

REP Training Phase II Questions and Answers (Q&A)

 Q&A - Part I

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REP Training Phase II Q & A
Part I

1. How do we cover a worker's caseload during vacation?

Answer: Your agency must develop policy to cover a worker's caseload during vacation. Coverage examples include establishing a duty worker schedule (each day a different worker is responsible for handling the vacationing staff member's caseload, as well as their own) or rotating duty person (the responsible staff will be the person that is available at the time the vacationing staff member's participant arrives), or whatever is acceptable and appropriate to your agency. The county expects all participants to receive timely service.

2. Is Post-Assessment ESL counted as a CORE activity even if participant was in ESL prior to assessment?

Answer: No. Post-Assessment ESL is counted as a non-CORE activity even if the participant attended ESL prior to assessment. (See Policy Chapter 900, Post-Assessment Welfare-to-Work Activities, paragraph .33, Non-Core WtW Activities)

3. Shall we continue to process transportation/ancillary for ESL activities?

Answer: No, not for "ESL only" enrollment. After REP Training Phase II, RCM's must explain to their participants that they must enter a concurrent curriculum with their ESL activity for the county to authorize transportation/ancillary.

4. Doctors are charging up to \$200 to fill out the CW 61 (medical form). How do we respond to this? Can this problem be reported? If so whom shall we report this to?

Answer: Administrative fees charged by doctors for filling out the CW 61 is not an approvable fee under RSS/TA funding. RCM's are to encourage participants to use other doctor's who are not charging an administrative fee.

Agencies are to provide the name of the doctor and medical facility to the Los Angeles County REP Program Analyst or County Contractor Administrator for review. This trend was brought to the State's attention and the State has committed to research the matter to see if there is some policy or

regulation that would aide the county in reaching a resolution.

5. If participant's child is eligible for transportation money and the parents are not eligible for transportation because of walking distance, should we authorize transportation for one of the parents that takes his/her child to school?

Answer: Yes, CalWORKs/RCA participants may receive transportation payments to transport their children to and from school, child care providers or program activities (if child care is not available) in order to participate in program activities and/or employment.

6. How can participants apply for car repair expenses? How many activity hours are required to be eligible for car repairs expenses?

Answer: Effective 11/01/08, the Vehicle Diagnosis and Repair program was suspended until further notice. See Administrative Memo #08-52, dated 10/29/08, for details.

7. How is a REP Case Manager informed, when a Central Intake Unit (CIU) assessment has been added to GEARS?

Answer: GAIN Program Division will issue a REP Memo that informs agencies when CIU assessments are entered on the MGAR, and MGAS GEARS screens. Following the release of the memo, GPD will also send an email to each REP agency with a listing of the cases.

8. Should the Family Self-Sufficiency form be filed in the case if we have a WTW 2 form on file in the case?

Answer: Yes. Every participant engaged in an employment related activity is to have a completed Family Self-Sufficiency Plan and a WTW 2 in the case record.

9. If a participant has 20 hrs/week part time work and ESL class, should his wife go to Job Club? LACOE did not allow the wife to attend Job Club.

Answer: **Yes.** When a spouse of an active REP participant volunteers to enter the program he/she must follow the flow of the REP program. According to the REP Flow Chart the first employment related activity for a new enrollee is Job Club. This determination is made by the RCM during the appraisal appointment.

10. Could JVS be a provider of WEX or Community Service? What documentation should be acquired to have on file as proof of activity? Would internal forms be sufficient?

Answer: The policy to have REP Service Providers enter into an agreement to offer WEX services is currently being developed. Policy, procedures and instructions are pending and will be released in the near future.

A non-profit organization can become a Community Service provider by contacting the REP Program Analyst or County Contractor Administrator, who will in turn contact South Bay Workforce Investment Board to initiate the application process. Upon completion and approval, the REP Case Manager must follow the policy and procedures in Policy Chapter 1100 for required documentation.

11. What if a participant has a foreign degree as a dentist and during the appraisal participant, he stated that in order to be certified as a dentist here he has to pass the boarding exam. Participant brought in the exam data, which I have documented. I called Job Club to assign participant to an Arabic Job Club, I was told there wasn't one, would it be enough to document the response from Job Club in the case record?

