

Child Care Handbook 47-3.1:
CalWORKs Child Care Referral Process
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Update:

The purpose of this revision is to provide direction on immediate and continuous Stage One Child Care for exempt volunteer and sanctioned Welfare-to-Work (WTW) participants.

Summary:

This Handbook provides direction to the Department of Workforce and Benefits Administration (WBA) staff on the implementation of Senate Bill (SB) 80 Human services omnibus, effective October 1, 2019. SB 80 increases access to child care services for CalWORKs recipients by authorizing CalWORKs Stage One Child Care immediately and continuously for 12-months or until the recipients are transferred to Stage Two.

Form 42-32 CalWORKs Child Care Information Notice, Form 40-102 CalWORKs Stage One Child Care Communication Form and Form CCP 8 CalWORKs Stage One Child Care Authorization Form comply with the requirement to **verify child care has been secured prior to mandating Welfare-to-Work (WTW) program activities**.

I. General:

Immediate and continuous child care alleviates potential instability caused by frequent changes to WTW activities or other circumstances that require the need for child care during early CalWORKs engagement. By authorizing care for 12-months, and not for a single WTW activity, families will not experience breaks in their child care services. As a result, even if parents' WTW plans change, parents can be assured that consistent child care will be provided for their child(ren).

In addition to benefitting parents, immediate and continuous child care provides numerous benefits to child(ren). Child(ren) in poverty are often in need of quality, stable early care and education to achieve their full potential. Child(ren) benefit from consistent and uninterrupted child care, and these changes allow them to grow and achieve their full potential. Furthermore, immediate and continuous child care provides continuity of care for child(ren) and is especially valuable when care is provided in a high-quality early learning setting.

Immediate and continuous Stage One Child Care should be authorized for WTW exempt volunteers and sanctioned clients who have expressed intent to participate in WTW and receive services, providing a pathway to engagement and sanction cure planning.

A. Immediate and Continuous Child Care for 12-Months

Effective October 1, 2019, CalWORKs applicants will have access to immediate and continuous child care upon being approved for CalWORKs cash aid. Once an applicant is determined eligible for CalWORKs, they will receive a 12-month Stage One Child Care authorization, except in the following circumstances:

1. Families with no aided adults:
 - Adult(s) receiving SSI benefits;
 - Ineligible non-citizen adults;
 - Non-needy caretaker relatives;
 - Timed out adult(s) (Note: timed out adults who have received cash aid within the past 24 months are to be referred to Stage Two).
2. At application, newly approved recipients who are determined to have a WTW exemption and who do not indicate a desire to volunteer for any program activity; or
3. Two-parent families in which one parent is available and able to provide care for the child(ren).

Note: An exempt WTW participant, who in the future indicates an intent to participate in a program activity and signs a WTW plan, will be eligible for immediate and continuous child care for 12-months.

Child care shall be authorized full-time unless the participant requests part-time care. Full-time care is defined as care provided 30 or more hours per week. Part-time care is defined as care provided less than 30 hours per week. If the participant initially utilizes a partial month of child care, it shall count as the first month of child care.

Stage One Child Care recipients do not need to recertify child care eligibility more frequently than once every 12-months unless the recipient(s):

1. Indicate that their child care needs have increased;
2. Have a new child who needs care;
3. Have changed a child care provider; or
4. Eligible child becomes ineligible.

B. Early and Ongoing WTW Engagement

CalWORKs recipients who are expected to be referred to WTW or who are required to participate or are participating in WTW shall receive an immediate and continuous child care authorization. If a mandatory WTW participant stops participating in their activity, child care services will continue for the remainder of the authorization period or until the child care authorization is discontinued.

Recipients with a domestic violence waiver will remain eligible for continuous child care regardless of their participation in WTW.

C. Exempt Volunteer WTW Participants

Clients in a WTW exempt status who express an intent to participate in WTW as an exempt volunteer shall be authorized to receive 12 months of immediate and continuous Stage One Child Care.

12 Month Immediate and Continuous Stage Child Care Authorization Timeline

Step #1 =>	Step #2 =>	Step #3 =>	Step #4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Client Indicates Intent to volunteer: ✓ Child care Authorized 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Client access to child care confirmed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Client attends orientation, and ✓ Employment Counselor (EC) and client agree to WTW Plan- signed by the client 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Client participates ✓ Child care continues *

*In order for the authorization of childcare to continue, the client must complete all components of Step 3.

Exempt Volunteer Discontinuances

Exempt volunteers who do not subsequently sign a WTW plan will have their child care authorization discontinued until they become mandatory participants or sign a WTW Plan. Refer to [Welfare to Work Handbook: 42-7.32 Exempt Volunteers in the Welfare-to-Work Program](#) for further instruction on CalWORKs Exempt Volunteers. ECs shall utilize their existing re-engagement practices to provide support to the participant.

Exempt volunteers who sign a WTW plan will be authorized for immediate and continuous Stage One Child Care for 12 months without discontinuance, regardless of their participation status after signing the plan.

