Attachment 1

COUNTY NAME:

IMPERIAL

CalWORKs County Plan Addendum

Date Submitted to California Department of Social Services: 12-22-06

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I hereby certify that County Board of Supervisors was briefed regarding the contents of this Plan addendum prior to submittal.

County Welfare Director's Signature	**James Semmes** **Printed Name**	**12-19-06** **Briefing Date (B/S Consent Agenda)**

This plan addendum is submitted pursuant to Welfare and Institutions Code Section 10534.

1) County Goals

After reviewing the county's existing CalWORKs County Plan, please provide a general description of how the county will meet the goals defined in Welfare and Institutions (W&I) Code Section 10540, while taking into consideration the work participation requirements of the Federal Deficit Reduction Act of 2005.

The goals of W&I Code Section 10540 are the following:

1) **Reduce child poverty in the State;**
2) **Reduce dependence of needy parents on government benefits by promoting job preparation, work, and marriage; reduce out-of-wedlock births; and encourage the formation and maintenance of two-parent families;**
3) **Meet the requirements of federal law while avoiding unanticipated outcomes that negatively affect child well-being, the demand for county general assistance, or the number of families affected by domestic violence.**

A. General description of how the county will meet the goals of W&I Code 10540

Imperial County plans to increase our efforts to engage CalWORKs Welfare-to-Work (WTW) populations, both immediately and in the long term, so that participants can move toward self-sufficiency and the stated goals of W&I Code 10540.

The County has strong on-going collaborations with our local Workforce Investment Board, Imperial Valley College, San Diego State University, our local Adult Schools, the Imperial Valley Regional Occupational Program, Imperial County Behavioral Health Department, and our local Employment Development Department, our One Stops, the Childcare Community, and the public transit network in local planning and delivery of services. They have been, and are being, brought into play given these new requirements.

Immediately, Imperial County has focused on those areas where changes in strategies or policies will result in the most significant impact on our work participation rates (WPR). We are reviewing our County data and policies on upfront engagement, non-compliance and sanctions (including re-engagement of sanctioned individuals), and partial participation (for individuals participating less than the required hours or not participating when between activities). We are also identifying and addressing our safety net population since they are newly subject to Federal participation requirements to determine how best to engage them in activities.

2) Participation Improvement

Please describe what immediate and long-range actions the county will take to improve the federal work participation rate (WPR) among CalWORKs applicants and recipients. At a minimum, describe how the county will address increased participation in the areas listed below. When responding, provide a detailed description of the policy or strategy in each program area, the anticipated outcome that will result in program improvements, the percentage of families affected, and how success will be determined. Please note that if a county is already using a particular strategy that is successful, a description of that strategy is sufficient.

B. Providing up-front engagement activities

The current policy for up front engagement activities includes using ISAWS Gain Appraisal forms being routed to two key sites where ISAWS Gain Appraisal Forms are placed for pick up by the Welfare to Work office assistant on the day notice is issued to recipient notifying them of TANF approval. Welfare to Work then

schedules adult recipients for Welfare to Work Orientation/Appraisal within two weeks of picking up ISAWS Gain Appraisal Form.

The following policy is a revision to this current policy.
Upon approving an applicant for TANF benefits, Eligibility Technician will route ISAWS Gain Appraisal Form to designated Welfare to Work unit clerk. CalWORKs Welfare to Work will designate a unit clerk for 3 geographically designated regions of the county. These are:

- Northend, which includes TANF applications processed in the following satellite offices: Brawley, Winterhaven, Niland, and Imperial.

- El Centro which includes TANF applications processed in the following offices: El Centro County Center, Central Family Resource Center, F.A.C.T. El Centro and Seeley Family Resource Center.

- Southend which includes TANF applications processed in the El Centro main office for the recipients who reside in Calexico and Heber.

In addition, the three unit clerks designated for each geographic region will be responsible for researching the monthly TANF payroll roster to ensure all recipients have registered for CalWORKs Welfare to Work. In the event a person is identified as not enrolling in Welfare to Work, the unit clerk will schedule recipient for the next available CalWORKs Welfare to Work Orientation/Appraisal. The Orientation/Appraisals are done weekly at each of the 3 geographical sites.

The County is also going to be checking at the beginning of each week to see if that will assist with capturing new, approved cases more quickly.

Imperial County expects to register 100% TANF recipients identified as mandatory registrants within 7 days of TANF approval.