Answer: Yes. All actions taken on behalf of the participant should always be documented in the case record. Report all Job Club issues, including lack of classes to REP Program Analyst and County Contractor Administrator. Additionally, the REP Case Manager should assign participant to an Arabic Job Club as soon as one becomes available. In regards to preparing for and passing the Board Exam, this participant may be eligible for the Professional Development program.

12. Will Learning Disability screening be available for REP?

Answer: At this time, the Learning Disability (LD) screening tool is not available for non-English/non-Spanish participants, it is only available in English. However, if a physician provides medical proof that the participant suffers with a learning disability, the prognosis could be used to determine the participant's appropriate activity.

13. Will RCMs be trained to use masked codes for Domestic Violence, Substance Abuse and Mental Health?

Answer: The Specialized Supportive Services Codes used that represent Clinical Assessment ,Domestic Violence, Mental Health, and Substance Abuse are GEARS Codes 001, 002, 003, and 004, respectively.

14. How do we remove deleted alerts?

Answer: Alerts that must be deleted manually can be deleted by the REP Supervisor.

15. When does the clock stop for a case with a clock stopper, due to Domestic Violence (DV)? Can a participant request to have their clock restarted? If so, what is the process?

Answer: The clock stops for delivery of Specialized Supportive Services (Domestic Violence) when the participant/family determines a safety issue no longer exist. The participant can continue to participate in the program if he/she along with their DV service provider determines it is appropriate for him/her to remain engaged. To stop and start the Clock a DV Component must be opened and/or closed. Refer to Policy Chapter 1200, Section 1250.64 and .66.

16. If a client is held up from attending a component (like Job Club) due to the unavailability of services – can the participant’s clock be stopped while they are waiting for services to begin?

Answer: No. Lack of services or unavailability of services is not a clock stopper. If services are not available, the RCM should assign the participant to the next available date and offer In-House Job Search until a week prior to the component start date.

State law established circumstances in which the CalWORKs 60-month clock does not tick for cases, they include:

- A victim of domestic violence (DV).
- A caretaker relative of a foster child.
- A participant caring for an ill/disabled household member.
- A participant unable to work or participate in a REP activity under certain circumstances.

- A participant living in Indian Country, defined by federal law/ Alaskan native village (LA County does not meet the federal definition).

17. Are REP agencies required to conduct Time Limit Workshops? If so, how are we notified and what curriculum/workshop guide needs to be used?

Answer: Yes. REP agencies are required to conduct Time Limit Workshops. GAIN Program will schedule training for REP Service Providers upon request from REP agency.

18. Can a WEX assignment in REP be extended to 6 months? (We understand that in regular GAIN a WEX assignment has duration of 3 months).

Answer: Yes. A WEX assignment in REP may be extended for 6 months. Participants are eligible for a one time extension (3 or 6 months) that is recommended and requested by the WEX Service Provider.

19. When is the WEX inventory in GEARS updated? One agency tried to use it but did not get WEX agencies to call back.

Answer: The WEX inventory on GEARS for is maintained by the City of Hawthorne. Any discrepancies or problems contacting a WEX provider must be reported to REP Program Analyst.

20. We have had cases approved for supportive services in the past, namely transportation, by the CIA based on ESL. Please clarify the requirements.

Answer: The requirements for transportation and/or ancillary approval for an ESL activity are that the participant enters into a concurrent activity along with their ESL activity and request for transportation/ancillary approval be submitted to DPSS' County Issuance Approval (CIA) staff.

21. Self Employment

- a. Is there a six month period to increase income?
- b. Is a concurrent activity required?

Answer: a. Yes. When earned income is below the minimum wage, whether the participant is self-employed or secured unsubsidized employment, the RCM is to inform the participant the program minimum wage requirements and allow six months for the participant to meet the income requirement.

- b. No. Assigning a participant to a concurrent component is not a requirement of the 6-month extension.

