

Solano County Community Service Plan 2000

INTRODUCTION

The CalWORKs assistance program was designed within the parameters of TANF (Temporary Assistance to Needy Families.) California Assembly Bill 1542 requires counties to provide community service activities for those receiving CalWORKs assistance, who are not exempt from Welfare-to-Work requirements, and have reached their 18 or 24 months on aid. Counties have the option to provide community service activities for those who have not reached their 18 or 24 months on aid. Solano County has chosen to provide community service activities for **all** individuals who are not employed in unsubsidized employment sufficient to meet the minimum hours of participation.

The purpose of Community Service is to provide participants with basic job skills, work behavior skills, a valuable job reference, and on-the-job enhancement of existing or recently acquired skills, that will lead to unsubsidized employment. The community service assignment must meet an identified community need. Community Service activities are limited to performance in the public or private non-profit sector.

Solano County will serve the Community Service activity needs of the Welfare-to-Work (WtW) program participant, through a partnership with Goodwill Industries of the Greater East Bay, and through the county's existing Pre-employment Preparation Program (PREP).

WHO WILL BE SERVED

County PREP Community Service

Clients will be placed in PREP if they have used *less than 18 months* on their WtW clock, and are participating in a WtW activity, but need more hours of unpaid work experience to meet their WtW requirement.

Examples:

- 1) A recipient who has a WtW requirement of 32 hours per week works an average of 20 hours per week, and has not been able to find unsubsidized employment to fill the remaining hours, may be referred to PREP.

- 2) A recipient who is in an approved SIP and participates in their school program 12 hours per week, and cannot find unsubsidized employment to fill the remaining hours, may be referred to PREP.

Referral Process-The PREP activity will be included in the Employment Development Plan. The Employment Development Plan (EDP) is Solano County's Welfare-to-Work Plan. Therefore, the Employment Resource Specialist (ERS) will make a referral to Assessment. The Assessment Counselor will complete an EDP, develop a PREP worksite, and place the individuals in an appropriate PREP activity or activities, and monitor progress. The ERS will track hours of participation and issue necessary supportive services.

Monitoring Progress-The Assessment Counselor will contact all PREP participants and worksite supervisors no less than monthly to monitor the participant's progress, and to institute any early interventions that may be necessary to promote success. At least once every six months the Assessment Counselor will make an on-site visit to the PREP worksite to conduct a person-to-person interview with both the PREP participant and worksite supervisor to:

- Ensure worksite agreement compliance
- Determine the participant's progress
- Evaluate whether the worksite is meeting the participant's needs towards achieving their employment goals, and
- Problem solve, when necessary

Goodwill Industries Community Service Program

A participant will be placed in the Goodwill Industries Community Service Program if s/he:

- Has used more than 18 months on the WtW clock, or
- Has used less than 18 months on the WtW clock, but needs the full 32/35 hours in community service to meet the WtW requirements, and
- Agrees to participate in community service activities

Examples:

- 1) A client has used 10 months on the WtW clock, has attended WtW orientation, job club, and supervised job search, but has been unsuccessful in finding any employment. The Assessment Counselor and client determine that the best course of action is to participate in Community Service, if participation will most likely lead to unsubsidized employment. The EDP is written to reflect this agreement. Since this client needs the full 32/35 hours of WtW activities, a referral is made to Goodwill Industries Community Service Program.

- 2) The client has used 20 months of a 24-month WtW clock, and is attending an approved vocational program for 20 hours per week. S/he is unable to find employment for the remaining 12/15 hours per week. The client will be referred to Assessment to determine if Community Service will most likely lead to employment, and if so, include the activity in the EDP. Since this client has used more than 18 months on the WtW clock, s/he will be referred to Goodwill Industries Community Service Program.
- 3) The client's WtW clock has expired. S/he is currently following the mutually agreed upon WtW plan, but has failed to find unsubsidized employment to meet the required hours. The client will be referred to an Assessment Counselor to be certified that no job is currently available, and subsequently referred to Goodwill Industries Community Service Program.

