



CalWORKs DIVISION DECEMBER 2004 NEWSLETTER

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Right To Self Determination Q & A

Q.: Can a participant request to stop receiving CalWORKs benefits?

A.: Yes, a participant can request to stop receiving CalWORKs benefits for his/her family at any given time. This is known as the participant's right to self-determination and it is necessary that we respect the individual's right to accept or reject what we have to offer him/her (EAS 40-109.4). In some instances, it may be beneficial for a family to stop receiving CalWORKs benefits. For example, if a CalWORKs family is receiving a small monthly cash aid grant, the participant can request to stop receiving CalWORKs benefits so that the months will not count towards his/her CalWORKs 60-month time limit. This will save him/her some months for cash aid in the future.

Please note, it is important that "self determination" not be confused with "mandatory inclusion." Under "mandatory inclusion" CalWORKs applicants/participants are required to include the following persons in the filing unit or AU when living in the same home: parents, siblings or half-siblings (LEADER Handbook, CW 82-820.3.)

DEPARTMENTAL GOAL FOR SPECIALIZED SUPPORTIVE SERVICES

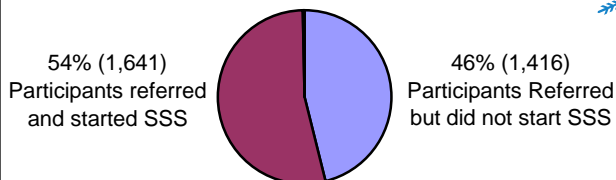
Our Departmental goal for Specialized Supportive Services (SSS) is to increase engagement in SSS by conducting appropriate follow-up to ensure that at least 60% of participants referred to services commence services.

Here are some tips:

1. Follow-up to remind participants of their upcoming Supportive Services appointment.
2. Ensure that child care and transportation are authorized.
3. Promptly reschedule participants, as needed.
4. Be supportive and sensitive to the needs of participants with supportive services issues.

Together we can achieve our goal.

SSS referrals and results for July - Sept. 2004
Total referred - 3,057



Dept'l goal is that 60% of participants referred would begin SSS

New Welfare-to-Work Requirements Per All County Letter #04-41

This is to remind you of the importance of informing all applicants of the new Welfare-to-Work (WtW) requirements resulting from implementation of SB 1104, which became effective on December 1, 2004.

Two key changes in the new WtW requirements are as follows:

- ▶ All non-exempt participants are required to sign their initial WtW plan within 90 days of their eligibility determination for CalWORKs cash aid; and
- ▶ The CalWORKs 18/24 month WtW time clock is eliminated.

Note: *Participants receiving specialized supportive services continue to be eligible for domestic violence waivers or limited participation, as recommended by the participant's substance abuse, mental health or domestic violence provider. Policies and procedures related to specialized supportive services are not changed with the implementation of the new WtW requirements.*

We are asking that **all Home Interview Program (HIP) workers:**

- ▶ Review all areas of the PA 1795, HIP Eligibility Worker Checklist;
- ▶ Stress the importance of GAIN participation to all applicants;
- ▶ Explain the difference between the role of the Eligibility Worker and GAIN Services Worker;
- ▶ Inform all applicants that they will also be assigned a GAIN Services Worker to coordinate their WtW and supportive services activities; and
- ▶ Apprise applicants of the new WtW requirements.

INTER-COUNTY TRANSFERS (ICT)

Counties are now required to ensure that Medi-Cal benefits continue for cases that are discontinued from the CalWORKs Program, but at the same time transfer to another county. A county cannot require individuals to reapply for Medi-Cal or complete a redetermination based solely on the family moving from one county to another.

To facilitate and standardize the process of continuation of Medi-Cal, CDSS developed form CW 215A, *CalWORKs Inter-county Transfer Continuation Request for Additional Documents*. This form will be used to request information from the sending county that must be provided to the receiving county to initiate an active Medi-Cal case and complete the Medi-Cal ICT. Be on the look out for this new form and instructions that will be released soon!