D. Two-parent Families

Immediate and continuous child care eligibility shall not be granted for two-parent families in which one parent is available and able to provide care for the child(ren). A parent is considered available to provide care unless they are working, going to school, participating in a county approved WTW activity, or have a condition that prevents them from caring for the child(ren).

E. WTW Sanctioned Participants

CalWORKs participants subject to WTW who do not participate in required activities are subject to non-compliance and financial sanctions. WTW participants who were sanctioned before October 1, 2019, including those in long-term sanction, and have received aid in the past 24-months are considered former CalWORKs recipients and are, therefore, eligible for Stage Two child care services.

If WTW participants become sanctioned after being authorized for 12-months of immediate and continuous child care, they shall continue in Stage One until the 12-month period has concluded or until they are transferred to Stage Two.

Sanctioned participants who indicate an intent to cure their sanction are eligible to receive Stage One Child Care services immediately and continuously for 12-months. Authorization is effective at the time the client communicates their intent to cure. An intent to cure a sanction takes place when the participant requests to cure their

sanction. However, if the participant is already receiving child care in Stages Two or Three, they may continue to work with the Stage Two or Stage Three administrator to have their child care needs met. The County does not need to transfer the participant back into Stage One if their child care needs are being met in Stages Two or Three.

12 Month Immediate and Continuous Stage Child Care Authorization Timeline

Step #1 =>	Step #2 =>	Step #3 =>	Step #4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Client Indicates Intent to Cure: ✓ Child care Authorized 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Client access child care confirmed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ EC and client agree to WTW 29 (Curing Plan), signed by the client 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Sanction is cured, ✓ Child care continues <li style="text-align: center;">OR ✓ Participant attempts to cure, but falls back into sanction, ✓ Child care continues*

*In order for the authorization of childcare to continue, the client must complete all components of Step 3.

Sanctioned Participant Discontinuances

Child care authorization may also be discontinued for sanctioned clients who do not demonstrate their expressed intent to cure by signing a Curing Plan. Staff shall ensure child care has been obtained/secured by the client before applying the requirements of the signed Curing Plan.

For those who fail to sign a Curing Plan, child care will be discontinued until the sanctioned client indicates an intent to cure again.

Sanctioned clients who sign a Curing Plan will be authorized for immediate and continuous Stage One Child Care for 12 months without discontinuance, regardless of their participation status **after** signing the plan.

F. Good Cause for Non-Participation

A participant shall be excused from participation for good cause when staff determine there is a condition or other circumstances that temporarily prevents or significantly impairs the participant’s ability to be regularly employed or to participate in WTW activities. Conditions that may be considered good cause include lack of necessary supportive services, such as child care. Therefore, if a participant is unable to secure child care, the participant will have good cause for non-participation. Please refer to [Welfare-to-Work Handbook 42-7.2.:](#) Exemptions and Good Cause/Deferral Reasons in the Welfare-to-Work Program.

II. Specifics

Effective October 1, 2019, CalWORKs applicants will have access to immediate and continuous child care upon being approved for CalWORKs cash aid.

A. New CalWORKs Applicants

During the CalWORKs face-to-face interview (excluding child-only cases):

Eligibility Services Technician (EST) shall:

1. Review and ask the applicant to complete and sign Form [42-32 CalWORKs Child Care Information Notice](#);
2. Complete worker name;
3. Provide a copy of Form [42-32](#) to the client;
4. Enter case comments that Form [42-32](#) was provided to the client.;
5. Place Form [42-32](#) in a designated box for priority imaging.

When the CalWORKs case is approved by waiting room intake, the EST shall email Form [50-20 Case Transfer Routing Slip](#) to the designated email box for ES engagement. When the CalWORKs case is approved and the case is assigned to regular intake, the EST shall place the printout of the Display Employment Services Exemption Results window in the designated box.

Note: Clerical staff shall assign an Employment Counselor (EC) and schedule the upfront activity the same day the participant is deemed eligible for CalWORKs. If unable to be assigned the same day, the case shall be assigned to an EC no later than the next business day. Refer to [General Processes Handbook 50-0.41 Registering Employment Services and Running Exemptions](#).

When the EC receives the case assignment, they shall:

1. Retrieve Form [42-32](#) from WebFiles
2. Email Form [42-32](#) to the appropriate Stage One Child Care agency.
 - South County - 4Cs email: ccrf@4c-alameda.org (Servicing: Fremont, Newark, Union City, Hayward, San Leandro, San Lorenzo, and Castro Valley).
 - North County – Hively’s email: ccrfoakland@behively.org (Servicing: Oakland, Alameda, Albany, Berkeley, and Emeryville).
 - East County – Hively’s email: ccrfpleasanton@behively.org (Servicing: Pleasanton, Dublin, Livermore, and Sunol).

When the Contractor receives Form [42-32](#), they shall:

1. Provide written notice to participants reminding them that they have up to 30 days to confirm that child care has been secured before the county makes participation in early engagement activities mandatory. The notice should also include information on how to get help finding child care.

2. Contact the participant if they are unable to verify that child care has been secured after 15 days and reminding them available supports to help secure child care, or to confirm that child care has been secured.
3. Contact the participant every 15 days thereafter until confirmation of child care has been secured, the participant indicates that they need additional time to locate suitable child care, or until 30 days passes without a response from the participant.