Referral Process Summary-If the client meets any of the examples above, the Employment Resource Specialist (ERS) will make a referral to assessment. If certified, the Assessment Counselor will forward the client's EDP and send the referral to the Community Service Coordinator, who will send the referral, together with the EDP, and all pertinent information for a proper placement, to the Goodwill Industries Community Service Program.

Monitoring Progress-Goodwill Industries will maintain regular contact with the client, which will include verbal and written verification at least monthly, if not more often, with the community service worksite supervisor and the community service participant to evaluate performance, progress and monitor hours. Failure to attend without good cause is considered non-compliance.

If the client fails to participate in community service activities as agreed in the EDP, Goodwill Industries will contact the client, and notify the county Community Service Coordinator. The Community Service Coordinator will contact the ERS to initiate the sanction process.

SANCTION

Any participant assigned to participate in Community Service who fails to comply without good cause shall be sanctioned. Financial sanctions for failing or refusing to comply with program requirements without good cause shall result in a reduction in the family's grant by removing the non-complying family member from the assistance unit for a period of time as outlined in EAS Section 42-721.4.

The county shall restore aid upon expiration of the sanction period if the individual applies for aid, is determined to be in compliance with program requirements, and is otherwise eligible, or if the sanction is rescinded as a result of the outcome of a state hearing, or the formal grievance procedure.

CERTIFICATION

Clients who have exceeded the 18/24-month WtW time limit must participate in community service to receive aid and are subject to certification by an Assessment Counselor. The Assessment Counselor must certify on an individual basis there is no job currently available. The county defines *no job currently available* to mean that the recipient has taken and continues to take all the steps to apply for appropriate positions and has not refused an offer of employment without good cause. The county Assessment Counselor will determine whether the client meets this definition before certification.

REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS

Our existing PREP Program and the agreement we have with Goodwill Industries to provide a Community Service Program meet the requirements of Community Service described in MPP 42-710.5, 42-711.9, 42-716.4 and ACL 99-111, and AB1542, in that:

- Community service activity worksites will be limited to the public and/or private non-profit sector
- Job skills will be identified, developed and enhanced
- Progress will be reviewed as necessary to determine the participant's progress toward reaching the training goal
- Revisions shall be made as necessary to ensure that the assignment continues to be consistent with the participant's plan and is effective in preparing the participant to obtain employment
- Community service assignments will comply with nondisplacement provisions set forth in the Welfare & Institution (W&I) Code Section 11324.6 and EAS Section 42-720. Each service site organization will provide a written statement regarding displacement regulations. The statement will read as follows:

Your employer has included Community Service participants in the workforce at this location. Employers may not use Community Service participants in a way that will cause other employees to lose their job, to be laid off, or to have their work hours reduced, including overtime hours currently being worked. State law prohibits the county from creating any education, employment, or training program that result in any of the following:

1. Displacement or partial displacement of current employees including, but not limited to, a reduction in hours of non-overtime and overtime work, wages, or employment benefits.
2. The filling of positions that would be promotional opportunities for current employees, unless such promotions are routinely filled through an open process in which recipients are provided an opportunity to compete for the job.
3. The filling of a position prior to compliance with applicable personnel procedures or provisions of collective bargaining agreements.
4. The filling of established unfilled public agency positions, unless the positions are unfunded in a public agency budget.
5. The filling of a position created by termination, layoff, or reduction in work force, caused by the employer's intent to fill the position with a subsidized position.
6. A strike, lockout, or other bona fide labor dispute, or violation of any existing collective bargaining agreement between employees and employers.
7. The filling of a work assignment customarily performed by a worker in a job classification covered by a collective bargaining agreement in that specific worksite, or the filling of a work assignment in any bargaining unit in which funded positions are vacant or in which regular employees are on layoff.
8. The termination of a contract for services, before its expiration date, that displaces or partially displaces workers performing contracted services and which is caused by the employer's intent to fill the vacancy with a subsidized Welfare-to-Work participant.
9. The denial to a participant or employee of protections provided other workers on the worksite under state and federal workplace health, safety, and representation laws.

