

## HUMAN SERVICES AGENCY

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February 9, 1998

Administrative Services  
 Area Agency on Aging  
 Eligibility Services  
 Employment Services  
 Project Planning  
 Public Conservator  
 Refugee Services  
 Social Services  
 Veterans' Services

Grover D. Omyer  
 Director

Diane Just  
 CalWORKs Regional Advisors  
 California Department of Social Services  
 744 "P" Street, M.S. 14-44  
 Sacramento, CA 95814

Fax: (916) 654-1295

RE: Merced County's CalWORKs Plan

Dear Ms. Just:

These are the written clarifications you requested regarding Merced County's CalWORKs Plan. We have appreciated your assistance and look forward to having our plan certified. The attached clarifications address the certification cover letter from the Board of Supervisors and the Director of Human Services Agency ; Child Care, Coordination with Resource and Referral Agency, and Participation Requirements.

In addition, I would like to provide the following assurances to assist with the certifications of the county's plan. The Human Services Agency does propose to continue to use the GAIN Grievance procedures. We will also reimburse travel expenses for recipients in accordance with ACL #97-72. Merced County has included the faith community in discussions regarding the County's CalWORKs Plan, this would include discussions with the private sector to help with the identification of jobs for CalWORKs recipients.

I will be in Sacramento on Monday, February 9, 1998, but will be available via pager in case you have any questions regarding the information provided. I will be available Tuesday all day in case you need any further clarifications in getting Merced County's Plan certified. In addition, Charlie Millar, Administrator of Employment and Training Services will also be available to assist Monday at Extension 5210.

Sincerely,

Hubert "Hub" Walsh, Deputy Director  
 Employment Services and CalWORKs Planning  
 Pager # (209) 725-5737

HW/ja

Attachment

cc Grover Omyer  
 Charlie Millar

## **CHILD CARE EXEMPTIONS**

The Human Services Agency proposes to refer all CalWORKs recipients to our welfare to work program. The County will exempt from welfare-to-work activities parents who have primary responsibility for providing care for a child six months or younger. On a case-by-case basis, this exemption will be extended up to 12 months based on the availability of child care and welfare-to-work support services. The 12 week exemption for subsequent children may be extended up to 6 months on a case-by-case basis based on the availability of child care and welfare-to-work support services. Merced County does not propose to exceed the statutory limits established regarding child care exemptions.

## **CHILD CARE**

Presently, the Children's Services Network (CSN) is the only Resource and Referral and Alternative Payment Provider (APP) in Merced County. Children's Services Network administers Stage II and Stage III Child Care under contract with the California Department of Education. The Merced County Human Services Agency (MCHSA) presently administers Stage I Child Care.

Recipients who require child care will be given an informational packet and referred to CSN. In collaboration with CSN, the case manager will also have child care provider information available. As the county moves toward collocation of services, a CSN staff person will be assigned to the MCHSA.

## **COORDINATION WITH LOCAL R&R**

Human Services Agency has arranged that all Stage III clients have been advised with notices of the services available for them via CSN. In addition, Children's Services Network will transition CalWORKs participants who are receiving Stage II Child Care, but are eligible for Stage III Child Care, to Stage III as child care slots are available. As Stage II slots become available, CSN will notify the MCHSA and the most appropriate participants receiving Stage I Child Care will be referred to CSN. All other child care needs of CalWORKs Clients will be provided under Stage I by the MCHSA.

Children's Services Network will continue to provide Stage II and Stage III, and this will probably require CSN staff to be collocated with MCHSA CalWORKs staff.

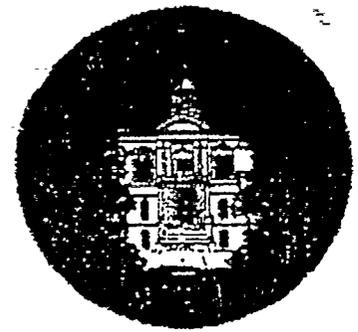
## **PARTICIPATION REQUIREMENTS**

The MCHSA will comply with the CalWORKs Law. The standards for participation in Merced County CalWORKs is proposed to be 32 hours. MCHSA will enroll single parent families in welfare-to-work activities for a minimum of 32 hours per week beginning January 1, 1998. Participation at the prescribed level may be reduced to the statutory minimum on a case-by-case basis dependent upon the availability of welfare-to-work services and child care.

# MERCED COUNTY

## BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

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January 28, 1998

Eloise Anderson  
California Department of Social Services  
744 P Street  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**Re: Merced County's CalWORKs Plan**

Dear Ms. Anderson:

It is my pleasure to forward you Merced County's Plan for CalWORKs. This plan was developed by the Human Services Agency in collaboration with the community, and describes the county's effort in providing assistance to needy families and individuals as well as assisting them to move from welfare to work.

This plan has been developed in accordance with the appropriate Federal, State and County laws and regulations. The terms of this plan, including all certifications within this plan, and all applicable laws and regulations will be followed during the implementation and execution of this plan.

Any questions regarding Merced County's Plan can be directed to Grover Omyer, Director of Human Services Agency at (209) 385-3000, Extension 5300.