When the Contractor determines child care is not secured, they shall:

When the Contractor is **unable** to confirm that child care has been secured or does not receive communication from the participant that additional time is needed to find child care following 30 days from the date CalWORKs is authorized, the Contractor will send a completed Form 40-102 CalWORKs Stage One Child Care Communication Form to Employment Counselor (EC) as confirmation that child care is no longer a barrier to the participant.

Once the EC receives a confirmation from the Contractor determining that child care is no longer a barrier, the EC shall:

1. Schedule the next activity if applicable;
2. Send an appointment letter for all upcoming mandatory activities; and
3. Sanctions and other appropriate actions may be taken by the EC to conform to compliance standards for WTW participant engagement they do not participate in subsequent mandatory activities. [Refer to CalWORKs Handbook 42-7.11:](#) Noncompliance, Cause Determination and Sanction Process in Welfare to Work.

The determination that child care is no longer a barrier may also be made by the EC if the participant is not making a good faith effort to acquire child care after the first 30 days.

When the Contractor determines child care is secured

When the participant **is** able to obtain a child care provider within the allocated timeframe, the Contractor shall email the EC a completed Form 40-102 CalWORKs Stage One Child Care Communication Form and [CCP 8 CalWORKs Stage One Child Care Authorization Form](#) confirming child care has been secured.

When EC receives Form 40-102 and [CCP 8](#), they shall:

1. Review Form 40-102 CalWORKs Stage One Child Care Communication Form
 - a) Check the appropriate box
 - Participant is an exempt volunteer and signed a WTW plan;
 - Participant is an exempt volunteer and did not sign a WTW plan or indicate a desire to volunteer for any program activity;
 - [Participant is sanctioned and is in a curing sanction status or has acknowledged an intent to cure their sanction;](#)
 - [Participant is sanctioned and has not expressed the intent to cure their sanction;](#) or
 - Participant is approved for CalWORKs and is not a child-only case.

- b) Complete worker name, worker #, phone #, ext, date, email, and send Form 40-102 back to the contractor via email;
- c) Print and place Forms 40-102 and Form [CCP 8](#) in a designated box for imaging;
- d) Indicate notes in CalWIN case comments.

B. Existing Participants

CalWORKs participants authorized for CalWORKs Stage One Child Care prior to October 1, 2019 shall receive an authorization for 12-months of immediate and continuous child care beginning October 1, 2019, or until they transfer to Stage Two or are otherwise ineligible.

Contractors shall notify the existing participants of their authorization for 12-months immediate and continuous child care and send the completed Form 40-102 to the county at their 12-months child care recertification. The EC shall follow the process listed in section **II Specifics**; Subsection **When Contractor determines child care is secured** for all existing participants.

Note: When the participant expresses a need for Stage One Child Care directly to the EC, the EC shall send a completed Form 42-32 to the Contractor.

C. Inter-County Transfers

When the child care Contractor receives notification that the Stage One Child Care client is transferring to a new county, the existing 12-month child care authorization shall continue in the receiving county. For example, if a participant is authorized for 12 months of child care, and after two months relocates to a new county, the participant shall receive 10 more months of child care in their new county of residence before having to recertify child care eligibility. It is the responsibility of the receiving county to ensure there is no break in the participant's child care services.

D. Diversion

In determining eligibility for diversion services, the EC shall also consider the applicant's child care arrangements. Stage Two Child Care may be provided to a family who elects to receive a lump sum diversion payment or diversion services when a funded space is not immediately available for the family in the third stage. Refer to [CalWORKs Handbook 40-1.10 Diversion Program In CalWORKs](#).

E. Informing Notices

Career and Employment Center (CEC) and Limited English Proficient (LEP) Service Providers, ESTs, and/or ECs shall inform recipients of the availability of paid child care at several times throughout their time in CalWORKs by providing them Form [42-32, CalWORKs Child Care Information Notice](#). [Form 42-32](#) shall be provided at the following times:

- At the time of application/when they enroll in CalWORKs

- Orientation and Redetermination
- Anytime they express a need for child care
- When signing an original or amended WTW plan

Note: If Form 42-32 has already been provided to the Child Care Contractor, the EC does not need to resend unless there is a change.

F. Transition from Stage One to Stage Two

CalWORKs Child Care Contractor manages a participant's transition from Stage One to Stage Two so that participants do not experience a break in their child care services as they move between the stages of CalWORKs child care services. A participant's child care shall continue in Stage One until child care is provided in Stage Two, unless the family is otherwise ineligible.

Attachments:

[Instructions for Saving Online Forms](#)

[Form 42-32 CalWORKs Child Care Information Notice](#)

[Form 40-102 CalWORKs Stage One Child Care Communication Form](#)

[Form CCP 8, CalWORKs Stage One Child Care Authorization Form](#)

References:

[ACL 19-99 Immediate and Continuous Eligibility ACL](#)

[ACIN I-15-20 Immediate and Continuous Stage One Child Care for Sanctioned and Exempt Volunteer Participants](#)