[www.lacehh.org](http://www.lacehh.org)

Contiene mucha información, noticias, foros de discusión y recursos para organizaciones comunitarias, gente sin hogar y activistas sociales. También enviamos alertas de email y fax si lo pide.

**(800) 339-6993 INFO-LINE** Este

número esta disponible 24 horas al día, siete (7) días a la semana y proporciona referencias telefónicas. Los operadores hablan varios idiomas. Le pueden ayudar a encontrar vivienda y comida de emergencia, asistencia legal y financiera, consejería y muchos otros recursos. INFO-LINE recibe muchas llamadas, pero cada persona que llama recibe buen servicio. Esté preparado para esperar a que contesten aunque suene muchas veces.

Otros números de INFO-LINE:

Area del aeropuerto LAX 310 671-7464

Area de Los Angeles 323 686-0950

Valle de San Gabriel 626 350-6833

Valle de San Fernando 818 501-4447

Burbank/Glendale 818 956-1100

West Los Angeles 310 551-2929

Long Beach/South Bay 562 603-8962

Editor: Gene Boutilier. Traductora Liz Torres.

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La Guía Popular de Asistencia Social, Servicios Médicos y otros Servicios del Condado de Los Angeles, 2003

~~Para obtener mayor información sobre CalWORKs favor de ver el capítulo de CalWORKs en nuestra publicación. Otros capítulos cubren los temas de ingresos, trabajos, educación, alimentos, asistencia médica, y oportunidades de vivienda. Incluye un capítulo sobre audiencias y quejas, buenos consejos y listas de oficinas de asistencia y lugares donde obtener beneficios. El libro cubre beneficios y cálculos, quién es elegible, límites y reglas y beneficios adicionales, como aplicar y mucho mas. Hay una sección especial que indica como cada programa afecta su estado migratorio.~~

Las copias están disponibles en varios idiomas. Para ordenar, use el formulario para ordenar en nuestra página de internet o mande una carta indicando:

Nombre, dirección, código postal, número de copias, idioma. Mande a: LACEH&H, 520 S. Virgil #300 Los Angeles, 90020. Incluya por impuestos manejo y envío: 1 copia \$3. 2 copias \$4. 3 copias, \$5. 4 copias \$6. 5 copias \$7. 6 copias o mas \$1 por cada una. Le mandamos el saldo. Descuentos por 100 copias o mas con pago inmediato.

# ¿Cual es el límite de 60 meses?

## ¿Me va a quitar CalWORKS Mi Ayuda?

La Ayuda Monetaria [los cheques de Welfare] está limitada a 60 meses. Los niños siguen recibiendo ayuda. Los 60 meses incluyen todos los meses en que recibió ayuda después de enero 1, 1998 en cualquier lugar de Estados Unidos.\*\*

### PERO hay:

**Extensiones o “Excepciones”** - En muchos casos hay un buen motivo por el cual el límite de los 60 meses no debe de afectarle a usted. Esta Guía explica como aplicar para una excepción y poder seguir recibiendo el cheque de CalWORKs después del límite de 60 meses si es elegible. [ver la página 4]

**Parar el Reloj o “Exentaciones”** En muchos casos hay ciertos meses que no deben de ser contados como parte de los 60 meses, pero que fueron contados. Esta Guía tiene un formulario en la página 7 y las instrucciones para que apele al Condado de Los Angeles para recuperar esos meses perdidos. A esto se le llama “parar el reloj”. Como resultado de esto podría ser mas largo el tiempo para que llegue a sus 60 meses. [ver la página 5]

**Otros Beneficios Pueden Continuar** - Esta Guía le ofrece información para ayudarlo a obtener o a retener otros beneficios. Usted y sus hijos siguen siendo elegibles para el Medi-Cal y para las Estampillas. [ ver la página 6]

\*\* Cada estado usa su propio nombre para el equivalente al programa que California llama CalWORKs. El programa federal se llama “TANF”, [ Ayuda Temporal para Familias Necesitadas]

### ¿Cuánto Voy a Perder Después del Límite de 60 meses?

**Para una Unidad de Asistencia [UA] que no tiene otro ingreso:** [“unidad de asistencia” es un término técnico que se le da a aquellos miembros de la familia que están recibiendo ayuda.]

| Número de personas | Antes del límite de 60 meses | Después del límite de 60 meses |
|--------------------|------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1 adulto           | \$336                        | \$0                            |
| 2 personas         | \$548                        | \$336                          |
| 3                  | \$679                        | \$548                          |
| 4                  | \$809                        | \$679                          |
| 5                  | \$920                        | \$809                          |
| 6                  | \$1033                       | \$920                          |

La legislatura estatal de California está debatiendo una reducción en estos niveles para julio, 2003 en vez de incrementarlos por el costo de vida.

La columna encabezada “después del límite de 60 meses” indica que solo hay un adulto en la unidad de asistencia. Si hay mas de dos adultos en la unidad, la cantidad perdida es mayor. Una Unidad de Asistencia de 5 personas con dos adultos y ningún otro ingreso recibiría 679 después del límite de los 60 meses.

Para las UA que tienen otro ingreso, lo que se va a perder depende de cuanto gana en su trabajo o recibe de otros medios y también su relación al niño/a.

Algunos adultos tienen “ingresos” trabajando por su cuenta. Para reportar estos ingresos, puede contar 40% de las ganancias brutas o puede deducir gastos comprobables del ingreso bruto.

Padre/madre de un niño con ayuda

Si usted es el **padre/madre** de un niño/a recibiendo CalWORKs, su ingreso adicional si cuenta y le va a reducir la cantidad que recibe para su hijo/a. Si su ingreso es lo suficientemente alto, ya no va a recibir ayuda en efectivo. Sus gastos no serán incluidos como parte de la UA.

#### Ejemplo:

**Antes del límite de 60 meses:** Una madre soltera con dos hijos que trabaja medio tiempo y gana en total \$425 por mes, antes de las deducciones de nómina. Sus ingresos cuentan, incluyendo días de enfermedad pagados o comisiones. De su ingreso de \$425 se le resta la Deducción de Ingreso de \$225. Esto deja \$200. La mitad de esta cantidad es \$100. Estos \$100 se restan de la cantidad máxima de ayuda para una familia de tres, la cual es \$679. Ver las cantidades previamente descritas. Ayuda total: \$579.

**Después del límite de los 60 meses** La familia recibe la cantidad máxima para una familia de 2, \$548, menos el ingreso contable de \$100. Ayuda máxima: \$448.

Pariente que Cuida a un Niño Recibiendo Ayuda

Si usted **cuida de alguien que no es su hijo/a**, su ingreso adicional no es contado y no se reducirá la cantidad recibida para el niño/a.

Padrastro de un Niño con Ayuda

Si usted es el **padrastro/madrastra**, usted tiene una elección. Si usted elige ser parte de la UA, sus ingresos **si** cuentan. Si usted no es parte de la UA, si ingreso y sus necesidades **no** cuentan. Aun cuando su ingreso es considerado, hay parte que puede ser excluido, si es ingreso ganado o si es cobertura de seguro y pago por un incapacidad.

## Para el Reloj o “Exentaciones” -

### Algunos Meses No Deben de Contar Hacia el Límite de 60 Meses

**Castigo**- Cualquier mes en que fue castigado.

**Incapacidad** - Si ambos padres o familiares en el hogar del niño/a que recibe ayuda están incapacitados y están recibiendo State Disability Insurance, Worker’s Compensation, In-Home Supportive Services o SSI.

**Cuidado de un Familiar** - Cualquier mes en que usted está cuidando a un familiar que está enfermo o incapacitado y esa responsabilidad le impide ir a GAIN o buscar trabajo.

**Riesgo de Tener a un Menor en Foster Care** - Si usted cuida de un niño/a que no es su hijo/a y este se encuentra en peligro de ser puesto en foster care y ese riesgo le impide ir a GAIN o de obtener trabajo. Por ejemplo, esto puede exentarlo a usted si es el abuelo menor de 60 años que no puede tener un trabajo fijo y cuidar de un niño/a.

**Violencia Doméstica** - Si usted es víctima de violencia doméstica que no puede participar en CalWORKs por el abuso. No es necesario que su situación actual sea violenta. También califica si está sufriendo los efectos de experiencias abusivas pasadas. Solo tiene que decirle a su trabajador para calificar; no necesita presentar mas pruebas, ni siquiera un reporte de policía.

**Pago de Manutención de Menores** - Cualquier mes en que el pago de su asistencia fue cubierto por un pago de sostenimiento para el niño/a por el padre/madre ausente. Pregúntele a su trabajador de GAIN o llene el formulario de exentación de la página 7 para que le provean con la contabilidad de manutención que se ha recibido durante esos 60 meses.

**Padre/Madre Adolescente**- Si usted es madre/padre o está embarazada y está participando en [o ha exentado] Cal Learn u otro programa para madres/padres adolescentes que es aprobado por el estado. Es posible exentar Cal Learn si le muestra al condado que no pudo obtener el cuidado necesario para su niño/a o por falta de transporte, por enfermedad o incapacidad o que fue expulsada/o y que no hay un programa alternativo disponible. No puede usar Cal Learn como exentación después de obtener su GED o diploma o si no participó en Cal Learn.