Respectfully,

Grover Omyer, Director  
Merced County  
Human Services Agency

Kathleen M. Crookham  
Board Chairman

HW/ja

Merced

## GRIEVANCE AND HEARING PROCEDURES

### I. INTRODUCTION

Any time a participant in the Greater Avenues for Independence (GAIN) Program believes that a program requirement or assignment is in violation of the contract or is inconsistent with the program, the Merced County Department of Human Resources (MCDHR) shall inform the participant of the right to: Request a State Hearing pursuant to Manual of Policy and Procedure Division 22; or file a formal grievance pursuant to Section 5302 of the Unemployment Insurance Code and EAS MS 42-781; or file a formal grievance pursuant to the Merced County Board of Supervisors (MCBOS) grievance procedure.

The formal grievance processes shall not be used when a participant is dissatisfied with the results of an assessment made in accordance with 42-773 concerning the development of an employment plan, or 42-774.2 concerning amendments to the contract between the MCDHR and the participant.

### II. COUNTY GRIEVANCE AND HEARING PROCEDURE

#### A. Rights of Participant:

Participants who have requested a grievance hearing are entitled during the grievance process to the following rights:

1. To present evidence and question witnesses.
2. To receive a written statement from the County, in advance, stating the facts and the basis of the County's position.
3. To receive a written decision of the findings of facts and conclusions of law.
4. To appeal the decision through the state hearing procedure.
5. To be represented by an attorney or other representative at all stages of the proceedings.
6. To obtain access to all relevant documents and information, in advance of the hearing.
7. To receive a tape recorded or other verbatim record of the hearing. A fee will be charged for this record.

The MCDHR shall advise participants of these rights. A list of these rights will be printed on the letter sent to the participant acknowledging their request for a grievance hearing. The

participant will be further orally advised of their rights at the commencement of proceedings.

B. Procedures:

1. Any participant dissatisfied with a program requirement or assignment who desires a grievance hearing must request a hearing, either orally or in writing, within 30 days of the date the action was taken. This request shall contain a specific complaint identifying what action the participant is dissatisfied with. MCDHR personnel shall assist the participant in preparation of the complaint, if such assistance is requested or necessary.
2. The MCDHR shall acknowledge receipt of the request and set a hearing date within 30 days of the date of the request, or within 30 days of the clarification of issues not clearly stated in the original request. No hearing will be scheduled until the issues to be resolved are clearly identified.
3. A Notice of Hearing indicating the date, time, and location of the grievance hearing shall be mailed seven (7) calendar days prior to the hearing.
4. The MCDHR Fair Hearings Officer shall serve as the Hearing Officer for all GAIN grievance proceedings.
5. The hearing shall be conducted as much as possible in a non-adversary atmosphere.
6. The participant and their representative shall be permitted to examine all evidence introduced at the hearing.
7. Testimony during the hearing shall be given under oath or affirmation.
8. Testimony shall be recorded by audio tape recorder, or other means which can be reproduced or transcribed. The hearing record shall be retained for one year from the date of the decision.
9. All documents and physical evidence accepted as evidence at the hearing shall be retained as a part of the hearing record.
10. The hearing can be continued for not more than ten (10) calendar days if additional witnesses or evidence are needed.
11. The Hearing Officer shall render a written decision within thirty (30) days of the date of the hearing, and shall mail copies of the decision to the GAIN participant and their representative.

12. The decision will be based solely on evidence presented at the hearing. The decision shall contain a summary of the facts and findings, what further action if any will be taken, and an explanation of further appeal rights.

CPA 1157 BO attachment 11-08



# MERCED COUNTY

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December 16, 1997

Eloise Anderson  
California Department of Social Services  
744 P Street  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**Re: Merced County's CalWORKs Plan**

Dear Ms. Anderson:

It is my pleasure to forward you Merced County's Plan for CalWORKs. This plan was developed by the Human Services Agency in collaboration with the community, and describes the county's effort in providing assistance to needy families and individuals as well as assisting them to move from welfare to work.

Any questions regarding Merced County's Plan can be directed to Grover Omyer, Director of Human Services Agency at (209) 385-3000, Extension 5300.

Thank you  
  
Joe Rivero  
Board Chairman

521e202.j6a

cc Grover Omyer, Director  
Merced County  
Human Services Agency

**COUNTY OF MERCED**  
**CalWORKs Plan**

**Prepared by:**

**MERCED COUNTY**  
**HUMAN SERVICES AGENCY**

**December 1997**

This plan is submitted pursuant to Section 10531 of the Welfare and Institutions Code required by the Welfare-to-Work Act of 1997, AB 1542.

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Merced County's California Work Opportunity and Responsibility for Kids (CalWORKs) Plan describes the local efforts to assist families transition from welfare to work. The Plan builds on the County's historically strong community/service provider collaborations. The focus of the County's effort is to develop strategies and systems which will encourage work as an alternative to welfare.

The Merced County Human Services Agency (MCHSA) will be taking the lead in the development, planning, and implementation of the local CalWORKs Plan.

The following program goals, service delivery, and initial performance outcomes and indicators are established.

### Program Goals

- Clients are responsible for their future. The Department is responsible to provide appropriate services as follows:
  - Work-related activities will be established for each client with the sole objective of quickly obtaining unaided employment.
  - Clients are expected to complete their work-related activities with maximum effort.
- Establish a business-friendly employment service delivery system.
- Fraud will be identified and prosecuted.
- Quality services are to be provided in a fair and positive manner.
- Community awareness and partnerships are key in a successful design and implementation of CalWORKs.

### Principles

- Early identification of CalWORKs versus non-CalWORKs clients.
- Early screening of client needs, identifying employment barriers, designing appropriate welfare-to-work activities, and providing extensive case management services.
- Timely and accurate determination of eligibility.
- Use of preventive services in order to avoid the need for continuing services.