Once recipient participates in and completes Orientation/Appraisal, the participant is scheduled for the Job Club component the following week, followed by Job Search and then, Assessment. The physical file is routed to a Universal Engagement worker who is responsible for monitoring the completion of Job Club/Job Search and Assessment within the 90-day time limit to meet Universal Engagement requirements. Universal Engagement worker routes physical file to originally assigned Intake/On-going Social Worker identifying deadline date by which person must sign Welfare to Work Plan to meet Universal Engagement requirements. Social Workers are then responsible for engaging participant in Welfare to Work Plan within 10 days of receiving case file and no later than the Universal Engagement End Date, which may require a home visit or activity site visit to ensure Universal Engagement requirements are met.

Success will be determined using a Universal Engagement report. The Universal Engagement Report includes the following information, date TANF notice was issued to recipient, Date of CalWORKs Orientation/Appraisal, Date of Job Club participation, Date of Assessment, Universal Engagement End Date, Date Routed to originating worker, and whether Universal Engagement requirements were met.

B-2 Providing Up-Front Job Services - (Diversion)

There are actually 2 distinct operations taking place with the applicant population.

At the point of Eligibility's Intake interview, all applicants are notified of the availability of the Diversion Program prior to the approval of their CalWORKs application. Diversion assistance is an alternative to becoming a cash aid recipient. Applicants who are "apparently eligible" as determined by

Eligibility might benefit from receiving a lump sum cash or non cash diversion services to avoid the need for extended services.

Eligibility determines "apparent eligibility" and then, assesses whether the applicant would benefit from the Diversion Program by considering any of the following:
*Applicant's employment history.
*The likelihood of the applicant's obtaining immediate full-time employment.
*The applicant's need for cash assistance to pay for housing or substantial and unforeseen expenses and/or work related expenses.
*Housing stability.
*The adequacy of the applicant's child care arrangements, if applicable.

Eligibility advises the applicant that it has been determined the applicant would benefit from a diversion payment. The applicant may then choose to participate in the Diversion program or continue to pursue the CalWORKs application. It is strictly up to the applicant. If the applicant opts for CalWORKs, then the applicant can continue in the normal CalWORKs eligibility process.

The second operation is the offer of a strictly voluntary Upfront Job Services Workshop to assist applicants with job findings so they might not need to receive CalWORKs. Eligibility gives all applicants a flyer advising them of this offered service. If they choose to be signed up for this weekly offered workshop, they will receive this assistance. Attendance to this workshop in no way affects CalWORKs eligibility. To see how success will be determined, refer to section H.

C. Achieving full engagement by individuals who are required to participate, and who are partially participating, not participating, or are between activities

Imperial County has had an open entry/open exit General Education Diploma (GED) Class for those participants not having a high school diploma, GED or this equivalent with no set requirement of hours, which works well for this population. And, this past year, we added a component which we call "Bridges" which is a week long, 32/35 hours each week of a series of Vocational skills topics lasting up to 8 weeks specifically for that participant population between other components. These are Job Skills Training directly related to Employment. It has proven to really meet this need and should serve more than 250 participants this fiscal year.

We also have a participant population that works part-time and is limited English speaking. We are looking at adapting one of our full-time English Immersion Classes to become open entry/open exit with no set hours to increase WPR for this participant population. We are still gathering data for analyses as to expected impact. We expect to see at least 10% of the population affected. To see how success will be determined, refer to section H.

D. Providing activities to encourage participation and to prevent families from going into sanction status

We currently have three social workers assigned to geographical areas of the county. The social worker conducts home visits prior to a recipient becoming sanctioned. The purpose is to make contact with the recipient and attempt to identify any barriers the person may have that impede them from participating. The findings are then reported to the ongoing social worker as well as the Deputy Director. A recommendation is given based on the findings. Roughly 50% of the pre-sanction situations are resolved at this point.

In the month of October, 2006 we conducted 51 pre-sanction home visits. We have found that approximately 5% are part-time employed and require an increase of hours to meet the work participation rate (WPR). We inform the recipients of other activities they can participate in that will allow them to meet the hour requirements and therefore, prevent a financial sanction.

We intend to more comprehensively analyze this effort as to findings. To see how success will be determined, refer to section H.

E. Reengaging noncompliant or sanctioned individuals
Description of policy(ies) or strategy(ies) that will result in program improvement (identify whether this is a new policy/strategy, a current policy/strategy that will continue to be promoted, or an expansion of, or revision to, current policy/strategy).

This is a new strategy that seems to be working so far. We currently have three staff members assigned to geographical areas of the county. The social worker will make contact with the individual to attempt to reengage them in the CalWORKs (WTW) program by reviewing not only the financial benefits but also the long-term benefits of stability for the family.