**No Recibió Cheque** - Cualquier mes que no recibió cheque de CalWORKs aunque haya recibido otros servicios como cuidado de niño/a, consejería o entrenamiento. Si el cheque hubiera sido menos de \$10 o si estaba cuidando a un niño/a que recibía ayuda pero no recibió ayuda para usted, no se le dió un cheque para ese mes. El mes no cuenta hacia el total de 60 meses.

**Aplique para una exentación para “parar el reloj” para los meses que no debieron contar hacia el límite de 60 meses.**

Debe de pedir la exentación por escrito, pero puede ser verbal. Aceptarán el formulario de la página 7 u 8. El condado le tiene que contestar por escrito dentro de 15 días al menos que algo pase fuera del control del estado. Si usted no está de acuerdo con la decisión del Condado, puede pedir una audiencia con el estado. Ver el reverso de la negación. El Condado tiene que buscar los records disponibles antes de pedirle más información.

# Extensiones—“Excepciones” -

## Posiblemente Pueda Seguir Recibiendo Ayuda Después del Límite

**Incapacidad** - Si ambos padres o familiares en el hogar del niño/a que recibe ayuda están incapacitados y están recibiendo State Disability Insurance, Worker's Compensation, In-Home Supportive Services o SSI.

**Cuidado de un Familiar** - Si usted está cuidando a un familiar que está enfermo o incapacitado y esa responsabilidad le impide ir a GAIN o buscar trabajo.

**Riesgo de Tener a un Menor en Foster Care** - Si usted cuida de un niño/a que no es su hijo/a y este se encuentra en peligro de ser puesto en foster care y ese riesgo le impide ir a GAIN o de obtener trabajo. [Ejemplo: si usted es el abuelo menor de 60 años que no puede tener un trabajo fijo y cuidar de un niño/a, el condado puede continuar su ayuda de CalWORKs en vez de poner al niño/a en foster care.]

**Mayor de 60** - Si todas las personas aparte del niño/a que está recibiendo ayuda tienen 60 o más años.

que usted siga sufriendo los efectos del abuso o si está a riesgo de seguir en una situación violenta.

**Violencia Doméstica** - Si usted es víctima de violencia doméstica que no puede participar en CalWORKs por el abuso. No es necesario que su situación actual sea violenta. También califica si está sufriendo los efectos de experiencias abusivas pasadas que le impiden ir a GAIN o ir a trabajar. Solo tiene que decirle a su trabajador para calificar; no necesita presentar más pruebas, ni siquiera un reporte de policía. Su tiempo será extendido el tiempo

**No Puede Trabajar** - Si el Condado ha determinado que no puede ir a GAIN o trabajar porque tiene un impedimento significativo, por ejemplo una incapacidad de aprendizaje o una enfermedad mental severa. Tiene que tener un record de cooperación completa con GAIN por un tiempo definido. Cooperación completa quiere decir que no le han castigado y que tiene buen record de asistencia.

Sin embargo, aun si lo han castigado, se le puede otorgar si es que participó en GAIN 6 meses corridos o si estuvo en GAIN por dos períodos de un total de seis meses o más en un período de 2 años. El condado también puede darle la excepción si no puede trabajar porque no hay trabajo en el mercado local.

**Indígenas Nativos de Estados Unidos** - Si vive en una reserva, pueblo de Alaska si es que 50% o más de los adultos están desempleados.

# Aplique para una excepción para seguir recibiendo los cheques de CalWORKS

Al aplicar para una excepción debe de hacerlo por escrito, pero también puede hacerlo por teléfono o en persona. El Condado le tiene que dar un formulario si usted lo pide. También tienen que aceptar el formulario de la página 7 o 8. El Condado tiene que tomar una decisión escrita dentro de 15 días y [al menos que algo pase que este fuera del control del Condado]. Si usted no está de acuerdo con la decisión, puede pedir una audiencia estatal. Vea el reverso de la negación.

El condado tiene que ver la información que está en su record antes de pedirle más información o papeleo.

# Otros Beneficios Deben de Continuar

## a Ayudarle Después del Límite de los 60 Meses

El Condado ha dado esta publicación y una variedad de talleres, asesoramiento y fondos para reubicación para familias limitadas por el tiempo. Se le volverá a asignar a un trabajador de GAIN que se especializa en servicios que continúan después del límite de los 60 meses. Algunos de los servicios que se indican a continuación de vivienda, trabajo y apoyo solo existirán hasta junio 30, 2003. Su futuro depende del presupuesto a nivel estatal y del condado que comenzarán julio 1.

### Empleo

Después del límite de los 60 meses, usted tiene preferencia para programas que le ayuden con un trabajo. Póngase en contacto con su trabajador de GAIN o con su trabajador de RITE para aquellos con inglés limitado, para los programas especiales para gente que ya pasó el límite.

**Programas Para Ser Aprendiz del Condado** - le ofrece entrenamiento mientras trabaja y un cheque [actualmente posiciones de mantenimiento].

**Servicio Comunitario con Salario y Trabajo Subsidiado de Transición** - En vez de recibir el cheque como ayuda, la ayuda es parte de un cheque de trabajo de una agencia de gobierno o de una organización no lucrativa. Esto aumenta sus Estampillas, probablemente califica para un crédito de Ingreso para sus Taxes y le ayuda a construir su curriculum.

**Inglés Vacacional Intensivo** en el cual aprende Inglés y a desempeñar un trabajo a la vez. Esto incluye un programa nuevo con el departamento de Vivienda.

### Apoyo para Tener y Retener su Trabajo

Aparte de dar ayuda en forma de un cheque, CalWORKs le ayuda a seguir trabajando o seguir estudiando si esta participando en un programa de 32 horas por MES. (Menos horas son posibles si son confirmadas por un proveedor de servicios especializado). Estos servicios de apoyo incluyen:

**Cuidado de Niño/a**

**Dinero para Transporte** - camión, pago de millage, o fondos para arreglar un coche para ir a la escuela o el trabajo.

**Cupón para Taxi** - (disponible de su trabajador si tiene problemas de seguridad por violencia doméstica.)

**Herramientas, libros y uniformes** - si son necesarios para entrenamiento o trabajo.

**Busqueda de Trabajo**

**Violencia Doméstica** (servicios de protección y recuperación)

**Adicción a las drogas** - servicios de tratamiento y recuperación.

**Salud Mental** - consejería, medicinas y servicios varios.

### La Parte de la Ayuda que es del Niño/a

Solo su parte de la ayuda es cortada. Sus hijos siguen con su parte de la ayuda. Es decir, el cheque es de menos pero continua cada mes al menos que sus ingresos u otro dinero reduzca la ayuda a \$10 o menos.

### Medi-Cal, Estampillas, y Ayuda General (GR)

**Medi-Cal** - Usted y sus hijos dependientes siguen siendo elegibles para Medi-Cal

**Estampillas** - No pierde su elegibilidad para las Estampillas. Si su ingreso es menor, sus Estampillas aumentarán.

**Ayuda General - GR**

Si ya llegó al límite de 60 meses puede aplicar para esta ayuda cuando su hijo menor cumpla 18 años.

### Dinero para Vivienda y Costos de Mudanza

**Ayuda para Reubicación** - Hasta \$1,500 para ayudarle a mudarse mas cerca al trabajo, cuidado de menores o para transporte público; para vivienda mas económica; para comprar una estufa o refrigerador.

**Ayuda para Evitar Desalojo y Pagos de Utilidades** - Pago de hasta \$2500 para renta atrasada y utilidades atrasadas que se le pagan directamente al dueño o a la compañía de la utilidad. Esto requiere una buena razón de porque no se ha pagado.

**Sección 8** - Si usted tiene un cupón o certificado de Sección 8 o si vive en vivienda del departamento de Vivienda, su renta será menos si usted gana menos. Después del límite de 60 meses usted pasa a la lista de espera para estos programas.

**Ayuda para la Gente Sin Vivienda** Ayuda de un pago para vivienda temporal, hasta 16 días de un albergue o de un motel, y luego un pago de mudanza del costo actual del depósito, el último mes de renta y depósito de utilidades si encuentra vivienda económica.

**Peticion al Departamento de Servicios P blicos y Sociales del Condado de Los Angeles para Revisar los Meses que Recib  Ayuda en Efectivo o para Una Exclusion del Limite de los 60 Meses**

Marque todas las categor as que sean aplicables para usted. Si sabe, llene los meses y los a os.

**Creo que el DPSS del Condado no ha contado correctamente los meses que aplican hacia el limite de 60 meses.**

**Creo que contaron meses que no debieron de contar. Estoy pidiendo un Aviso de Accion con respecto a los meses que he indicado.**

No recib  cheque [ayuda monetaria] porque estaba siendo castigado durante estos meses:

Cumpl  60 a os en:

Estuve [o estoy] incapacitado y no pude trabajar durante estos meses:

No puedo trabajar, y cumpl  con GAIN por 6 meses.

