

Counties Champion Multiple Pathways to Eligibility and Assistance *California Well Positioned to Implement Health Care Reform*

More than 8 million Californians currently receive access to Medi-Cal, CalFresh (Food Stamps) and CalWORKs benefits through a large-scale, automated system that supports multiple pathways to ensuring residents receive assistance. County social service agencies have championed eligibility policies and practices to better serve children and families in need, while efficiently using taxpayer money.

California is well positioned to hit the ground running in implementing the Affordable Care Act, and sustain the no-wrong-door approach built by counties to ensure health coverage for all our residents in the coming years, both before and after 2014.

Quick Facts

- ✓ Acting under the same eligibility rules, and interacting with state and federal systems for information verification, three automation systems are used by the 58 county social service departments: LEADER/GEARS – Los Angeles County, CalWIN – 18 counties, C-IV – 39 counties. This thoughtfully conceived approach was developed on a bipartisan basis by the state and counties. In 2010, California's Chief Information Officer listed the large-scale system as a major "automation win" for the state.
- ✓ Counties effectively use automation and evolving modernization measures to serve clients across 1,102 offices, online, over the phone, by mail and via out-stationed staff in community organizations.
 - **More than 8 million Californians currently receive access** to Medi-Cal, CalFresh, and CalWORKs
 - **400,000 household/family applications are received monthly**; many more individuals are served.
 - **Demand increased 60% during Great Recession**, with 1 million families added to Medi-Cal, and 2 million to CalFresh.
- ✓ Given California's diverse populations across the state, counties know the best way to meet someone's needs varies person to person. Offering multiple pathways to assistance for children, families and individuals have cut the red tape, removed roadblocks, and reduced the need to visit an office. Whether it is online, over the phone, by mail, or in person for more complicated cases, counties are promoting ways to achieve better service and greater efficiency in meeting people's needs. One recent example:
 - Launching of statewide portal (www.benefitscal.org) for applications. Available statewide June 2011.
- ✓ Counties determine eligibility for and administer an array of programs – each program has specific eligibility rules determined by state and federal officials – including: Medi-Cal, Cal Fresh, CalWORKs, County Medical Services Program, California Food Assistance Program, Refugee Cash Assistance, Cash Assistance Program for Immigrants, CalLearn, Foster Care, KinGAP & Adoption Assistance, and General Assistance/General Relief.