22. How does an RCM exempt a participant from the REP program when we believe he/she has a reason for exemption from participating? (The book did not cover this process)

Answer: There are three types of acceptable exemption documentation:

- Written Third Party Documentation: CW 61, CW61A and CW61B used for a medical exemption.
- Verbal Third Party Documentation: Acceptable, only if written third party documentation cannot be obtained, must include the name of the REP Provider who obtained the statement.
- An Affidavit (PA 853) by the participant: Acceptable only when unusual circumstances both written and/or verbal third party documentation are not obtainable. The PA 853 must be completed in the presence of the REP Provider and must include both the participant's and the REP Provider's signature.

All exemption documentation must include the following information:

- A statement that the individual cannot work, or participate in training.
- Date the statement is provided.
- Name, address, and phone number of the person providing the statement or documentation.
- Reason for the exemption.
- The duration of the exemption.

23. What should be included in the "appraisal package"?

Answer: RCM must complete MGA 1, 2, and 3 on GEARS. The Appraisal package should include the following forms:

FORMS

GN 6053-1 REP Appraisal Appointment Notice

GN 6064 Important GAIN Information

GN 6059 GAIN Brochure

GN 6140 Screening for Mental Health & Substance Abuse

GN 6142 WTW Certification Form
GN 61 51 Transportation & Ancillary Request Form
PA 481 Primary Language Designation Form
PA 1913 Domestic Violence Information Sheet
PA 13 Your Rights Under CA Welfare Programs
Apprenticeship Program Certification Form
Learning Disability Screening Sheet
PA1672-I (10105) Verification of Employment
Family Self-Sufficiency Form

24. Do we need to process overpayments for supportive services issued prior to the “no supportive services for ESL only” policy being classified?

Answer: No. RCMs are not to process overpayments for supportive services for ESL only courses until instructed to do so by Los Angeles County.

25. Does an exempt volunteer have to follow the usual flow of services if they have no limitations that would restrict his/her participation in Job Club as the first activity?

Answer: Yes. An exempt volunteer has to follow the usual REP flow of services; 1st- Appraisal, 2nd Job Club, and 3rd Assessment, as the first three activities.

REP Training Phase II Q & A
Part II

1. Please clarify the Over Payment Repayment procedure for REP contractors in Section 5, page 4, 5th paragraph of REP training handbook.

Answer: Refer to REP Memo 08-20, dated December 18, 2008, Instructions for Processing Refugee Employment Program (REP) Overpayments and Cancellation Remittance for clarification.

2. This question is from IILA. Should we authorize retroactive supportive services for “ESL only” participants who didn’t receive any supportive services for their ESL requested in March or April of 2008?

Answer: Yes. Prior to REP Training Phase II, REP participants were granted supportive services for “ESL only” participation. As such, participants in an approved “ESL only” activity are eligible for retroactive supportive services up until Phase II Training. The RCM must immediately inform the participant that they must be enrolled in a concurrent activity to receive supportive services in the present and future.

3. Are participants eligible for reimbursement for a degree evaluation?

Answer: No. Fees for degree evaluations are not an approved ancillary. Participants are entitled to be reimbursed for transportation, ancillary (books, fees, clothes, and tools). Under the term “fees”, the following are examples of allowances: course registration, school ID, exams, licenses, fingerprinting and court filings for Domestic Violence (DV).

4. How many months can a REP participant be in a Job Training activity?

Answer: Allowable job training activities include: Paid Work Experience (PWEX), Non-Paid Work Experience (WEX), On-the-Job Training (OJT), and Work Study in conjunction with a Vocational training program.

Participation in a non-paid WEX training is limited to 6 months, unless an extension is granted for the WEX. At no time is participation in a job training activity to exceed 12 months in duration.

5. If a husband is working or participating 35 hrs, and the wife wants to receive supportive services. How many hours does she have to participate in REP?

Answer: If the wife volunteers for REP, she must follow the flow of the REP program. Her assigned activity will dictate how many hours she is to participate and once assigned, she is eligible for supportive services.

6. Which Notice of Action is the REP service provider required to mail out in participant's primary language?

Answer: All Notice of Actions are required to be mailed to participants in their primary language, for threshold languages. Current threshold languages are as follows: English, Spanish, Armenian, Russian, Cambodian, Chinese, Korean, Tagalog, and Vietnamese.....REP Memo #08-09, dated August 28, 2008, Instructions on Issuing Notice of Action (NOA) and Forms on GEARS, provides instructions when a translated NOA is not available.