Fue [o soy] la persona que cuida a un familiar enfermo o incapacitado que vive en mi casa en los siguientes meses:

Soy madre adolescente [o fui] o estoy embarazada y no recib  mi GED ni mi diploma en los siguientes meses:

Estoy [o estuve] cuidando a un ni o/a que esta en riesgo de ser puesto en foster care y durante los siguientes meses:

Soy Ind gena Nativo de Estados Unidos, vivo [o vivi] en una reservacion o pueblo de Alaska con 50% o mas de desempleo en los siguientes meses:

Fui v ctima [o sigo lastimada por] violencia dom stica o abuso durante los siguientes meses:

No recib  un cheque para los meses:

Se que el Condado recib  manutencion del padre/madre ausente para el ni o/a:  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
Quiero que el Condado me explique como fue usado ese dinero para calcular los meses que no cuentan hacia el limite de los 60 meses.

Nombre: \_\_\_\_\_ Oficina de DPSS: \_\_\_\_\_  
Direccion: \_\_\_\_\_ Trabajador: \_\_\_\_\_  
Numero de Caso: \_\_\_\_\_ Telefono (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ Fecha: \_\_\_\_\_

Please respond within 15 days from the date of receipt of this request pursuant to MPP   40-107.143.



## Appendix E

### ALL-COUNTY SURVEY ON THE CalWORKs TIME LIMIT

WPRP All-County Survey on the CalWORKs Time Limit

Dear County Respondent,

Thank you for participating in this study of the 60-month CalWORKs time limit in California. Berkeley Policy Associates and MDRC are conducting this study in partnership with the Survey Research Center at the University of California at Berkeley. All three organizations have extensive experience researching welfare and employment programs in California and nationally. This three-year, \$2.25 million study has been commissioned by the Welfare Policy Research Project (WPRP), a legislatively mandated program that conducts applied research sought by senior state and county officials. WPRP is administered by the University of California's Office of the President. For your information, we have attached a detailed description of our research study.

County Human Services Directors in all 58 California counties are being asked to take part in this survey. Survey responses will be analyzed and included in a report to be released in 2004.

Most questions ask you to indicate a simple 'Yes' or 'No' response, or to check all appropriate responses. Some questions ask you to select **only one** response from a list of responses.

Some questions ask for your estimate of a percentage:

% Enter the number that corresponds to your best estimate.

Towards the end of the survey, some questions are followed by a series of numbers:

|          |   |   |   |   |   |          |
|----------|---|---|---|---|---|----------|
| 1        | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7        |
| Strongly |   |   |   |   |   | Strongly |
| Agree    |   |   |   |   |   | Disagree |

Circle the **number** that best reflects your view. In this example, "1" would indicate "strongly agree" and "7" would indicate "strongly disagree." A "4" would mean that you do not have strong feelings either way, a "5" or "6" would mean that you lean towards "strongly disagree" while a "2" or "3" would mean you lean towards "strongly agree."

The final three questions are open-ended questions that ask for your perspective on challenges to implementation of time limits in your county as well as strategies that have helped to facilitate time limits implementation.

The survey should take approximately 45 minutes to complete. Please return the completed survey in the enclosed return-addressed and stamped envelope. We would like to receive all completed surveys by July 30, 2003. We greatly appreciate your cooperation.

If you have any questions about this survey, please do not hesitate to contact Deana Tanguay, the study's Project Director, at (831) 423-3555 or via email at [deana@bpacal.com](mailto:deana@bpacal.com).



County Name \_\_\_\_\_

**Section I: Agency Planning for Time-Limit Implementation**

---

**We would like to learn more about the planning process counties engaged in prior to implementation of the CalWORKs five-year time limit in California.**

- |  | Yes                      | No                       |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. Has your agency held meetings with CalWORKs program managers or other program managers to discuss strategies for managing cases approaching the time limit? .....                             | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. Has your agency prepared materials to assist your supervisors and case managers with your county's guidelines for exempting or excepting residents from the time limit? .....                 | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. Has your agency held trainings for eligibility workers / case managers to prepare them for managing cases approaching the time limit? .....   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4. Has your agency held community forums or meetings with recipients or advocates to discuss time limits implementation? .....   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5. Has your agency requested technical assistance from the California Department of Social Services on time limits implementation? .....   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 6. Has your agency held inter-departmental meetings to discuss access to supportive services (such as Food Stamps or child care assistance) by time-limited recipients? .....                    | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 7. Has your agency held meetings with child support enforcement program staff to develop procedures for access to child support collection information for exempting ("unticking") months? ..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

**Section II: Tracking Recipients' Time on Aid**

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**Procedures vary for how counties track the status of CalWORKs cases with regard to the time limit. This variation is important to our understanding of implementation of the time limits across the state.**

8. What data source or sources do you initially use to identify families approaching the time limit?  
(PLEASE CHECK ALL ITEMS THAT APPLY)
- a) WDTIP database.....
  - b) County-specific database.....
  - c) Paper case file record.....
  - d) Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_
9. If WDTIP indicates previous months of CalWORKs receipt in another California County do you count those months towards the recipients 60-month time limit?  
(PLEASE CHECK ONLY ONE ITEM)
- a) Yes, for all cases .....
  - b) Yes, for some cases .....
  - c) No (PLEASE SKIP TO QUESTION 11) .....
10. Under what circumstances do you use WDTIP reports showing CalWORKs receipt in another county to count towards a recipient's 60-month time limit?  
(PLEASE CHECK ALL THAT APPLY):
- a) We always count WDTIP reported months.....
  - b) If client confirms WDTIP count.....
  - c) If other county confirms WDTIP count.....
  - d) Other takes precedence (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

11. Do you contact other California counties directly to check on countable months of assistance a recipient has accumulated towards their 60-month time limit?  
(PLEASE CHECK ONLY ONE ITEM)

- a) Yes, for all cases .....
- b) Yes, for some cases .....
- c) No (PLEASE SKIP TO QUESTION 13A) .....

12. Under what circumstances do you contact another county to check for countable months of assistance?

(PLEASE CHECK ALL THAT APPLY)

- a) To confirm recipient self-report .....
- b) To confirm WDTIP count .....
- c) To confirm information in recipient case file .....
- d) Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

13A. Do you ever check cases for countable months of assistance a recipient accumulated from another state?

(PLEASE CHECK ONLY ONE ITEM)

- a) Yes, for all cases .....
- b) Yes, for some cases .....
- c) No (PLEASE SKIP TO QUESTION 14A) .....

13B. Under what circumstances do you track months of assistance from other states?

(PLEASE CHECK ALL ITEMS THAT APPLY)

- a) If a recipient self-reports .....
- b) Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

**Section III: The Child Support Time Limit Exemption**

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**Child support payments appear to be a major reason for cases not reaching time limits within 60 months in some counties. We would like to understand how counties implement child support exemptions to the 60-month time limit.**

14A. **To date**, have any CalWORKs cases in your county received exemptions for months of assistance due to child support collected?

a) Yes (*PLEASE SKIP TO QUESTION 14C*).....

b) No.....

14B. In what month/year do you expect to begin exempting months of assistance due to child support collection?

(PLEASE ENTER MONTH AND YEAR)

\_\_\_\_\_ (mm/yy) (*PLEASE SKIP TO QUESTION 15*)

14C. What proportion of adult-headed families on the caseload **to date** have received time limit exemptions for child support collected?

(PLEASE ENTER PERCENT)

Approximately \_\_\_\_\_ %

14D. What do you estimate is the average number of months that are exempted or “unticked” for families receiving credit for child support?

(PLEASE ENTER NUMBER)

Approximately \_\_\_\_\_ months on average

14E. How is the process for exempting months of assistance for child support payments made to your county initiated?

(PLEASE CHECK ONLY ONE ITEM)

a) County staff review child support payment information when a case acquires a specified number of months prior to reaching the time limit (e.g., at 54 months or 58 months) .....

- b) County staff review child support payments information when a case reaches the 60-month time limit .....
- c) CalWORKs recipient must request a review of child support payments information .....
- d) CalWORKs recipient must file a grievance .....
- e) Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

14F. Do you currently include child support collected when recipients were in other counties to calculate the number of months to exempt?

- a) Yes .....
- b) No (*PLEASE SKIP TO QUESTION 15*) .....

**14G. When do you request from another county information on child support collected by that county for one of your CalWORKs recipients?**  
(PLEASE CHECK ALL ITEMS THAT APPLY)

- a) If a recipient's case is transferred from another county .....
- b) If WDTIP data indicate that the recipient has received CalWORKs ... assistance from another county .....
- c) If the recipient requests a review of child support payments paid in ..... another county .....
- d) Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

**Section IV: Notification to CalWORKs Recipients of Approaching Time Limit**

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**The effects of time limits on families may be influenced by the extent to which families are forewarned about the time limits and understand them. In this section we ask some questions to determine how the use of notifications about approaching time limits varies across the counties.**

15. Do you send recipients approaching the time limit an “informing notice” which states that the recipient has reached 54 months on aid and has six months remaining?

a) Yes .....

b) No .....