**Service Delivery Outcomes**

The MCHSA has developed a service delivery flow emphasizing the following outcomes:

- Provision of holistic family services.
- Prudent management of client time-limited eligibility.

**Increase “Entered” Employments**

- Full- versus part-time.
- People versus jobs.

**Job Retention**

- Increased earnings.
- 90- to 180-day follow-up.
- Grant reductions.
- Discontinuance due to earnings.

**Diversion from Assistance**

- Entered employment.
- Time period diverted.

**Improved School Attendance**

**Increased Child Immunization**

**A. COLLABORATION WITH PUBLIC AND PRIVATE AGENCIES TO PROVIDE TRAINING AND SUPPORT SERVICES**

The MCHSA is committed to the provision of CalWORKs services through collaboration with a wide array of public and private agencies to assist our CalWORKs recipients toward self-sufficiency. Merced County has a 247-page Resource Directory which is used by staff to make referrals to appropriate agencies. These include, but are not limited to, the following agencies:

**1. Educational and Training Services**

Merced County Private Industry Training Department (PITD)  
California Employment Development Department (EDD)  
Merced Lao Family Community, Inc.  
Central Valley Opportunity Center  
Merced College  
Merced County Office of Education  
Out-of-county public and private training providers  
The Work Force Development Roundtable  
California Department of Rehabilitation

**2. Child Care Services**

Community Action Agency/Head Start/Child Development  
Children's Services Network  
Child Care Advisory Council

**3. Transportation Services**

Merced County Bus Service

**4. Mental Health Services**

Merced County Mental Health Department

**5. Substance Abuse Services**

Merced County Drug and Alcohol Services

**6. Domestic Violence Services**

A Woman's Place

**7. Economic Development Services**

Incorporated cities within the County  
Chambers of Commerce throughout Merced County  
Economic Development Organizations

**8. Others**

The Area Agency on Aging  
Merced County Health Department  
Housing Authority of Merced County  
CalWORKs Community Advisory Committee  
County and Private Health Facilities  
Catholic Charities  
Merced County Public Works Department  
Incorporated cities within the County

These agencies will provide, but are not limited to, the following services:

Intake, orientation, referrals, employment counseling, labor market information, case management, job placement, job referrals, Job Club/Job Search, Assessment, Basic Education, GED training, vocational training, on-the-job training, work experience, work maturity training, unemployment insurance, Veterans services, California Employers Unemployment Insurance Taxes, California Training Benefits, Trade Readjustment Benefits, Youth Employment Services, Outreach Services for farm workers, child care, transportation, and follow-up services, domestic violence assistance, shelter, food, clothing, Vocational English as a second language, disability evaluating rehabilitation, mental health evaluations and treatments, drug and alcohol evaluations and treatments, welfare-to-work plans, internships, community service, employer requirements, job orders, job leads, coordination of workfare development issues, skills training, health care, and employer-specific training.

Does your County have a Refugee Employment Service Plan?

Yes

No

The Welfare-to-Work activities will be coordinated with the County Refugee Services Plan.

**B. PARTNERSHIPS WITH PRIVATE SECTOR TO IDENTIFY JOBS**

The MCHSA has maintained a positive connection with the private sector throughout the operations of its Employment Services program. The Department has strengthened this connection through formation of the following partnership with the private sector to identify jobs.

The County, in collaboration with its workforce development agencies, is continuing its efforts to form and maintain community forums to establish partnerships with the private sector for the purpose of fostering employment opportunities for CalWORKs program recipients.

The County works in collaboration with its Private Industry Council (PIC), a board comprised of representatives of the community and businesses, to prepare our CalWORKs participants with the skills and training needed in order to successfully compete in the local labor market. Working with PIC, the County gains a close-up perspective of employer needs and expectations from among the private sector, which in turn influences its strategies for delivering employment and training services to CalWORKs participants.

BusNet is another forum the County utilizes, through which meetings are held in order to bring together local businesses to advertise our labor pool and our employment and training services, to identify potential job opportunities for CalWORKs participants, and to promote employer incentives through training programs and tax credits.

The county also holds community meetings with the local Chambers of Commerce in an effort to formulate connections with the local businesses to direct job opportunities to CalWORKs participants. Local businesses participating in these forums can bear direct influence upon employment training offered, in exchange for hiring from our labor pool.

Additionally, in the interest of attracting employers to our labor pool, the County continues to work through its Economic Development Commission in marketing our labor pool to employers locally, statewide, and nationally.

## C. LOCAL LABOR MARKET NEEDS

### 1. Labor Market Analysis Methodology

Merced County has taken information from the United States 1990 Census, State of California Department of Finance, California EDD, Merced County Farm Bureau, and the Merced County Labor Market Information (LMI) Project. All information except the LMI Project is provided to the County by the agencies developing the material for use in Labor Market and Economic Analysis.

The LMI Project is a combined effort between EDD, the Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) and GAIN/Refugee programs. Occupational areas are identified for survey based on public, employer, educational institution, and Employment and Training program input through public hearings.

Information gathered from all sources were analyzed for use in determining service strategies. The overall data was used to determine population growth verses new job growth and factors that would effect the projected outlook for employment. The LMI was used to specifically target occupational areas with employment potential and the ability to allow for clients durable self-sufficiency.