7. What are the required hours of participation for Post-Time Limited and Post-Employment Services for each participant in a two-parent/adult household to be eligible for supportive services? (For CW or RCA)

Answer: **PTL**
CalWORKs Chapter 1412.55

Effective 10/1/2008, REP Case Managers may not provide PTL services for CalWORKs participants, as once they reach 60 months of CalWORKs assistance, they will be in the Country for 5 years and are no longer eligible for refugee employment services. REP CalWORKs participants eligible to PTL are to be transferred to the appropriate GAIN Region based on the participant's zip code.

Note: PTL services for CalWORKs refugees were eliminated in REP with the expiration of the Refugee Social Service Waiver on 9/30/2008.

RCA

RCA participants who have exhausted their eight (8) months of cash aid are considered Time-Expired. Time-Expired RCA participants are eligible to REP services if participating a minimum of 20 hours per week in an employment related activity.

PES CalWORKs Chapter 1012.24

Current CalWORKs Participants

CalWORKs participants who currently receive cash aid are eligible for PES during their entire 60-month eligibility if employed at least 32/35 hours per week or employed and participating in REP activities for a combined total of 32/35 hours per week, as follows:

Thirty-two hours per week, for single parent households; or

Thirty-five hours per week, for **each** parent residing in a two parent household (see policy [Section 1012.72 Contribution to Minimum Weekly Participation Requirement](#)).

Former CalWORKs Participants

PES eligibility for former participants is limited to full-time employed individuals who meet PES minimum eligibility requirements. In a two-parent household, only the parent who is employed full-time (at least 35 hours per week) is eligible for post-termination PES. The second parent may only receive PES if employed full-time as well.

RCA

PES policy does not apply to RCA participants. RCA participants receiving cash aid are required to meet the 32 weekly hour requirement. Time-Expired and non-aided RCA individuals are required to meet 20 weekly hours of participation in an employment related activity to be eligible to supportive services.

8. Why are progress reports (GN 6070) sometimes auto-generated by GEARS and not always?

Answer: The GN 6070, Progress Report for Education, Training, Post-Employment Services and Work Experience (WEX) Programs is generated via GEARS on a quarterly basis or at the midpoint of any education and training activities less than three (3) months but more than one day duration to the participant to request proof of progress.

Note: Participants in Job Club and Job Search activities do not receive a GN 6070.

9. Is it okay if we open a Refugee component for Job Skills training when participant has a training activity?

Answer: No. The Refugee component is only to be opened in conjunction with the following session types: In-House Job Search and Family Appraisal. Job Skills training components are identified by the following titles: Vocational Training, On-The-Job Training, Work Experience, Paid Work Experience, Community Service and College Work Study.

10. Can we process supportive services for clients who are taking ESL and math, or ESL and keyboarding, etc.?

Answer: Supportive services are allowable when required for an activity that is in-line with a participant's employment plan and Welfare-to-Work Plan. Supportive services for ESL and keyboarding classes may be approved if:

- a. the classes are required for a VOC program or;
- b. the classes are concurrent with a work related activity, such as JCO, WEX, College Work Study, Voc Training, approved SIP, etc.

11. Is there any limit for In-House Job Search?

Answer: Job search activities, which include Job Club and In-House Job Search can be assigned for up to four consecutive weeks, for a total of six weeks in a twelve month period.

Revised REP Memo 08-16, Instructions for Prioritizing the Assignment of REP Participants to Job Services, dated September 30, 2008. This memo provides detailed instructions as to the services and participation hours of the REP participants.

12. Unable to open REM component for Time-Expired RCA even if they have been to assessor.

Answer: GEARS doesn't allow components to be added to GEARS twelve months following the termination of RCA benefits. Policy and system changes are being reviewed and instructions are pending. The completion target date for program changes is May 31, 2009.

13. Can we apply for health fee and student fee?

Answer: Yes. Health and student fees are usually a part of tuition at colleges and university and are considered registration fees at Adult Schools and local skills/training centers. Registrations fees (including health and student fees) are an allowable ancillary expense.

14. Are both adults in a two-parent household eligible to supportive services if they are both working part-time and contributing to the 35 weekly hours of participation?