16. When do you send recipients approaching the time limit a “notice of action” (NOA)?

(PLEASE CHECK ONLY ONE ITEM)

a) When recipients have six months remaining.....

b) When recipients have between two and six months remaining.....

c) Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

17. Which of the following types of information do you include with the NOA?

(PLEASE CHECK ONLY ONE RESPONSE NEXT TO EACH ITEM)

|   | Yes                      | No, mailed separately    | No, information not provided |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------------|
| a) Number of months exempted due to child support.....  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>     |
| b) Description of allowable exemptions .....  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>     |
| c) Description of allowable exceptions .....  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>     |
| d) Information on how to apply for an exemption for prior months of assistance .....          | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>     |
| e) Information on how to apply for an exception for assistance beyond the 60-month limit..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>     |
| f) Information about formal appeal rights .....   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>     |

- 18A. Do you provide NOA forms in any languages other than English?
- a) Yes .....
- b) No (*PLEASE SKIP TO QUESTION 19A*) .....

- 18B. In which languages other than English are NOA forms provided?  
(PLEASE CHECK YES OR NO NEXT TO EACH ITEM)
- |                                 | Yes                      | No                       |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| a) Spanish.....                 | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b) Vietnamese.....              | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c) Chinese.....                 | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| e) Other (please specify) _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

- 18C. How are forms in other languages provided to recipients?  
(PLEASE CHECK YES OR NO NEXT TO EACH ITEM)
- |   | Yes                      | No                       |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| a) The standard notice includes statements both in English and in other languages .....                                   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b) If a recipient is known to have a primary language other than English, the translated form is automatically sent ..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c) By recipient request.....  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| d) Other (please specify) _____   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

- 19A. Are caseworkers, as a matter of policy, required to contact recipients approaching the 60-month time limit specifically to discuss the time-limit and/or review recipient plans and service needs?
- a) Yes .....
- b) No (*PLEASE SKIP TO QUESTION 20A*) .....

- 19B. When are caseworkers required to contact recipients specifically to discuss the time-limit and review recipient plans and service needs?  
(PLEASE CHECK ONLY ONE ITEM)
- a) 7-12 months prior to reaching the time limit .....
- b) 6 months prior to reaching the time limit.....
- c) 1-5 months prior to reaching the time limit.....
- d) Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

19C. What specific topics are discussed?

| (PLEASE CHECK YES OR NO NEXT TO EACH ITEM)                    | Yes                      | No                       |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| a) Special service/action plans developed for recipients..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b) Exemptions or exceptions .....                             | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c) Employment plans/job contacts.....                         | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| d) Service referrals.....                                     | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| e) Other (please specify) _____                               | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

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**Section V: Services Provided to Time-Limited Recipients**

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**Many counties have developed special services for families who are approaching the 60-month time limit. In this section we will ask you about any special services you are using in your county. We will also ask you about continued eligibility for services by families leaving CalWORKs due to time limits.**

20A. Have any services been developed specifically for recipients approaching the 60-month time limit?

|   |                          |
|---|--------------------------|
| a) Yes .....                                      | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b) No ( <i>PLEASE SKIP TO QUESTION 21A</i> )..... | <input type="checkbox"/> |

20B. What services are provided for recipients approaching the 60-month ti

| (PLEASE CHECK YES OR NO NEXT TO EACH ITEM) | Yes                      | No                       |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| a) Intensive case management.....          | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b) Job search assistance .....             | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c) Home visits.....                        | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| d) Informational workshops .....           | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| e) Other (please specify) _____            | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |



20C. When are these services made available for recipients approaching the 60-month time limit?

(PLEASE CHECK ONLY ONE ITEM)

- a) 7-12 months prior to reaching the time limit.....
- b) 6 months prior to reaching the time limit.....
- c) 1-5 months prior to reaching the time limit.....
- e) Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

21A. Have any services been developed specifically for adult CalWORKs recipients who have reached the 60-month time limit and are no longer eligible for cash assistance, but whose children continue to receive CalWORKs assistance?

- a) Yes.....
- b) No (*PLEASE SKIP TO QUESTION 22A*).....

21B. What services are provided?

(PLEASE CHECK YES OR NO NEXT TO EACH ITEM)

Yes No

- a) Home visits.....
- b) Job search assistance .....
- c) Assistance in accessing other supportive services (food stamps, child care, etc.).....
- d) Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

22A. Have any services been developed specifically for families who are no longer receiving CalWORKs assistance because the adult recipient(s) reached the 60-month time limit and the grant amount became zero or so small that the case closed?

- a) Yes.....
- b) No (*PLEASE SKIP TO QUESTION 23A*).....

22B. What services are provided?

(PLEASE CHECK YES OR NO NEXT TO EACH ITEM)

Yes No

- a) Home visits.....
- b) Job search assistance .....

- c) Assistance in accessing other supportive services (food stamps, child care, etc.).....
- d) Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

23A. Have any services been developed specifically for adult CalWORKs recipients who are still receiving assistance because they have been excepted from the 60-month time limit (i.e., had their eligibility extended beyond 60 months)?

- a) Yes .....
- b) No (*PLEASE SKIP TO QUESTION 24*) .....

23B. What services are provided for recipients who have been **excepted** from the 60-month time limit?

- | (PLEASE CHECK YES OR NO NEXT TO EACH ITEM) | Yes                      | No                       |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| a) Intensive case management.....          | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b) Job search assistance .....             | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c) Home visits.....                        | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| d) Informational workshops .....           | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| e) Other (please specify) _____            | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

24. Do adult CalWORKs recipients who have reached the 60-month time limit and are no longer on CalWORKs remain eligible for any of the following supportive services in your county?

- | (PLEASE CHECK YES OR NO NEXT TO EACH ITEM)   | Yes                      | No                       |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| a) Transportation assistance .....           | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b) Tools and uniforms needed for work.....   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c) Domestic violence counseling.....         | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| d) Mental health services .....              | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| e) Substance abuse counseling/treatment..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| f) Other (please specify) _____              | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

25. How do adult CalWORKs recipients who have reached the 60-month time limit and are no longer on CalWORKs retain Medi-Cal assistance?

(PLEASE CHECK ONLY ONE ITEM)

- a) Continuing eligibility is presumptive and automatic for a certain period of time.....
- b) Recipients must reapply: recipients must complete new application .....
- c) Recipients must reapply: application is automatically transmitted by agency.....
- d) Other \_\_\_\_\_

26. How do adult CalWORKs recipients who have reached the 60-month time limit and are no longer on CalWORKs retain Food Stamps assistance?

(PLEASE CHECK ONLY ONE ITEM)

- a) Continuing eligibility is presumptive and automatic for a certain period of time.....
- b) Recipients must reapply: recipients must complete new application.....
- c) Recipients must reapply: application is automatically transmitted by agency.....
- d) Other \_\_\_\_\_

27. How do adult CalWORKs recipients who have reached the 60-month time limit and are no longer on CalWORKs retain eligibility for Child Care Assistance?

(PLEASE CHECK ONLY ONE ITEM)

- a) Continuing eligibility is presumptive and automatic for a certain period of time.....
- b) Recipients must reapply: recipients must complete new application ...
- c) Recipients must reapply: application is automatically transmitted by agency.....
- d) Other \_\_\_\_\_

**Section VI: Exemptions**

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**We would like to learn more about the reasons that adult CalWORKs recipients receive exemptions from the time limit in California counties. Exemptions granted for current or previous months of assistance stop the time limit for adult recipients by excluding those months from counting towards the 60-month time limit.**

28. Please identify and rank the top three reasons for exemptions among cases receiving an exemption to date.

(PLACE A 1, 2, AND 3 NEXT TO THE TOP THREE REASONS)

| Exemption Reason  | Rank of Top 3 Reasons |
|---|-----------------------|
| At least 60 years old                                   |                       |
| Has a disability  |                       |
| Caring for an ill or incapacitated person               |                       |
| Caring for a child with special needs                   |                       |
| Sanctioned for not meeting welfare-to-work requirements |                       |
| Victim of domestic abuse                                |                       |
| Child support credit                                    |                       |
| Other (please specify) _____                            |                       |

29. On average, how many days does it take to review an exemption request?

(PLEASE ENTER THE NUMBER OF DAYS)

Approximately \_\_\_\_\_ days on average

30. How often is a recipient's exemption status reviewed?

(PLEASE CHECK ONLY ONE ITEM)

- a) Each month.....
- b) Once exemption period has ended.....
- c) Other \_\_\_\_\_

**Section VII: Exceptions**

---

**Exceptions are “Time Extenders,” which do not stop the clock or remove months from the clock, but rather allow recipients to continue receiving cash assistance after they have reached the five-year time limit. We would like to better understand how counties use these exceptions.**

31A. As a matter of policy, has your county established criteria for granting exceptions to adult CalWORKs recipients who have reached 60 months of assistance, allowing them to continue to receive assistance beyond 60 months?

- a) Yes (PLEASE INCLUDE A COPY OF THESE CRITERIA WITH YOUR SURVEY) .....
- b) No .....

31B. Who initiates the process for applying for an exception?

(PLEASE CHECK ONLY ONE ITEM)

- a) Recipient .....
- b) Caseworker .....
- c) Caseworker-recipient joint initiation .....
- d) Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

31C. How often is this exception status reviewed?