Since the start of the project, 09/06, we have conducted 124 home visits. A total of 36 sanctions have been lifted. Of 36, to date, 100% remain in compliance. This is due to the social worker monitoring the individual's activity closely and ensuring the individual has all the supportive services needed. The intensity of contact may be daily if that is what success takes.

The objective of this project is to increase the rate of individuals reengaging after a sanction. Our expected rate of individuals reengaging in CalWORKs (WTW) is 7 to 10 sanction lifts per month, therefore increasing our WPR.

F. Other activities designed to increase the county's federal WPR?
Description of policy(ies) or strategy(ies) that will result in program improvement (identify whether this is a new policy/strategy, a current policy/strategy that will continue to be promoted, or an expansion of, or revision to, current policy/strategy):

Imperial County is conducting an 100% supervisory case review of all participants currently active in CalWORKs WTW planning actions to try to have all of those participants in appropriate activities and the required number of hours. These review findings may indicate the need for more strategies and other activities to be developed. This is a first effort at this.

A certified letter was sent out to each timed out adult whose children are still receiving TANF benefits in an effort to engage them in participation. We identified 480 such adults. This is a new effort.

Line staff development is another key strategy area. It is important that line staff be kept current as to Work Participation Rate strategies and regulatory changes. We are endeavoring to create a higher level of trained staff to work with the Behavioral Health served participants, those with Drug and Alcohol issues, those with Domestic Violence issues, and the pre and post sanction populations. This is new. This should positively affect 100% of the participant population, and analyzing existing ones. To see how success will be determined, refer to section H.

The other item that has become abundantly clear as we have worked on this Addendum is that even though we have always submitted certain statistical data and done some strategizing analyses, etc., it has not been as formal and comprehensive as current needs dictate. Given this, the County is in the process of acquiring more analytical staff to formalize analysis of the various populations being worked with, devising new strategies, and analyzing existing ones.

G. Please provide a description of how the county will collaborate with local agencies, including, but not limited to, local workforce investment boards, community colleges, universities, adult schools and regional occupational centers/programs that provide activities that meet federal work participation requirements and provide participants with skills that will help them achieve long-term self-sufficiency. For each individual agency, responses should include elements such as how information is shared or will be shared, ongoing or planned contracts, ongoing meetings established, etc.

As previously noted, **Imperial County** has ongoing collaborations.

With the **Imperial County Workforce Investment Board**, the Deputy Director for CalWORKs WTW is an appointed Board Member and chairs one of its key committees. This has been the case for more than 10 years. There are regular monthly meetings of the WIB, its Executive Board, and its committees with so much communication here.

In the past, CalWORKs participants have greatly benefited from vocational training offerings, but these offerings have been greatly reduced in recent years.
The current relationship is more one of sharing economic development knowledge and services.

With the **Imperial Valley College (IVC)**, there has been a partnership pre-dating the CalWORKs Assessment Component and academic counseling for the Self Initiated Program population as well as all college attending CalWORKs participants. We also work jointly on the Community College's annual CalWORKs Plan. Their staff is co-located on the CalWORKs premises to further enhance communication. Their staff attends the Annual CalWORKs Conference to stay abreast of any developments. There are set bi-monthly meetings.

With increased funding going to IVC, there will be an increased number of hours for Work Study which will increase participants' work experience, their income, and increasing their participation in federally allowable activities.

With **San Diego State University-Calexico Campus,** we partner in the Empowerment Project, an advanced English Language Immersion, computer usage, and vocational effort, which serves about 50 CalWORKs participants. A CalWORKs Social Worker is frequently on the campus to assist the Administration, the instructors, and the participants.

With the **Imperial Valley Regional Occupational Program (IVROP),** our CalWORKs participants take advantage of their vocational skills offerings. Also, for many years, we have contracted with them as the lead entity in partnership with the Holtville, Brawley, Calexico, and El Centro **Adult Education Programs** for English Immersion and GED classes. They propose to serve at least 250 participants this year. There is a "Job-Ready" component that works with the job placement sometimes offering on-the-job training pay. Part of the contract also has staff working with the County's most outlying areas, those about to time out, and volunteers who have timed out. We added another element last year, "Bridges". This is for participants needing an activity between other Components. "Bridges" consists of 8 different week-long sessions of Job Skills Training directly related to work. Each week is 32 hours of activities. "Bridges" should serve at least 250 CalWORKs participants this year. This is a key partnership for us and we have monthly partnership meetings with the school administrators to thoroughly analyze attendance, scores, and any other issues. Some **IVROP** staff is co-located at CalWORKs.

