



CalWORKs Single Allocation Cut: A Direct Hit on Client Services

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The Governor's proposed 2017-18 budget, as updated last week, cuts \$248 million from the CalWORKs Single Allocation, which funds eligibility activities, employment and supportive services, and child care. This comes on the heels of a \$160 million reduction in the current year. If adopted, funding for these services will have dropped 21.2 percent over two years.

A cut of this magnitude will have devastating effects on services for CalWORKs families in every county. Counties report that the cuts will affect staffing and direct services, including contracts for services such as subsidized employment. Below are just a few examples:

Staffing Cuts: Delayed Benefits, Reduced Case Management

Counties of all sizes, from Kings to Sacramento, Shasta to Sonoma report staff reductions would be inevitable if these cuts come to pass. Specific examples include:

- With the January proposal, Riverside County projected a staff reduction of 204 positions as well as cuts to direct client services of \$3.9 million. The larger May Revision numbers mean even deeper cuts. Among other things, these reductions will reduce the availability of subsidized employment, as the county will have fewer staff to sign up employers and support clients to succeed in their subsidized jobs.
- San Francisco County would enact a hiring freeze across all categories of line staff, from eligibility staff to employment specialists and social workers. The county would need to reduce staff by about 20 percent, or 58 workers, across these areas. Loss of eligibility staff would result in delays in all aspects of intake and case management, causing longer waits for benefits to start and changes to be processed. Reducing employment services workers means delays in Welfare to Work plans and employment referrals for new participants. Social work staff play a critical role in assessing families' needs using the Online Client Assessment Tool (OCAT) and providing specialized services to the most vulnerable families, such as through the Family Stabilization component of the program.
- The proposed cuts for Santa Barbara County would result in less intensive, less comprehensive case management and delays in processing applications and service payments (such as child care) that are needed for parents to work or attend other job-related activities, delaying their path to self-sufficiency.

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- In Fresno County, contracts with local service providers enable families to get vocational education and job training that lead to employment. These contracts would be reduced and some local initiatives lost altogether. As an example, Fresno partners with the Fresno County Economic Development Corporation to do strategic recruitment of employers to the county. With EDC, the county has developed a web-based program linking clients with employers, and partnered to develop a building trades pre-apprenticeship program, truck driver training and welding programs.
- Kings County would have to eliminate its only remaining contract with a school partner to provide GED training and enhanced lab hours for one-on-one preparation for GED testing. The county also anticipates having to eliminate funding for a partnership with the County Probation Department that allows for co-located, coordinated case management and services for joint clients of the two agencies to work on barrier removal and mitigate court issues so that clients can focus on job activities.
- In Monterey County, investments have been made in a two-generation approach that serves CalWORKs parents and their children. This cut would force Monterey to eliminate the innovative Therapeutic Parent/Child Playgroups offered on site at its career centers; these playgroups support child well-being while at the same time increasing parental engagement in Welfare-to-Work activities.
- In Stanislaus County, a variety of Welfare-to-Work services are contracted for and available in each of the county's four regions, co-located with or near the county's Family Resource Centers which offer additional services. The proposed cut will require the county to centralize services in just one office, in Modesto, and some services will no longer be offered. Travel time from outlying areas to Central Modesto can take in excess of one hour, and more families will receive exemptions from participating
- The cuts will force Ventura County to eliminate positions and lay off staff, in addition to eliminating programs. An example is the Professional Employment Preparation Program (PREP) run by Goodwill, which helps Welfare to Work clients prepare for the workforce. Goodwill conducts PREP at four locations, with one conducted in Spanish. PREP services include: orientation, an employment portfolio, vocational testing, job search techniques, life skills presentations, job readiness, work experience, job development and placement, and guest speakers.

This budget update was created by CWDA Staff. Direct questions to the contact at right.

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