(PLEASE CHECK ONLY ONE ITEM)

- a) Each month.....
- b) Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

31D. **To date**, has your county granted any exceptions to adult CalWORKs recipients who have reached the 60-month time limit?

- a) Yes .....
- b) No (*PLEASE SKIP TO QUESTION 32F*).....

31E. Please identify and rank the top three reasons for exceptions among cases receiving an exception **to date**.

(PLACE A 1, 2, AND 3 NEXT TO THE TOP THREE REASONS)

| Exception Reason   | Rank of Top 3 Reasons |
|--|-----------------------|
| At least 60 years old  |                       |
| Has a disability   |                       |
| Caring for an ill or incapacitated person  |                       |
| Caring for a child with special needs  |                       |
| Sanctioned for not meeting welfare-to-work requirements  |                       |
| Victim of domestic abuse   |                       |
| Cooperating with welfare-to-work requirements but who are incapable of maintaining employment or participating in welfare-to-work activities |                       |
| Other (please specify) _____   |                       |

31F. Has your county established criteria for determining if an adult is cooperating with welfare-to-work requirement but is incapable of maintaining employment?

- a) Yes (PLEASE INCLUDE A COPY OF THESE CRITERIA WITH YOUR SURVEY) .....
- b) No .....

**Section VIII: Appeals Process for 60-Month Time Limit**

---

32A. Have any recipients filed an appeal because they reached the 60-month time limit and lost continued CalWORKs eligibility?

- a) Yes .....
- b) No (*PLEASE SKIP TO QUESTION 34*) .....

32B. **To date**, approximately how many appeals had been filed?

(PLEASE ENTER THE NUMBER OF APPEALS)

Number of appeals: \_\_\_\_\_

32C. **To date**, approximately what percent of appeals that had been heard were successful?

(PLEASE ENTER THE PERCENT OF APPEALS THAT WERE SUCCESSFUL)

Percent of appeals: \_\_\_\_\_%

33. Do you use the regular CalWORKs appeals process or a special appeals process for 60-month time limit appeals?

(PLEASE CHECK ONLY ONE ITEM)

a) Standard CalWORKs appeal process.....

b) Special appeals process.....

34A. Have any recipients been reinstated without having filed an appeal, due to county error in calculating months of assistance or child support collections not taken into account?

a) Yes.....

b) No (*PLEASE SKIP TO QUESTION 36*).....

34B. **To date**, approximately how many reinstatements have occurred for these reasons?

(PLEASE ENTER THE NUMBER OF REINSTATEMENTS)

Number of reinstatements: \_\_\_\_\_

---

**Section IX: The Message of CalWORKs Time Limits**

---

**Although the rules for the CalWORKs time limit are the same in every county in California, counties can add their own messages and incentives when they present the time limits to CalWORKs clients. The questions in this section ask about these messages and incentives.**

**The section consists of a series of 14 generalizations. None of these is probably entirely true, but the point is to capture your agreement or disagreement with each of them. We would like to measure your agreement with each statement on a scale of 1 to 7, where:**

- 1 – Strongly agree**
- 2**
- 3**
- 4 – Don’t agree or disagree**
- 5**
- 6**
- 7 – Strongly disagree**

| (PLEASE ASSIGN EACH OF THE FOLLOWING<br>ITEMS A RATING OF BETWEEN 1 AND 7)  | <b>1</b><br><b>Strongly</b><br><b>Agree</b> | <b>2</b>                 | <b>3</b>                 | <b>4</b>                 | <b>5</b>                 | <b>6</b>                 | <b>7</b><br><b>Strongly</b><br><b>Disagree</b> |
|---|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--|
| 35. My county emphasizes the importance of the 60-month time limit from the moment someone applies for CalWORKs. ....   | <input type="checkbox"/>                    | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>                       |
| 36. My county emphasizes to CalWORKs recipients that the 60-month time limit only applies to adults on the case and that children continue to be eligible after 60 months. ....                     | <input type="checkbox"/>                    | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>                       |
| 37. My county encourages CalWORKs recipients to get as much education and training as possible while on assistance so that they will earn enough to leave assistance when they reach 60 months. ... | <input type="checkbox"/>                    | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>                       |
| 38. My county uses the 60-month time limit to encourage CalWORKs recipients to find a job as soon as possible. ....   | <input type="checkbox"/>                    | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>                       |
| 39. My county actively helps CalWORKs recipients who are approaching the 60-month time limit find ways to get exemptions or extensions. ....  | <input type="checkbox"/>                    | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>                       |
| 40. Most CalWORKs recipients in my county should have no problem leaving welfare before they reach a time limit. ....   | <input type="checkbox"/>                    | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>                       |
| 41. My county believes it is important to insure that CalWORKs time limits do not adversely impact families. ....   | <input type="checkbox"/>                    | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>                       |
| 42. Most CalWORKs recipients in my county only realize that there is a 60-month time limit when they are close to reaching it. ....   | <input type="checkbox"/>                    | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>                       |
| 43. The time limit helps CalWORKs recipients in my county focus on finding a job and become self-sufficient. ....   | <input type="checkbox"/>                    | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>                       |
| 44. My county worries that time limits may increase the incidence of child abuse and neglect. ....  | <input type="checkbox"/>                    | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>                       |
| 45. My county is hopeful that time limits will encourage CalWORKs recipients who might not otherwise to look for work. ....   | <input type="checkbox"/>                    | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>                       |
| 46. CalWORKs recipients who really want to work can always find a job in my county. ....  | <input type="checkbox"/>                    | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>                       |



(PLEASE ASSIGN EACH OF THE FOLLOWING ITEMS A RATING OF BETWEEN 1 AND 7)

**1**  
**Strongly**  
**Agree**

**2**

**3**

**4**

**5**

**6**

**7**  
**Strongly**  
**Disagree**

- 47. My county has many families with so many problems that we don't want to subject them to the time limit. ....
- 48. My county believes the CalWORKs time limit would be more effective if it included the whole family, not just the adults on the case. ....

|                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |









**Appendix F**

**STAFF SURVEY ON THE CalWORKS TIME LIMIT**

**STAFF SURVEY**

---

for the WPRP Welfare Time Limit Study

**Combined eligibility worker/  
Case manager**

*August 2003*

## Survey Instructions

---

Thank you for participating in this study of the welfare time limit in California. We hope you find it interesting to describe your first-hand experiences and opinions regarding the 60-month time limit of CalWORKs cash assistance. Your honest and thoughtful responses are appreciated.

Our questions are usually followed by a series of numbers:

|                      |   |   |   |   |   |                   |
|----------------------|---|---|---|---|---|-------------------|
| 1                    | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7                 |
| Strongly<br>Disagree |   |   |   |   |   | Strongly<br>Agree |

Circle the **number** that best reflects your view. In this example, “1” would mean that you “strongly disagree” and “7” would indicate “strongly agree.” A “4” would mean that you do not have strong feelings either way, a “5” or “6” would mean that you lean towards “strongly agree” while a “2” or “3” would mean you lean towards “strongly disagree.” **Please pay careful attention to the words beneath each scale—they are not always the same.**

Some questions ask for your rough estimate:

□□□ %

Enter the number that corresponds with your best estimate.

If you have a comment about a question or want to qualify your answer, you can use the side or back of the page. We appreciate your extra effort in making these additional remarks.

The survey asks about many aspects of your job and takes about 20-30 minutes. We greatly appreciate your help.

## Definition of Terms as Used in the Survey

---

### **60-month time limit**

The policy implemented in January 1998 that limits the receipt of a CalWORKs cash grant to 60 consecutive or non-consecutive months.

### **Exemption**

Also known as a “clock stopper.” CalWORKs clients with a time limit exemption do not have their current months on cash aid count toward the 60-month limit. Exemptions can also be applied retroactively once a client accumulates 60 months of cash assistance.

|                                 |   |
|---------------------------------|---|
| <b>Post-time limit services</b> | Services available to those whose benefits are reduced or eliminated as a result of reaching the 60-month time limit.   |
| <b>Time extender</b>            | CalWORKs clients with a time extender (also known as a “time limit exception”) have accrued 60 “countable” months of cash assistance, but are allowed to continue receiving cash assistance.  |
| <b>Time limit “clock”</b>       | Number of months that an income-eligible recipient may continue to receive cash benefits before she or he reaches the 60-month time limit. If a client is <i>exempted</i> , her or his months on cash assistance will not count against the time limit “clock.” |

## **Section A: Implementation of the Time Limit**

---

Counties differ slightly in the ways in which they have implemented the 60-month time limit. In this section, we would like to learn more about how your county is implementing the time limit and your experience during this process.

A1. Which of the following circumstances is an allowable exemption (“clock stopper”) or time extender of the 60-month time limit on cash assistance?