### 2. The Area and Its Economy

Merced County, Geographical service area, is an agriculturally-based rural county located in the San Joaquin Valley of California. According to the California Department of Finance, on January 1, 1997, Merced County had a population of 201,000 and an average unemployment rate of 16.2 percent for calendar year 1996. Additionally, Merced County is home to an estimated 14,000 Southeast Asian Refugees.

### 3. Population Specific

Based on the latest estimates for the California Department of Finance, Merced County's total population increased by 11.2 percent between January 1990 and January 1997 from 178,403 to 201,000.

As of January 1, 1997, there were 122,500 people living in the incorporated cities of Merced County, an increase of 1.3 percent over the January 1, 1996 figures. The unincorporated sections of the county recorded 78,500 as of January 1, 1997, compared to 77,500 one year earlier, an increase of 1.3 percent over January 1, 1996.

### 4. California EDD Employment Outlook

EDD projections of employment between 1993-2000 by industry and occupation for Merced County indicate the employment total for all industries will increase by 9.4 percent or an overall increase of 4,500 jobs by 2000. The number of jobs in most industries will continue to grow through 2000, with the exception of the Finance, Insurance, and Real Estate industry. Service industries will achieve the largest absolute change in employment with 1,400 new jobs by 2000.

As mention on the previous page, Finance, Insurance, and Real Estate is expected to lose 200 jobs by 2000. Government totals should reach a new high, indicated by an increase of 700 jobs mainly concentrated in the federal and local sectors.

*(Note: Agriculture is not included in projections.)*

**5. Labor Force Trends and Outlook**

**a. Annual Average Civilian Labor Force 1990-1996**

	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996
Civilian Labor Force	81,000	81,200	87,500	84,000	87,300	83,500	82,900
Civilian Employment	71,100	69,200	73,100	69,700	73,700	69,200	69,500
Civilian Unemployment	9,900	12,000	14,400	14,300	13,600	14,300	13,400
Civilian Unemployment Rate	12.2%	14.8%	16.5%	17.0%	15.5%	17.1%	16.2%

**b. Monthly Civilian Labor Force**

	Jan-97	Feb-97	Mar-97	Apr-97	May-97 Revised	June-97 Prelim.
Civilian Labor Force	83,300	84,100	83,300	85,300	86,300	87,600
Civilian Employment	66,700	67,100	67,600	71,000	73,500	75,200
Civilian Unemployment	16,600	17,000	15,700	14,300	12,800	12,400
Civilian Unemployment Rate	19.90%	20.20%	18.90%	16.70%	14.80%	14.10%

**c. Annual Average Civilian Unemployment Rate**

	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996
Civilian Labor Force	81,000	81,200	87,500	84,000	87,300	83,500	82,900
Civilian Employment	71,100	69,200	73,100	69,700	73,700	69,200	69,500
Civilian Unemployment	9,900	12,000	14,400	14,300	13,600	14,300	13,400
Civilian Unemployment Rate	12.2%	14.8%	16.5%	17.0%	15.5%	17.1%	16.2%

**d. Monthly Civilian Unemployment Rate**

	Jan-97	Feb-97	Mar-97	Apr-97	May-97 Revised	June-97 Prelim.
Civilian Labor Force	83,300	84,100	83,300	85,300	86,300	87,600
Civilian Employment	66,700	67,100	67,600	71,000	73,500	75,200
Civilian Unemployment	16,600	17,000	15,700	14,300	12,800	12,400
Civilian Unemployment Rate	19.90%	20.20%	18.90%	16.70%	14.80%	14.10%

**e. Estimated Wage and Salary Workers  
Large Industries, 1990-1996**

	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996
Agriculture	11,400	10,300	9,700	10,300	10,800	11,000	11,000
Manufacturing	8,500	8,700	9,600	9,500	10,000	10,200	10,700
Retail Trade	7,900	8,500	9,200	9,300	9,900	9,900	10,100
Services	6,400	7,700	7,900	7,800	8,000	8,000	8,300
Government	12,400	12,400	13,300	13,500	13,200	12,100	12,000

**f. Estimated Wage and Salary Workers  
Large Industries January - June 1997**

	Jan-97	Feb-97	Mar-97	Apr-97	May-97 Revised	June-97 Prelim.
Agriculture	6,500	6,700	7,000	10,200	12,800	13,700
Manufacturing	10,700	10,800	10,700	11,000	11,300	11,600
Retail Trade	10,200	10,200	10,200	10,300	10,400	10,500
Services	9,300	9,500	9,500	9,700	9,700	9,500
Government	11,400	11,500	11,900	11,900	11,900	12,000

**g. Average Wage and Salary Workers  
Small Industries 1990 - 1996**

	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996
Construction and Mining	1,800	1,900	1,500	1,700	1,700	1,500	1,500
Transportation and Public Utilities	1,900	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	1,900	1,900
Wholesale Trade	2,000	2,100	1,900	1,800	1,800	1,700	1,700
Finance, Insurance, and Real Estate	2,200	2,300	2,300	2,200	2,100	2,000	2,100

**h. Estimated Wage and Salary Workers  
Small Industries January - June 1997**

	Jan-97	Feb-97	Mar-97	Apr-97	May-97 Revised	June-97 Prelim.
Construction and Mining	1,300	1,400	1,400	1,500	1,500	1,600
Transportation and Public Utilities	1,900	1,800	1,800	1,900	2,000	2,100
Wholesale Trade	1,500	1,500	1,500	1,600	1,700	1,900
Finance, Insurance, and Real Estate	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,100	2,100	2,100