The local **Employment Development Department** is another long-standing collaboration with the contract for CalWORKs' Job Club Component, has done some CalWORKs marketing, and has a relatively new element where they are working intensely with the more employable CalWORKs participants to find jobs. They also facilitate job workshops and job fairs as needed. They are co-located at CalWORKs with frequent meetings and discussions. They provide a comprehensive written report monthly.

With the **Imperial County Department of Behavioral Health Services,** we contract for CalWORKs participant screening for behavioral health issues and alcohol and drug issues. For those screened in, they provide case management, perinatal services, and treatment. They are co-located at CalWORKs with a set monthly meeting where a comprehensive written report is jointly gone over.

With the **One Stops,** CalWORKs has a geographically defined unit of staff co-located at the Brawley One Stop and at the Calexico One Stop. Staff is assigned a workstation at the El Centro One Stop-West on a rotating basis. There is a monthly meeting to discuss various One Stops concerns.

With the **Child Care Community,** CalWORKs was instrumental in establishing Imperial County's Local Child Care Planning Council which meets bi-monthly. Establishing this council was one of the best things that the CalWORKs legislation provided as it brought the various Child Care interest together to work together to provide our overall community the best and improving child care. CalWORKs is also part of a Child Care Consortium, which puts on an Early Child Care Conference annually, which brings this community together for educational workshops and speakers. Good, reliable child care is essential for CalWORKs participants to be able to go to school, attend trainings, and to work.

With the **Public Transit Network,** CalWORKs has been part of the local planning council, too, and has been instrumental in improving local offering. We still have work to do here, but there has been much improvement.

3) Plan to measure quarterly progress

H. Plan to measure quarterly progress:
Measures of quarterly progress:

Imperial County is in the process of hiring a Staff Services Analyst in the immediate future to create reports collecting the following data:

Orientation/Appraisals Report: This report will collect data on quantity of ISAWS GAIN Appraisal's received and identifying whether 100% of mandatory registrants completed Orientation/Appraisal within 2 weeks of TANF approval notice.

Universal Engagement Report: We are collecting data monthly to evaluate whether 100% of participants needing to comply with Universal Engagement criteria secure a Welfare to Work Plan prior to 90 days of being notified of their TANF approval. We are working to tighten up the time it takes between TANF Intake, approval of Aid, CalWORKs Orientation/Appraisal, Job Club, Assessment, and assigned activities.

Re-Engagement Report: This report will be broken down into the following two sub-categories

A) Pre-Sanction Report: This report will collect data to evaluate number of cases being routed to a pre-sanction home visit. In addition, report will collect data on quantity of cases that will result in a financial sanction and quantity of cases that will be routed back to assigned worker for continued efforts in Welfare to Work participation.

B) Actively Sanctioned Report: This report will collect data identifying factors that are preventing re-engagement. In addition, report will quantify number of persons which are on the actively sanctioned monthly roster. The 1st quarter 2007 report will produce a base number for actively sanctioned population. Imperial County's objective with this population is to reduce the number of persons on the actively sanctioned report on a quarterly basis.

Projected impact on County's Federal Work Participation Rate:

Currently, Imperial County averages a Federal Work Participation Rate of 58%. There will be additional populations to engage whom we are just now meeting so it is difficult to know just how they are going to impact our rate.

Through these described strategies which we will be analyzing and new ones we may need to develop, we plan to meet the required Federal Work Participation Rate with in the next 3 years.

4) Funding

Describe how the county has spent and plans to utilize single allocation and other funding for the County's CalWORKs program. This section will help explain to county and State stakeholders how increased funding will be used.

Program Component	Fiscal Year 2005-06 Actual expenditures	Fiscal Year 2006-07 Budgeted Amount	Description of how additional provided in Fiscal Year 2006-07 will be used
CalWORKs Eligibility Administration	*$3,934,859*	*$2,339,218*	*Salaries and benefits for under funded eligibility staff as well as D/A Fraud staff*
WTW Employment Services	*$4,365,279*	*$5,826,634*	
CalWORKs Child Care	*$1,961,369*	*$1,907,984*	
Cal-Learn	*$139,104*	*$75,437*	
CalWORKs Funded Mental Health Services	*$938,526*	*$661,066*	
CalWORKs Funded Substance Abuse Services	*$24,390*	*$203,848*	
Incentives Funds	*$70,660*	*$750,184*	