**(Mark one circle for each row.)**

|  | Allowed                 | NOT Allowed             | Not Sure                |
|--|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| a. Being 60 years of age or more   | 1 <input type="radio"/> | 2 <input type="radio"/> | 3 <input type="radio"/> |
| b. Being 55 years of age or more   | 1 <input type="radio"/> | 2 <input type="radio"/> | 3 <input type="radio"/> |
| c. Having a verified disability  | 1 <input type="radio"/> | 2 <input type="radio"/> | 3 <input type="radio"/> |
| d. Caring for an ill or incapacitated person in the home   | 1 <input type="radio"/> | 2 <input type="radio"/> | 3 <input type="radio"/> |
| e. Has a history of cooperating with program requirements, but is unable to work or take part in welfare-to-work activities (based on county evaluation) | 1 <input type="radio"/> | 2 <input type="radio"/> | 3 <input type="radio"/> |
| f. Current victim of domestic abuse  | 1 <input type="radio"/> | 2 <input type="radio"/> | 3 <input type="radio"/> |
| g. Client’s CalWORKs cash grant fully repaid by child support collection   | 1 <input type="radio"/> | 2 <input type="radio"/> | 3 <input type="radio"/> |



A2. When a CalWORKs client reaches the 60-month time limit and has his/her portion of the grant terminated, does his/her income count against the children's portion of the cash grant?

- YES
- NO
- NOT SURE

A3. Are employment services available through your agency for those who reach the 60-month time limit without a job (i.e., job search assistance, job club, etc.)?

- YES
- NO
- NOT SURE

A4. Assuming that your clients remain income eligible, what services/benefits are still available to them after their portion of the cash grant is terminated as a result of the time limit? **(Mark one circle for each row.)**

|   | Always Available      | Available only if client is working | Not Available         | Not Sure              |
|---|-----------------------|-------------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| a. Transitional Medi-Cal                  | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/>               | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| b. Medi-Cal, Section 1931b                | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/>               | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| c. Food Stamps                            | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/>               | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| d. Subsidized child care                  | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/>               | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| e. Transportation assistance              | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/>               | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| f. Work-related expenses (uniforms, etc.) | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/>               | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

A5. How adequate or inadequate was the guidance and training you received about the rules and procedures for implementing the 60-month time limit on welfare benefits, in the areas listed below:

Training could include both formal staff training provided by your agency and informal guidance provided by your supervisor. If you received no training in a particular area, please circle 9, no training.

|  | Totally Inadequate    |                       |                       |                       |                       | Totally Adequate      |                       | Not Applicable        |
|--|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
|  | 1                     | 2                     | 3                     | 4                     | 5                     | 6                     | 7                     | 9                     |
| a. Explaining the time limit to CalWORKs applicants?   | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| b. Accessing information about a CalWORKs client's 60-month time clock to track his or her remaining months? | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

|   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| c. Providing guidance to CalWORKs recipients who are about to reach the time limit? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 9 |
| d. Conditions under which exemptions (“clock stoppers”) can be granted?             | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 9 |
| e. Conditions under which time extenders can be granted?                            | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 9 |
| f. Availability of post-time limit services for those who reach the time limit?     | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 9 |
| g. Calculating the cash benefit when adult is removed from the case?                | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 9 |

A6. In some welfare agencies, there are clear-cut regulations and local policy guidelines about implementing the 60-month time limit, while in others certain decisions are left more to the professional judgment of the staff. How would you describe the practices in your agency with regard to the following:

|   | Always<br>Based on<br>Clear<br>Regulations | Some<br>Regulations,<br>Some<br>Judgment | Always<br>Based on<br>My<br>Judgment | Not<br>Applicable/<br>Not Part of<br>My Job |   |   |   |   |
|---|--|--|--------------------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|
| a. When and how to inform CalWORKs applicants of the time limit?  | 1  | 2  | 3                                    | 4   | 5 | 6 | 7 | 9 |
| b. When to inform clients of their remaining months on CalWORKs?  | 1  | 2  | 3                                    | 4   | 5 | 6 | 7 | 9 |
| c. Whether a client can receive an exemption (“clock stopper”) from the 60-month time limit?  | 1  | 2  | 3                                    | 4   | 5 | 6 | 7 | 9 |
| d. Whether a client can receive a time extender from the 60-month time limit?   | 1  | 2  | 3                                    | 4   | 5 | 6 | 7 | 9 |
| e. Whether clients remain eligible for subsidized childcare, transportation, and other work-related expenses after they reach the time limit? | 1  | 2  | 3                                    | 4   | 5 | 6 | 7 | 9 |

A7. How accurate is the information you have about the number of remaining months that they have left on their time limit “clock”?

|            |   |   |   |   |   |          |            |
|------------|---|---|---|---|---|----------|------------|
| 1          | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7        | 9          |
| Not At All |   |   |   |   |   | Very     | Not        |
| Accurate   |   |   |   |   |   | Accurate | Applicable |

A8. How often would you say your clients reach the time limit and have the adult portion of their grant terminated when they actually should have received an exemption (“clock stopper”) or time extender?

|       |   |   |   |   |   |       |            |
|-------|---|---|---|---|---|-------|------------|
| 1     | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7     | 9          |
| Never |   |   |   |   |   | Very  | Not        |
|       |   |   |   |   |   | Often | Applicable |

A9. How often would you say your clients receive an exemption (“clock stopper”) or time extender inappropriately?

|       |   |   |   |   |   |       |            |
|-------|---|---|---|---|---|-------|------------|
| 1     | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7     | 9          |
| Never |   |   |   |   |   | Very  | Not        |
|       |   |   |   |   |   | Often | Applicable |

A10. How often does your supervisor review cases that are close to reaching the 60-month time limit to see whether exemptions (“clock stoppers”) or time extenders have been applied correctly?

|       |   |   |   |   |   |       |            |
|-------|---|---|---|---|---|-------|------------|
| 1     | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7     | 9          |
| Never |   |   |   |   |   | Very  | Not        |
|       |   |   |   |   |   | Often | Applicable |

A11. How unlikely or likely would you be to grant an exemption (“clock stopper”) or time extender under the following circumstances?

a. Your client has fully complied with program requirements, but has been unable to find a job.

|          |   |   |   |   |   |        |           |
|----------|---|---|---|---|---|--------|-----------|
| 1        | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7      | 9         |
| Very     |   |   |   |   |   | Very   | Not Part  |
| Unlikely |   |   |   |   |   | Likely | of My Job |

b. Your client was not fully complying with program requirements previously, but has been in full compliance for the last couple months and is making a good faith effort to find employment.

|          |   |   |   |   |   |        |           |
|----------|---|---|---|---|---|--------|-----------|
| 1        | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7      | 9         |
| Very     |   |   |   |   |   | Very   | Not Part  |
| Unlikely |   |   |   |   |   | Likely | of My Job |

- c. Your client has a hard time holding down employment because of a mental health problem and is currently receiving treatment as part of her/his program requirements.

|               |   |   |   |   |   |             |                    |
|---------------|---|---|---|---|---|-------------|--------------------|
| 1             | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7           | 9                  |
| Very Unlikely |   |   |   |   |   | Very Likely | Not Part of My Job |

- d. Your client was recently diagnosed with a learning disability, and she/he needs help finding employment that will accommodate the disability.

|               |   |   |   |   |   |             |                    |
|---------------|---|---|---|---|---|-------------|--------------------|
| 1             | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7           | 9                  |
| Very Unlikely |   |   |   |   |   | Very Likely | Not Part of My Job |

- e. Your client has a chronic health problem that prevents her/him from attending work regularly.

|               |   |   |   |   |   |             |                    |
|---------------|---|---|---|---|---|-------------|--------------------|
| 1             | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7           | 9                  |
| Very Unlikely |   |   |   |   |   | Very Likely | Not Part of My Job |

- A12. How lenient or strict does your supervisor want you to be when applying exemptions (“clock stoppers”) to the time limit—to be lenient and apply exemptions often OR to be strict and only apply them in rare cases?

|               |   |   |   |   |   |             |                    |
|---------------|---|---|---|---|---|-------------|--------------------|
| 1             | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7           | 9                  |
| Very Unlikely |   |   |   |   |   | Very Likely | Not Part of My Job |

- A13. How lenient or strict does your supervisor want you to be when applying time extenders to the time limit—to be lenient and apply time extenders often OR to be strict and only apply them in rare cases?

|               |   |   |   |   |   |             |                    |
|---------------|---|---|---|---|---|-------------|--------------------|
| 1             | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7           | 9                  |
| Very Unlikely |   |   |   |   |   | Very Likely | Not Part of My Job |

- A14. Approximately how many clients on your current caseload have an exemption (“clock stopper”) from the 60-month time limit?

\_\_\_\_|\_\_\_\_| clients

- A15. Approximately how many clients on your current caseload have a time extender?

\_\_\_\_|\_\_\_\_| clients

A16. Since January 2003, approximately how many of your clients timed out (had the adult portion of the grant removed) as a result of the 60-month time limit?

\_\_\_\_|\_\_\_\_| clients

## Section B. Communication with CalWORKs Clients

---

In this section, we are interested in better understanding how you communicate the details of the 60-month time limit policy to CalWORKs clients. For these questions, we are interested in how *you* communicate with clients, not the practices of other staff in your agency.

B1. When you first meet with a CalWORKs client who is new to your caseload, how often do you explain:

a. The existence of the 60-month time limit?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7  
Never Very Often

b. Exemptions (“clock stoppers”) from the time limit?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7  
Never Very Often

c. Allowable time extenders?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7  
Never Very Often

d. The post-time limit services available after the time limit?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7  
Never Very Often

B2. Do you conduct client redetermination interviews?