6. Growth Occupations

Occupations With the Fastest Job Growth  
1993-2000  
Merced County

Occupation	Annual	Average	Absolute Change	Percentage Change
	1993	2000		
Correction Officer, Jailers	115	320	205	178.3%
Compl, Enforce Inspect—Ex Const	210	315	105	50.0%
Merch Displayers, Window Trimmers	70	105	35	50.0%
Home Health Care Workers	65	85	20	30.8%
Dairy Processing Equip. Operators—Including Setters	105	135	30	28.6%
Hairdressers, Hairstylists	195	245	50	25.6%
First-line Sup/Mgr-help, Laborers	70	85	15	21.4%
Teachers—Special Education	220	265	45	20.5%
Construction Managers	75	90	15	20.0%
Driver/Sales Workers	105	125	20	19.0%
Postal Mail Carriers	185	220	35	18.9%
First-line Sup/Mgr-Production	165	195	30	18.2%
Truck Drivers, Heavy	675	795	120	17.8%
Bus and Truck Mechanics	115	135	20	17.4%
Truck Drivers, Light	460	540	80	17.4%
Counter and Rental Clerks		205	30	17.1%
Cannery Workers	175	940	135	16.8%
First-line Sup/Mgr-Construction	805	140	20	16.7%
Child Care Workers	120	110	15	15.8%
Lawyers	95	110	15	15.8%
Painters, Paperhangers—Construction	95	110	15	15.8%
Traffic, Shipping, Receiving Skills	320	370	50	15.6%
Dental Assistants	100	115	15	15.0%
Graders, Sorters—Ag Products	100	115	15	15.0%
Welders and Cutters	200	230	30	15.0%
Guards and Watch Guards	135	155	20	
Automotive Body, Related Repairers	70	80	10	
Whole and Ret Buyers—ex Farm Prods	70	80	10	
Sales Reps, Non-scientific Ex Ret	360	410	50	
Carpenters	185	210	25	

**LABOR FORCE AND EMPLOYMENT**

		Total Employment, 1994 (BEA Series)	Number of Establishments by Employment Size, 1994		
		77,298			
		Percent of California	0.5%		
Civilian labor force, 1995	84,700	Wage and Salary	64,065	1-4	1,596
Civilian employment	70,400	Proprietors	13,233	5-9	563
Unemployment	14,300	Farm	3,033	10-19	350
Unemployment rate	16.9%	Non-Farm	10,200	20-49	226
				50-99	71
				100-249	31
				250-499	7
<b>Nonagricultural wage &amp; salary employment, 1993 ( BLS series)</b>	<b>47,300</b>	Farm	9,310	500-999	4
<i>Percent of California</i>	<i>0.4%</i>	Agricultural Services	4,343	1000+	1
		Mining	60	<b>Total</b>	<b>2,849</b>
Construction/Mining	1,600	Construction	2,795		
Manufacturing	9,400	Manufacturing	10,368		
Transportation-Utility	2,000	Transportation-Utility	2,452		
Trade	11,300	Wholesale Trade	1,993		
Finance-Insurance-Real Estate	2,300	Retail Trade	12,262		
Services	7,800	Finance-Insurance-Real Estate	4,029		
Federal Government	1,000	Services	13,155		
State-Local Government	11,800	Federal Civilian	1,010		
		Military	3,519		
		State and Local	12,002		

*Totals may not add due to rounding*

**D. WELFARE-TO-WORK ACTIVITIES**

Our goal is to move recipients of cash aid quickly into unsubsidized employment. Achieving this goal will require assessing job readiness, providing services to obtain job readiness skills when necessary, and matching job ready applicants to employment. To do this Merced County will provide the full range of Welfare-to-Work activities, including but not limited to:

- Unsubsidized employment
- Subsidized private sector employment
- Subsidized public sector employment
- Work experience
- On-the-job training
- Grant-based on-the-job training
- Vocational education and training
- Education directly related to employment
- Adult basic education (includes basic education, GED, and ESL)
- Work study
- Self-employment
- Community service
- Job search and job readiness assistance
- Job skills training directly related to employment
- Supported work
- Transitional employment
- Other (list)
  - Wrap-around Supportive Services
  - Mentoring Services
  - Retention Services
  - Life Skill Services
  - Holistic Family Supportive Services

## E. SUBSTANCE ABUSE AND MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

The MCHSA will collaborate with the Merced County Mental Health Department and its Alcohol and Drug Services division to provide mental health and substance abuse services. The services will endeavor to remove these issues as barriers to employment. New funding will be utilized in a manner that maximizes federal financial participation through Title XIX of the federal Social Security Act.

### 1. Substance Abuse

MCHSA will collaboratively work with the Mental Health Department's Alcohol and Drug Services to provide service to the CalWORKs participants. Ongoing assessments of participants will be made to ensure their readiness to work. Those identified as having substance abuse problems will be referred to Alcohol and Drug Services for evaluation and development of a treatment plan. Utilizing a team approach, services will be supplied with the aim of preparing participants for work participation activities.

**At a minimum the Substance Abuse Services will include:**

- Screening
- Assessment
- Evaluation
- Case management
- Substance abuse treatment
- Employment counseling
- Community service jobs

### 2. Mental Health Services

Mental health services will be provided by the county's Mental Health Department. New funding will be used to maximize the potential for employment of CalWORKs participants. A collaborative assessment process will enable those individuals needing service to be referred to the Mental Health Department. Case managers from MCHSA and Mental Health will provide ongoing service directed at removing identified barriers to employment.

