County of San Diego

COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO

CalWORKs PLAN

Prepared By:
The Health and Human Services Agency
Strategic Planning and Operational Support Division

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This Plan is submitted pursuant to Section 10531 of the Welfare and Institutions Code required by The Welfare to Work Act of 1997, Assembly Bill 1542.

Board of Supervisors

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Welfare Reform Directives

- **Work, Not Welfare** is the vehicle for self-sufficiency through a "Work First" program.
- **An Integrated Safety Net** provides a coordinated and consolidated package of services to support families as they move from government support and dependence to independence.
- **An Integrated Base of Community Services** provides supportive services through regional/community-based governmental and private sector organizations.
- **Local Flexibility** over program design and fair share of funding provide the County with the authority and resources necessary to tailor programs and services to meet the needs of our residents.

County of San Diego
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(g) CHILD CARE AND TRANSPORTATION SERVICES

Child Care

Please briefly describe how child care services will be provided to CalWORKs participants. This should include a description of how the county will provide child care for families transitioning from county funded providers to non-county funded providers of child care services. It should also indicate what criteria the county will use to determine, on a case-by-case basis, when parents who have primary responsibility for providing care to a child six months of age or younger, may be exempt from welfare-to-work participation. The exemption period must be at least twelve weeks and, at county discretion, can be increased to one year for the first child. The exemption period for subsequent children is twelve weeks, but may be increased to six months. Briefly describe the criteria the county will use to determine the period of time a parent or other relative will be exempt considering the availability of infant child care, local labor market conditions, and any other factors used by the county. Additionally, briefly describe how the county will ensure parents needing child care services can access the Resource and Referral Agency.

Resource and Referral Services YMCA Child Care Resource Service (CRS) currently provides resource and referral services for *all parents in San Diego County through a contract with the California Department of Education (CDE).*

Stage 1 *The County will provide bundled services for* Stage 1 Child Care, *Welfare-to-Work Employment Services, and Refugee Employment Services* through *contracts with Arbor Education & Training (E&T) and Public Consulting Group (PCG). Arbor E&T and PCG coordinate closely with Alternative Payment Program (APP) agencies to ensure a timely and seamless transition of children from Stage 1 to Stage 2 or 3 that* will not inconvenience the family.

Stage 2 and 3 Stage 2 Child Care will be administered by *APP agencies,* YMCA Childcare Resource Service and Child Development Associates, *through direct revenue agreements with CDE. They coordinate very closely with contracted Stage 1 Child Care providers to ensure a seamless transition from Stage 1 to Stages 2 and 3, as funding is available.*

Seamless Transition Between Child Care Stages

Families will be served in Stage 1 until the Welfare-to-Work Employment Case Manager deems them "stable" or they go off aid. The definition of "stable" is when Welfare-to-Work activities have been in place for a minimum of 60 days; the work activities are stable; and they are expected to continue for an additional 60 days. The additional 60 days may be shortened by mutual agreement between the County and APP agencies, depending on the history of the family's stability, caseload growth and funding. Likewise, the term a family remains in Stage 1 may be extended to a maximum of 6 months, depending on funding. However, if child care is not available in Stages 2 or 3 as appropriate, the County will extend the 6-month time limit for eligible families.

To promote effective service delivery, timely child care payments and a seamless transition from Stage 1 to Stages 2 and 3, the County Child Care Program Administrator and Welfare-to-Work

Program Manager will meet monthly with the contractors administering bundled services for Welfare-to-Work, Refugee Employment Services, and Stage 1 Child Care. The County Child Care Program Administrator will also meet monthly with APP agencies and contracted Stage 1 Child Care providers.

Exemption Standard State law exempts a single parent with a child *6* months of age or younger from participation in Welfare-to-Work activities. On a case by case basis, the County will lower the exemption to 12 weeks or raise it to 12 months *depending on the* availability of *appropriate* child care. Upon *the* birth of subsequent children, the exemption is 12 weeks, which on a case by case basis may be extended to *6* months. Parents of older children will be required to participate subject to the availability of age appropriate child care. *Changes to exemption standards will occur as necessary to comply with changing State law or regulation.* Good cause criteria for non-participation will *conform to State regulations and will* be included in the local program guide.

(g) CHILD CARE AND TRANSPORTATION SERVICES
(continued)

Transportation

Briefly describe how transportation services will be provided.
[Reference: Welfare and Institutions Code Section 10531(g)]

Transportation supportive services will be provided *to Welfare-to-Work participants for participation in approved activities. Transportation supportive services include travel expenses to and from Welfare-to-Work activities; travel for both the parent and the children to and from child care providers; and parking fees. Travel expenses are based on established public transportation rates and the County's mileage reimbursement rate.*

Public transportation rates are established by local transit agencies, and Welfare-to-Work transportation supportive services will be issued based on the most current rates. The mileage reimbursement rate issued by the County of San Diego shall be based on the rate established by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) and will cover the following vehicle expenses: the cost of insurance, vehicle license, vehicle registration, taxes, gasoline, oil, tires, vehicle maintenance and vehicle repairs.

Public transportation and mileage reimbursement may be authorized for a partial or full month as needed by the Welfare-to-Work participant to participate in approved activities. Transportation payments shall be advanced to the participant as necessary to prevent the participant from using personal funds for transportation. Transportation supportive services payments are authorized and issued through the County's automated system.

Welfare-to-Work Employment Case Managers are required to send written Notices of Action to Welfare-to-Work participants at the time transportation supportive services are approved, denied, discontinued, or changed. The transportation supportive services policy shall comply with State regulations and shall be explained in the County of San Diego's online CalWORKs Program Guide, which is available to the public.

(o) OTHER ELEMENTS IDENTIFIED BY CDSS DIRECTOR

Pilot projects. Please include a description of any pilot projects that the county may wish to pursue and submit a separate proposal for, as part of its CalWORKs Program. Should the county later determine an interest in a pilot proposal, this information could be submitted as an addendum to the County Plan.

1. ***Ready, Set, Work! Diversion Demonstration Project*** *The County of San Diego Health and Human Services Agency (HHSA) received a State waiver in May 2010 to implement an innovative CalWORKs Diversion Demonstration Project. This demonstration project, called Ready, Set, Work!(RSW!), was implemented on November 1, 2010. RSW! offers CalWORKs applicants an alternative to dependence on public assistance by providing short-term supportive services and intensive job search activities designed to move work-ready applicants into work. The waiver expires in May 2013.*

   Applicants must meet all the following criteria in order to enter RSW!:
   - *Eligible for CalWORKs according to all financial and non-financial requirements,*
   - *Currently dealing with an episode of need or crisis situation,*
   - *Not have been on CalWORKs cash assistance within the last 12 months,*
   - *Not have a significant barrier to employment, and*
   - *Have a recent job history, a valid and verified job offer, or have a high school diploma, the equivalent or a vocational certification.*

   RSW! is designed to help participants deal with a specific crisis situation or an episode of need and will provide four months of employment services to each participant, including:
   - *Orientation,*
   - *Employment search classroom curriculum, and*
   - *Guided job search.*

   Satisfactory completion of these activities will result in the participant receiving performance-based incentive payments. The program also provides the following supportive services:
   - *Child Care,*
   - *Transportation, and*
   - *Ancillary Supportive Services (i.e. clothing for work, etc.).*

   The goal of RSW! is to divert the family from on-going public assistance. Results of the program will be evaluated and reported to the State.

   RSW! is a voluntary program and is not a condition of eligibility for TANF assistance.