- Yes  
 No **GO TO QUESTION B4**

B3. In general, during redetermination interviews with your CalWORKs clients, how often do you explain:

a. How many eligible months your client has remaining on his/her time limit “clock”?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7  
Never Very Often

b. Exemptions (“clock stoppers”) from the time limit?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7  
Never Very Often

c. Allowable time extenders?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7  
Never Very Often

d. The post-time limit services available after the time limit?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7  
Never Very Often

B4. On average, approximately how often do you give your CalWORKs clients information about their remaining eligible months (at in-person meetings, during phone calls, or through the mail)?

- 1 Once every month or more
- 2 Once every two to three months
- 3 Once every six months
- 4 Once every year
- 5 Less than once every year

B5. Which of the following best describes how you discuss time extenders when talking with your CalWORKs clients? (**Only mark one circle.**)

- 1 “Most recipients will probably receive extensions to the time limit.”
- 2 “If you cooperate with the program rules but cannot find a job before reaching the time limit, you will probably receive an extension.”
- 3 “Some recipients will receive an extension from the time limit, and some will not.”

<sup>4</sup> “Very few recipients qualify for an extension, so you will probably not qualify.”

<sup>5</sup> I rarely or never discuss time extenders.

B6. How often would you advise your CalWORKs clients who are working and receiving a small cash grant to go off cash assistance to save their remaining eligible months?

|       |   |   |   |   |   |            |
|-------|---|---|---|---|---|------------|
| 1     | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7          |
| Never |   |   |   |   |   | Very Often |

B7. In your opinion, how *aware* of the time limit is your average first-time CalWORKs client when he or she first starts receiving cash assistance?

|              |   |   |   |   |   |               |               |
|--------------|---|---|---|---|---|---------------|---------------|
| 1            | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7             | 9             |
| Not<br>Aware |   |   |   |   |   | Very<br>Aware | Don't<br>Know |

B8. In your opinion, how *worried* about the time limit is your average first-time CalWORKs client when he or she first starts receiving cash assistance?

|                |   |   |   |   |   |                 |               |
|----------------|---|---|---|---|---|-----------------|---------------|
| 1              | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7               | 9             |
| Not<br>Worried |   |   |   |   |   | Very<br>Worried | Don't<br>Know |

B9. In your opinion, how *aware* of the time limit is the average long-term CalWORKs client with six months or less remaining on his or her time limit “clock”?

|              |   |   |   |   |   |               |               |
|--------------|---|---|---|---|---|---------------|---------------|
| 1            | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7             | 9             |
| Not<br>Aware |   |   |   |   |   | Very<br>Aware | Don't<br>Know |

B10. In your opinion, how *worried* about reaching the time limit is the average long-term CalWORKs client who has six months or less remaining on his/her time limit “clock”?

|                |   |   |   |   |   |                 |               |
|----------------|---|---|---|---|---|-----------------|---------------|
| 1              | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7               | 9             |
| Not<br>Worried |   |   |   |   |   | Very<br>Worried | Don't<br>Know |

B11. In your opinion, how effective are time limits in motivating new welfare recipients (those who have a lot of time left on their time limit “clock”) to become self-sufficient?

|                  |   |   |   |   |   |                |            |
|------------------|---|---|---|---|---|----------------|------------|
| 1                | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7              | 9          |
| Very Ineffective |   |   |   |   |   | Very Effective | Don't Know |

B12. In your opinion, how effective are time limits in motivating longer-term welfare recipients (those who have about 6 months left on their time limit “clock”) to become self-sufficient?

|                  |   |   |   |   |   |                |            |
|------------------|---|---|---|---|---|----------------|------------|
| 1                | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7              | 9          |
| Very Ineffective |   |   |   |   |   | Very Effective | Don't Know |

B13. How often do you try to motivate your clients to become more self-sufficient by mentioning the time limit?

|       |   |   |   |   |   |            |
|-------|---|---|---|---|---|------------|
| 1     | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7          |
| Never |   |   |   |   |   | Very Often |

B14. Do you think the 60-month time limit is too short, too long, or about right?

|           |   |   |             |   |   |          |
|-----------|---|---|-------------|---|---|----------|
| 1         | 2 | 3 | 4           | 5 | 6 | 7        |
| Too Short |   |   | About Right |   |   | Too Long |

B15. In your opinion, does the CalWORKs program in your county have too few or too many exemptions (“clock stoppers”) from the time limit?

|         |   |   |   |   |   |          |
|---------|---|---|---|---|---|----------|
| 1       | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7        |
| Too Few |   |   |   |   |   | Too Many |

B16. In your opinion, does the CalWORKs program in your county have too few or too many time extenders?

|         |   |   |   |   |   |          |
|---------|---|---|---|---|---|----------|
| 1       | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7        |
| Too Few |   |   |   |   |   | Too Many |



B17. If you have clients whom you think *cannot* become self-sufficient within 60 months, how often do you encourage them to seek an exemption (“clock stopper”)?

|       |   |   |   |   |   |            |
|-------|---|---|---|---|---|------------|
| 1     | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7          |
| Never |   |   |   |   |   | Very Often |

B18. If you have clients whom you think *cannot* become self-sufficient within 60 months due to a disability, how often do you encourage them to apply for SSI?

|       |   |   |   |   |   |            |
|-------|---|---|---|---|---|------------|
| 1     | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7          |
| Never |   |   |   |   |   | Very Often |

B19. In your opinion, how many of your CalWORKs clients believe that if they reach 60 months on cash assistance, the time limit rules will be applied to them and they will lose their portion of the cash grant?

|             |   |   |   |   |   |              |               |
|-------------|---|---|---|---|---|--------------|---------------|
| 1           | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7            | 9             |
| Very<br>Few |   |   |   |   |   | Very<br>Many | Don't<br>Know |

B20. In your opinion, how many of your CalWORKs clients understand that reaching the time limit will mean that the adult portion of their cash grant will be terminated (rather than the full cash grant)?

|             |   |   |   |   |   |              |               |
|-------------|---|---|---|---|---|--------------|---------------|
| 1           | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7            | 9             |
| Very<br>Few |   |   |   |   |   | Very<br>Many | Don't<br>Know |

B21. In your opinion, how many of your CalWORKs clients understand that reaching the time limit could mean that their entire cash grant is terminated depending on their household size and income?

|             |   |   |   |   |   |              |               |
|-------------|---|---|---|---|---|--------------|---------------|
| 1           | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7            | 9             |
| Very<br>Few |   |   |   |   |   | Very<br>Many | Don't<br>Know |

## Section C: Effects of the Time Limit

In this section, we would like to get your opinions on the time limit policy—whether and how it affects client motivation and behavior and the way you work with your clients. To answer these questions, imagine how the CalWORKs program would be different if there were no time limit on cash assistance.

- C1. Do you believe that few or many of the clients you work with are *hurt* by the time limit policy?

|          |   |   |   |   |   |           |            |
|----------|---|---|---|---|---|-----------|------------|
| 1        | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7         | 9          |
| Very Few |   |   |   |   |   | Very Many | Don't Know |

- C2. Do you believe that few or many of the clients you work with are *helped* by the time limit policy?

|          |   |   |   |   |   |           |            |
|----------|---|---|---|---|---|-----------|------------|
| 1        | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7         | 9          |
| Very Few |   |   |   |   |   | Very Many | Don't Know |

- C3. How unfair or fair do you believe the time limit is to your clients?

|             |   |   |   |   |   |           |
|-------------|---|---|---|---|---|-----------|
| 1           | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7         |
| Very Unfair |   |   |   |   |   | Very Fair |

- C4. Which do you believe has a greater effect on your clients finding jobs and leaving cash assistance: the work requirements **OR** the 60-month time limit?

|                   |   |   |              |   |   |            |
|-------------------|---|---|--------------|---|---|------------|
| 1                 | 2 | 3 | 4            | 5 | 6 | 7          |
| Work Requirements |   |   | Both Equally |   |   | Time Limit |

- C5. In your opinion, how much of an effect does your clients' awareness of the 60-month time limit have on their decision whether or not to:

|  | 1         | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7            | 9          |
|--|-----------|---|---|---|---|---|--------------|------------|
|  | No Effect |   |   |   |   |   | Large Effect | Don't Know |
| a. Seek <i>more</i> education or job training?                     | 1         | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7            | 9          |
| b. Look for work?  | 1         | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7            | 9          |
| c. Take jobs that have low pay or unfavorable hours or conditions? | 1         | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7            | 9          |

d. Get help with their personal or family problems? 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 9

e. Seek less education or job training? 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 9

C6. As they get **nearer to the time limit**, how often do your clients try harder to become self-sufficient?

|       |   |   |   |   |   |            |            |
|-------|---|---|---|---|---|------------|------------|
| 1     | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7          | 9          |
| Never |   |   |   |   |   | Very Often | Don't Know |

C7. As they get **nearer to the time limit**, how often are your clients more willing to take jobs that have low pay or unfavorable hours or conditions?