**At a minimum the Mental Health Services will include:**

- Screening
- Assessment
- Case management
- Treatment and Rehabilitation Services
- Identification of substance abuse problems and referral for substance abuse services
- Identifying individuals with severe mental health problems

**F. MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES AVAILABLE AFTER TIME LIMITS**

Participants reaching their time limits and still in need of services will be provided services through existing programs. Medi-Cal eligibility will be determined as needed and other Mental Health funding will be utilized. Persons suffering long term disabilities that prevent employment will be assisted in applying for available disability benefits for which they may qualify. MCHSA currently employs a Social Worker II to assist General Assistance clients in qualifying for benefits. This expertise will be utilized to assist clients that may require this service.

**G. CHILD CARE AND TRANSPORTATION SERVICES**

**1. Child Care**

Child care will be provided in cooperation with the Merced County of Education (MCOE) and the Merced County Child Care Planning Council. A child care specialist has been hired to coordinate Child Care Planning. It is the goal of the MCHSA to provide reliable, safe child care for CalWORKs recipients as needed, so that child care will not be a barrier to employment or other welfare-to-work activities.

Recipients that need child care information about providers in their area will either be referred to the Children Services Network and/or information will be provided by the Human Services Agency (HSA) case manager. If there are issues surrounding child care, case manager will work with providers to overcome any barriers.

As Recipients move from county funded child care to other providers, they will receive assistance during the transition from their case managers and/or the Children Services Network. It is the goal of MCHSA, MCOE, and the Child Care Planning Council to ensure that adequate child care is available.

A parent with primary care for an infant up to six months of age with extension up to the maximum by law will be exempt from welfare-to-work activities. This exemption may be extended if they are participating in a Parenting and/or Life Skills program. Circumstances will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis to determine continued exemption. The normal exemption criteria will apply. The availability of infant child care is a major concern but efforts will be made to ensure that adequate and safe care is available. All other factors will be considered on a case-by-case basis in determining exemption for welfare to work.

**2. Transportation**

Transportation will be provided through refinement and/or expansion of the current public transportation systems. As necessary, additional capacity may be purchased. It is anticipated that off-peak transportation needs may be met with an expanded dial-a-ride program. The County may also consider alternate transportation assistance. The Department will give priority to transit alternatives, including but not limited to: subsidies, vouchers, Van Pools, Car Pools, Ride Share, and other options as appropriate. All these options are in the planning stages with completion anticipated after the full implementation of the county's Welfare-to-Work Plan.

**H. COMMUNITY SERVICE PLAN**

The County plans to operate a community service plan for participants who have reached their 18/24 month time limitation on aid and may offer this component to other participants to assist them in meeting their participation rates. The MCHSA may contract with the County PITD and/or other public agencies such as incorporated cities. Merced County will submit an addendum to its CalWORKs Plan when the specific details of the community service plans are established. The Department is also considering utilization of public nonprofit agencies for community services to certain isolated county areas to develop community service work-sites and place referred welfare-to-work participants on the work-sites. They will target all public agencies within the county.

To increase community service capacity within the county, the Welfare Department will use a successful work experience model developed through the California Initiative project for our refugee population. This program would contract with county and city public works and parks departments to hire crew leaders to supervise community services work crews to provide needed clean-up of public property and roads. The crew leaders would be hired from the Welfare-to-Work participants.

**I. WORKING WITH VICTIMS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE**

Learning to recognize domestic violence is part of the normal training process for MCHSA workers with client contact. Additional training will be given to make staff even more aware of the issues of domestic violence as a barrier to success on the CalWORKs program. Staff development will be acquired from the local agencies that serve victims of domestic violence. It will be the responsibility of staff to refer victims to our local providers for service. MCHSA is working with the local domestic violence provider to develop a protocol for assessment and referral to these services. As these cases are identified, a plan will be developed to deal with the issues that may arise. The case manager will be responsible for coordinating services that may be needed.

MCHSA and other service providers will evaluate each situation on a case-by-case basis. Thus, staff development for the entire Employment and Training system will be required. HSA will be responsible for determining if there is a need for exemption from Welfare-to-Work Programs. The exemption will be granted for reasons of safety, treatment or other reasons determined to be in the best interest of the client or their children. These exemptions will be evaluated by the case manager and the service providers. Recipients that are exempted will be followed closely by their case manager with the goal of returning them to welfare-to-work activities as they are able.

**J. PERFORMANCE OUTCOMES TO MEET LOCALLY ESTABLISHED OBJECTIVES**

Merced County's performance in employment services has dramatically improved since 1995 despite double-digit unemployment rates and the closure of Castle Air Force Base, an economic force in the county. Entered employment rates have steadily increased and in FY 1996/97 we returned \$1.13 in AFDC dollars for every dollar spent in the GAIN program through grant reductions and grant terminations due to employment.

**Performance Outcome:** Some of the outcome measures Merced County has tentatively identified include some of the following:

**Measuring Entered Employment**

- New versus returning
- Full- versus part-time
- People versus jobs

Merced County has had a record of steady increases in job placements. We set our goals high and achieve them by working diligently with our service providers and local employers to improve the training and work maturity of our participants. We will continue to aggressively job develop and market our participants. We intend to procure new assessment materials which will allow us to certify to employers that our participants have been screened for aptitude and work attitude.