Answer: Yes. For example, if a husband works full-time (35 hrs/w) and the wife works 10 hrs/w, then the wife is eligible for transportation.

15. Can both participants in a two-parent CalWORKs case receive supportive services when one adult is working full-time (PES) and the spouse is PTL and participating less than 20 hrs per week?

Answer: Both parents in this CalWORKs case are eligible for supportive services if they are meeting the required hours of participation. The REP participant receiving PES services is to be evaluated for hours of participation and supportive services as stated in question 7. With regard to PTL, as REP does not provide PTL services, hours of participation and supportive services for the PTL spouse are addressed by GAIN Services Workers based on GAIN Program requirements.

GAIN Requirements for Participants Residing in Two-Parent Households

Adults in Two-Parent Households Stand Alone

Once an adult in a two-parent household times off CalWORKs, he/she stands alone. Thus, weekly participation hours may **not** be combined for adults residing in two-parent households.

Contribution to Federal Welfare-to-Work Participation Requirement

The aided parent who resides in a two-parent household is required to meet the federal work requirement (32 hours per week) of a one-parent household **without** contribution from the timed-off parent.

16. Can participants receiving TB treatment, be enrolled/serviced? Or can we request a medical exemption?

Answer: RCM must request a CW61 be completed by the participant's doctor. The physician will annotate whether the participant is able to continue working or not. It is not the decision of the RCM.

17. Please clarify if participant has to come to the office to sign the GN 6151 for ancillary? (We know that for transportation participant can request over the phone)

Answer: Ancillary and transportation request may be taken via a telephone conversation. RCM must document case record and GN 6151 is missing participant signature due to request being taken over the phone.

18. When should WTW 2 be completed – after assessment or during appraisal?

Answer: The WTW 2 is to be completed after assessment, but before you assign the participant to their post assessment activity.

19. If a participant works less than 20 hrs/w – can we open an EIC component? Is there a minimum amount of hrs/w to open EIC component?

Answer: The EIC component is a passive component used to authorize current and retroactive transportation and work-related ancillary payments for aided participants (regardless of the number of hours worked) and former (CalWORKs terminated) participants requesting supportive services.

Example: A mandatory participant employed 12 hours per week, and enrolled in a concurrent vocational activity 20 hours per week, may request and receive transportation authorized under the EIC component for travel to and from work.

The PES component is used to assign employed current and former CalWORKs participants who meet minimum weekly participation requirements to a WtW activity. Participation for these participants is voluntary and tracked via the PES component.

20. Is GEARS being programmed to generate notification to participants in languages other than English? If yes, when is this expected to be available? If not, why?

Answer: The GSW must generate the applicable NOA in English or Spanish via GEARS to the participant at least ten days prior to the effective date of the issuance.

Threshold languages NOAs are to be completed per existing procedures pending automation. The transportation payment notices used are the NA 820 - Transportation Approval; NA 821 – Transportation Denial/Discontinuance; NA 822 - Transportation Change; NA 824 - Transportation Extension; and NA 825 - Transportation Payment Adjustment. Also, each NOA must contain the NA Back 9 (Your Hearing Rights) on the reverse and must include the address for Appeals & State Hearings.

21. Who sends the transportation/ancillary denial Notice of Action?

Answer: RCMs are responsible to mailing the transportation/ancillary denial NOAs to their participants in the threshold languages.

22. Will GAIN Program provide a monthly list/report of participants who have been in the country 60 months or more from date of entry?

Answer: No. RCMs are to control their own caseload. An request has been submitted to create a GEARS Alert to identify participants who have been in the country for 60 months from the date of entry.

23. Community Service

- Is there a hard copy of the list of providers?

Answer: A regularly updated hard copy list of community service providers is not available. However, a listing by city is accessible via the GEARS inventory when adding a Community Service Activity.

24. Does VESL count as a core activity? If so, can it be a stand alone activity?

Answer: VESL does count as a core activity, as long as it is a post-assessment activity. It cannot be a stand alone activity.

25. In a two adult case, is a participant who is working part-time entitled to supportive services if the spouse is working full time, but declines supportive services?

Answer: Yes. If a CalWORKs participant is working part-time he/she is entitled to supportive services.