|       |   |   |   |   |   |            |            |
|-------|---|---|---|---|---|------------|------------|
| 1     | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7          | 9          |
| Never |   |   |   |   |   | Very Often | Don't Know |

C8. As they get **nearer to the time limit**, how often are your clients more willing to use childcare that they previously rejected in order to work?

|       |   |   |   |   |   |            |            |
|-------|---|---|---|---|---|------------|------------|
| 1     | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7          | 9          |
| Never |   |   |   |   |   | Very Often | Don't Know |

C9. As they get **nearer to the time limit**, how often are your clients more willing to travel longer distances to work?

|       |   |   |   |   |   |            |            |
|-------|---|---|---|---|---|------------|------------|
| 1     | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7          | 9          |
| Never |   |   |   |   |   | Very Often | Don't Know |

C10. Do you disagree or agree with the following statements?

a. Because of the time limit, I keep closer track of what my clients are doing.

|                   |   |   |   |   |   |                |
|-------------------|---|---|---|---|---|----------------|
| 1                 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7              |
| Strongly Disagree |   |   |   |   |   | Strongly Agree |

b. Because of the time limit, I am more likely to encourage my clients to go to work as soon as possible.

|                   |   |   |   |   |   |                |
|-------------------|---|---|---|---|---|----------------|
| 1                 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7              |
| Strongly Disagree |   |   |   |   |   | Strongly Agree |

- c. Because of the time limit, I am more likely to encourage my clients to take a job that has unfavorable features (e.g., long travel time, late shift, etc.).

|                   |   |   |   |   |   |                |
|-------------------|---|---|---|---|---|----------------|
| 1                 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7              |
| Strongly Disagree |   |   |   |   |   | Strongly Agree |

- d. Because of the time limit, I am more likely to encourage my clients to pursue child support from the non-custodial parents of their children.

|                   |   |   |   |   |   |                |
|-------------------|---|---|---|---|---|----------------|
| 1                 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7              |
| Strongly Disagree |   |   |   |   |   | Strongly Agree |

- e. Because of the time limit, I am more likely to encourage my working clients to apply for the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC).

|                   |   |   |   |   |   |                |
|-------------------|---|---|---|---|---|----------------|
| 1                 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7              |
| Strongly Disagree |   |   |   |   |   | Strongly Agree |

- f. I pay more attention to my clients who are about to reach the time limit.

|                   |   |   |   |   |   |                |
|-------------------|---|---|---|---|---|----------------|
| 1                 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7              |
| Strongly Disagree |   |   |   |   |   | Strongly Agree |

- g. Everyone who fully complies with the work requirements should be able to achieve self-sufficiency before reaching the time limit.

|                   |   |   |   |   |   |                |
|-------------------|---|---|---|---|---|----------------|
| 1                 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7              |
| Strongly Disagree |   |   |   |   |   | Strongly Agree |

- h. Because of the time limit, I am in a greater hurry for my client to start a program that will lead to self-sufficiency.

|                   |   |   |   |   |   |                |
|-------------------|---|---|---|---|---|----------------|
| 1                 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7              |
| Strongly Disagree |   |   |   |   |   | Strongly Agree |

- i. Because of the time limit, when my clients finish an activity, I am more concerned that they start their next activity quickly.

|                   |   |   |   |   |   |                |
|-------------------|---|---|---|---|---|----------------|
| 1                 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7              |
| Strongly Disagree |   |   |   |   |   | Strongly Agree |

- j. Because of the time limit, I am more likely to encourage my clients to pursue education and training.

|                      |   |   |   |   |   |                   |
|----------------------|---|---|---|---|---|-------------------|
| 1                    | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7                 |
| Strongly<br>Disagree |   |   |   |   |   | Strongly<br>Agree |

- k. Because of the time limit, I encourage my clients to enter education and training programs that they can complete in six months or less, rather than programs that are longer in duration.

|                      |   |   |   |   |   |                   |
|----------------------|---|---|---|---|---|-------------------|
| 1                    | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7                 |
| Strongly<br>Disagree |   |   |   |   |   | Strongly<br>Agree |

- C11. In the space below, please provide any additional information that you would like to share with us about your views of and experiences with the 60-month time limit. (*Optional*):

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## Section D: Personal Characteristics

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D1. What is your age? |\_|\_|

D2. Are you:

- Male  
 Female

D3. How long have you been employed by this welfare agency?

|\_|\_| years/months → Please check whether your numbers are in:

Years

Months

D4. How long have you been in your current position?

|\_|\_| years/months → Please check whether your numbers are in:

Years

Months

D5. Do you work:

Full-time

Part-time

D6. What is your current, approximate caseload size?

|\_|\_| cases

D7. What proportion of your caseload is receiving CalWORKs cash assistance?

|\_|\_| %

D8. Have you ever received welfare benefits?

Yes

No

D9. What is your ethnic background? (**Check one**)

Hispanic/Latino (regardless of race)

Black/African-American (not of Hispanic origin)

White (not of Hispanic origin)

American Indian or Alaskan Native

Asian or Pacific Islander

Other

D10. Are you fluent in a language other than English?

Yes

No (please skip to question D11)

D10a. Do you speak any languages other than English when working with your clients?

Yes, *please specify*: \_\_\_\_\_

No

D11. How much education have you completed? (**Check one**)

Did not finish high school

High school diploma or GED

Some college

Associate's Degree

Bachelor's Degree

Some graduate school

Graduate Degree

D12. Do you carry a specialized caseload (such as Spanish speaking, Cal-Learn, employed clients, intake-only, ongoing cases, etc.)?

Yes, *please specify*: \_\_\_\_\_

No

Thank you for your help!

## Appendix G

### CalWORKs PARTICIPANT FOCUS GROUP GUIDE

#### California Welfare Time Limit Study Field Guide for the Six-county Study

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## CalWORKs Participant Focus Group Guide

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Thank you all for coming. We are meeting with you today to talk with you about your experience with CalWORKs, and specifically the CalWORKs time limit. All of the information you share with us today will be kept strictly confidential. What this means is that your name will never be included in any reports and what you tell us will not be discussed with anyone, including your county case managers. Nothing you talk to us about today can affect any benefits you currently receive or may receive in the future. The purpose of this focus group is to learn from you how CalWORKs time limits are being implemented in your county and how they have affected you and your family. Your responses will then help us to make recommendations to your county and the state to improve the program for families like yours. Before we get started, we want to make sure that you understand that your participation in this focus group is completely voluntary. You don't have to participate and you don't have to answer any questions that you don't want to answer.

I am going to distribute a voluntary consent form to you now to ask you to confirm in writing that you understand that your participation is voluntary, that all information will be kept confidential, and that you don't have to answer any questions you feel uncomfortable answering.

Does anyone have any additional questions for me before we get started?

#### A. Time Limit Knowledge

**Time Limit Experiences: In 1998 California implemented a new rule limiting the amount of time an adult could receive CalWORKs cash assistance. I want to ask you all some questions about your understanding of the time limit rules.**

1. How did you find out about the time limits?
2. Do any of you know how long the CalWORKs time limit is? (number of months you can receive aid)?
3. What happens to your benefits when you reach your time limit? [*Note to interviewer: do recipients know that their children continue to receive aid?*]
4. In addition, when you reach your time limit, do you keep your:
  - Medi-Cal benefits for you or your children?
  - Food Stamps benefit?
  - Child care assistance?
5. Does the welfare office ever temporarily stop people's time clocks for any reason? Why? (clock stoppers)
6. Does the welfare office ever allow people to stay on assistance beyond the time limit? Why? (time extenders)



7. *If anyone knows about exemptions and extenders:* How did you find out about clock stoppers and time extenders, and what would you need to do to get one?

#### B. Communication About the Time Limit by County

1. When did your case managers first mention the time limit to you? How often does she/he mention it? Was the information she/he provided easy to understand?
2. Has the county told you how many months you have left?
  - For those of you that have been told by the county how many months you have left on CalWORKs, is the information you received accurate? If not, how is this information incorrect?

Is there an appeals process if you disagree with what your worker tells you about your time left on aid? What is it? What are your experiences with it?

#### C. Plans for the Future

1. Have any of you been doing anything to prepare for the time limits?

*Probes:*

- Looking for work?
  - Taking a job?
  - Taking college or vocational classes?
  - Learning English?
  - Looking for child care?
  - Getting help from an absent parent?
  - Relying more on family and/or friends?
  - Move in with friends/family?
2. If you reach the time limit, how do you think it will affect your family, if at all? Will your family be better off, worse off, or the same?
    - If worse off, do you have plans to make ends meet? [*Prompts:* getting help from an absent parent? Relying more on family/friends? Moving in with family/friends?
  3. Is there an appeals process if you disagree with what your worker tells you about your time left on aid? What is it? What are your experiences with it?

#### D. Attitudes Toward the Time Limit

1. How has the time limit been helpful or harmful for parents and/or their families?

#### E. Participant Needs

1. What county CalWORKs services or information have helped the most in preparing for the 60-month time limit?
2. What additional services or information would have been helpful to better prepare you for the time limit?
3. What kinds of information or services would be most helpful for you after you reach the time limit?

Thank you so much for your talking with us today. (*Distribute the incentive to all participants.*)