**Measurement:** Collect placement information and input via our Electronic Employment Management System. The system will tabulate the data, and we will compare it to the goal and to last years data.

**Job Retention**

- Grant Reductions
- Off Aids via Increased Earning
- 90- to 180-Day Follow-up

Merced County has had exceptional success in increasing grant savings due to grant reductions and termination due to earnings. We will continue to improve our efforts to provide meaningful post placement services to enhance our participants' skills and improve their chances to qualify for high wages.

**Measurements:** Collect data on entered employment report and electronically transmit names to the automated eligibility computer.

There are also other suggested outcome performance measures for Merced County, these include:

- Increase school attendance of our CalWORKs children

- Increase immunization rates for infants and small children

**Diversion from Aid**

- Enter Employment
- Time Period Diverted

These outcomes will be measured by comparing the number of applicants against the number who actually complete the application process and are granted aid.

**K. PUBLIC INPUT IN THE DEVELOPEMENT OF THE CALWORKS PLAN**

In September 1996, MCHSA created a Speakers Bureau for the purpose of keeping the public informed about Welfare Reform. Utilizing executive staff and other key MCHSA personnel, the Bureau has delivered over 70 presentations regarding Welfare Reform to community organizations, beginning with the Merced County Board of Supervisors.

These presentations are part of a continuing process and have been delivered to the following groups:

- County staff
- Service organizations
- Work force development groups
- Rights organizations
- Churches
- Law enforcement personnel
- Family preservation organizations
- Community resource groups
- Community leadership organizations
- Business organizations
- Southeast Asian family organizations
- Child development groups
- Schools and colleges
- Government organizations
- Health care organizations
- MAGIC service provider

In December 1996, the MCHSA started the process of developing a platform which would allow the MCHSA to not only share information about Welfare Reform with community members, but also to solicit the input and support of those community members. We were especially interested in interacting with other organizations which offer support services to our clientele to see what the anticipated impact to their agencies would be.

To that end, MCHSA invited key community leaders to take part in a planning team which would develop plans for a community forum on Welfare Reform. The team became known as the Welfare Reform Community Forum Task Force, and included representatives from:

- County Administration
- Public Health Department
- Drug & Alcohol Program
- Mental Health Department
- PITD
- Merced City Schools

- Housing Authority
- Merced Chamber of Commerce
- Merced County Sheriff's Department
- Community Action Agency
- EDD
- Social Security Administration

The purpose of the Task Force was to:

1. Disseminate information to clients and the general public regarding the changes, both programmatic and peripheral, brought about as a result of Welfare Reform.
2. Utilize the members of the Task Force to meet with their constituents and engage in interactive discussion with clients, the groups that provide direct or indirect services to clients, and the groups that will be most heavily impacted by the new programs.
3. Identify the potential impacts, issues, and outcomes of Welfare Reform as the implementation proceeds.
4. Develop strategies for moving recipients from dependency to self-sufficiency, addressing the need for improved employability of many clients, for more employment opportunities, for more Child Care providers/slots, and for expanded public transportation, etc.

The Task Force was comprised of representatives from MCHSA, PITD, Public Health, Mental Health, Probation, Drug & Alcohol, Family Support, Merced City Schools, Sheriff's Department, Community Action Agency, Social Security, and EDD.

The Task Force divided into eight focus groups to identify issues in each pertinent area, and to create position papers to share with the Task Force and then, to the general public at the Public Forums.

The following are the eight focus groups that were created:

- Employment Development
- Chambers of Commerce (Grocers, Retail)
- Child Care
- Schools
- Health Care Personnel
- Non-Profit Organizations
- Housing/Property Management
- Law Enforcement

By April 1997, the focus groups were completing their position papers and submitting them to the Task Force to be used in designing the Public Forums. By May 1997, all of the position papers had been completed.

In June of 1997, four Community Forums were held in various parts of Merced County in order to optimize the opportunity for people to attend. 75 participants attended the forum held in Merced; 63 participated in the forum held in Atwater; 40 attended in Livingston; and there were 32 participants in Los Banos.

The Community Forums were 2 to 2½ hours long. The format included one hour for introduction and presenting of position papers from various Focus Groups. The participants were given handouts regarding various statistics along with a Welfare Reform summary and the Focus Group position papers, translated as needed. The remainder of the time was spent in break-out groups. There were translators provided for

Hmong and Spanish, and a recorder was provided to capture additional comments. Input from the community was solicited both verbally on the night of the Forum and via self-mailers for written comments to be submitted that night or later.

The information that was accumulated was compiled and used to develop a set of Principles by which the MCHSA would operate in the months to come as we transition to Welfare Reform.

The Welfare Reform Principles were submitted to the Board of Supervisors for approval on August 14, 1997. The subjects covered included:

- Jobs
- Transportation
- Child Care
- Employability
- Safety Net

Throughout this process, the public has been kept informed through a series of articles, interviews, and advertisements in our local media (print, radio, and television). Public awareness will continue, as MCHSA, public, and private agencies guide the community into the transition to Welfare Reform.

L. SOURCES AND EXPENDITURES OF FUNDS

**County Plan Budget  
1997/98 State Fiscal Year  
Section 1**

	Total	FCS	State General Fund	County Funds *	Other **
Food Stamp Administration (For county MOE purposes)	\$5,386,139	\$2,789,143	\$1,946,100	\$659,896	

**County Plan Budget  
1997/98 State Fiscal Year  
Section 2**

Note: The following categories are for information purposes only and are not an indicator of specific claiming categories.

	Total	TANF/State General Fund	CCDBG	Title XIX	County Funds *	Other**
<b>TOTAL CalWORKs Admin &amp; Services Items (A) - (D)</b>	\$16,362,003	\$ 15,027,147	\$ 267,500	\$ 143,252	\$ 924,104	
(A) TOTAL CalWORKs Single Allocation Items (1) - (7)						
(1) Benefit Administration	\$ 3,751,454	\$ 3,391,027			\$ 360,427	
(2) Program Integrity (Fraud)	\$ 1,122,572	\$ 1,061,682			\$ 60,890	
(3) Staff Development/Retraining	\$ 140,163	\$ 134,689			\$ 5,474	
(4) Welfare-to-Work Activities	\$ 7,476,477	\$ 7,032,614			\$ 443,863	
(5) Cal Learn	\$ 635,815	\$ 635,505			\$ 310	
(6) Child care-- first half of 1997/98	\$ 535,000	\$ 214,360	\$ 267,500		\$ 53,140	
(7) Other Activities***						
(B) Child Care - second half of 1997/98	\$ 2,170,489	\$ 2,170,489				
(C) Mental Health Treatment	\$ 286,504	\$ 143,252		**\$143,252		
(D) Substance Abuse Treatment	\$ 243,529	\$ 243,529				

- \* When combined with food stamp administration, the total level of estimated county funds for CalWORKs administration and services should meet the requirement of Section 15204.4 of the W&I Code, which specifies that counties expend an amount for these programs that, when combined with the amount expended for the administration of the food stamp program, equals or exceeds the amount expended for corresponding activities in 1996/97.
- \*\* Title XIX Match From Mental Health Department
- \*\* If other sources of funding are being made available for an activity, please identify on a separate page.
- \*\* Please identify "other activities" on a separate page.

**M. ASSISTING FAMILIES TRANSITIONING OFF AID**

The County will work with families that transition off aid for both entering employment and for time limit reasons.

**1. Transitions Due to Employment**

Provide employed participants transitioning from cash aid with transitional supportive services for up to 12 months after employment to the extent that these services are needed and not available from other sources.

Provide job retention and re-employment services through specialized case management among Employment and Training staff or contracted out to service providers to assist in problem solving, crisis management, or advanced life skills.

Maintain employment resource centers to provide job information, counseling, peer group support and networking.

Continued Medi-Cal and Food Stamp eligibility to provide transitional support while participants advance to self-sustaining employment.

**2. Transitions Due to Time Limits**

Welfare-to-Work activities will be limited to Community Service for participants who have not become employed after reaching the 18 to 24 month time limit for receiving Welfare-to-Work services. Child care is provided; other supportive services are at county option.

No additional participation in Welfare-to-Work activities will be required of recipients removed from assistance upon reaching the 60-month time limit. Additional Welfare-to-Work services, limited to Community Service, may be offered to such persons on a volunteer basis. No supportive services will be provided.

Participants who no longer receive Welfare-to-Work services due to the 60-month time limit may receive limited services at the employment resource centers and have access to such services as job leads, job search coaching and use of telephones.

## N. JOB CREATION

The County is actively working through its Economic Development Department to attract private industry to the local area. The department is aggressively marketing the County's growth potential and its available labor pool.

The County will apply for funding from the Job Creation Investment Fund to develop a strategic plan for securing new private, unsubsidized employment within the County.

The County will continue its focus on utilizing Job Developers to secure employment and training agreements with local businesses for CalWORKs participants through the promotion of tax and training incentives.

## O. OTHER ELEMENTS

### Pilot Projects

Merced County started working on a School Attendance Pilot Project in August of 1995 which came to be known as MerCAP. In June of 1996, the State of California approved the waiver that was necessary for Merced County to implement the MerCAP program, and in October 1997 the MerCAP program officially got off the ground.

MerCAP is a pilot program intended to ensure the regular school attendance of children between the ages of 6 and 16 years old whose families are receiving cash aid for them.

Under MerCAP, the participating schools are tracking each child's attendance. After five absences, the school sends a reminder letter to the child's family. After seven absences, the school notifies the child's family that they are required to attend a conference with the school's staff. At the conference, a Corrective Action Plan is developed between the family and the school. If the family does not attend the conference, the school notifies MCHSA and a sanction is imposed, removing the child's needs from the cash aid. The sanction is "cured" as soon as the family cooperates by attending a conference with the school.

If the problem persists and the child continues to be absent, the school will again notify MCHSA after ten absences to impose a one-month sanction by reducing the cash aid by the needs of the non-attending child. This sanction is not "curable" (i.e., it must last for the full month).

There are 22 schools currently participating in MerCAP as we phase the program in throughout the County. This represents approximately one-third of the county's schools. Another third will begin participation in the second year of the program, and the last third will start in the third year.

It is much too early to know what results this program will have in terms of keeping children in school, but early comments from the participating schools seem to indicate that MerCAP is showing some positive results.

Merced County reserves the right to develop additional pilot projects and to submit a proposal or proposals as addendum to our County Plan in the future.

**P. COMPLIANCE WITH THE REQUIREMENTS OF CALWORKS**

MCHSA will meet the minimum requirements as required by law. It is our goal, however, to increase the availability of welfare-to-work activities so that we can increase the single parent activities to the 32 hour per week level as soon as possible.

**Q. INTERACTION WITH INDIAN TRIBES**

This is not applicable to Merced County.