If you believe your employer has violated any of the rules discussed above and this has led to problems with your job, you may file a complaint with the county. Your employer will be provided with a copy of the letter of complaint. The county will work with your employer to try and resolve the problem. If the problem cannot be resolved, you may request a hearing with the State.

A complaint against your employer must be in writing and must contain the following information:

- Your full name, your address, and your telephone number;
- The full name and address of your employer;
- A clear and brief statement of the facts, including important dates, which have led you to file this complaint;
- A statement that this complaint has been filed under penalty of perjury.

Send your complaint to this address:

Solano County Health and Social Services Department
Employment Services Division
Community Service Coordinator, Ava Williams
301 Georgia Street, MS: 40-100, Vallejo, CA 94590

CSP PLAN COLLABORATION AND DETERMINATION OF COMMUNITY NEEDS

Collaborative planning of the Community Service Plan involved Solano County Health and Social Services and Goodwill Industries of the Greater East Bay. Goodwill staff and county assessment counselors will maintain regular communication regarding clients, and will be participants in the Community Service Program Team, which will meet regularly to oversee community service activities. The Community Service Program (CSP) Team will include representatives from Health and Social Services (H&SS), organized labor, recipients of aid, and government and community-based organizations providing job training and economic development. The purpose of this collaborative team will be to further develop program policies and procedures, including review of curriculum, worksite activities, and identification of community needs. This team will conduct a survey to identify the unmet community needs of public and private non-profit organizations in the area, and based on those findings provide an Unmet Community Needs report.

Prior to welfare reform, Solano County provided unpaid work experience through our PREP Program, and has continued to do so. By forming good working relationships, through interviews, questionnaires, and working with local government and non-profit organizations, the PREP Coordinator has identified local community needs for clerical, maintenance, groundskeeper, office assisting, childcare, and medical office assistant.

WORKSITE AND/OR JOB PLACEMENT

Every effort will be made to meet the needs of the community while placing the participant at the most suitable community service worksite. In addition to placement in community service activity worksites, Goodwill Industries will provide unsubsidized employment job placement services for clients at the point the participant's job skill level meets the job requirements.

OTHER ACTIVITIES

As part of the community service assignment, we may include instruction or training, on an individual basis, if it is required for, or relevant to the specific community service activity in which a recipient is placed. This instruction or training will be considered part of his/her community service assignment as outlined in ACL 99-111.

Examples:

- 1) An individual performing childcare duties as his/her community service activity may be allowed to attend child development classes as part of his/her community service activity, if the classes are required for all providers at the childcare site, and/or they will enhance the individual's ability to provide care.
- 2) An individual performing clerical support duties that require the use of a personal computer may be allowed to attend computer-training classes as part of his/her community service activity to obtain necessary computer skills.
- 3) A limited-English speaking individual performing parks and recreation aide duties may be allowed to attend Vocational English-as-a-Second-Language classes, as part of his/her community service activity, to enhance his/her ability to follow instructions and properly use equipment and supplies.

In addition, supportive efforts such as substance abuse treatment and/or mental health counseling and/or domestic abuse service treatment hours may count toward meeting the individual's work requirement if the treatment enables or supports the individual's participation in community service and is included in the EDP.

TERMS OF COMMUNITY SERVICE ACTIVITIES

Participants in Community Service are required to perform activities for a maximum of 32 hours for single parent households and 35 hours for two parent households. Placements are intended to be temporary and transitional. However, it is possible that community service participation could continue up to, but not to exceed the date the 60-month CalWORKs time limit expires. The community service participation may include different assignments and activities. The participant may graduate from unskilled to semi-skilled activities, eventually resulting in unsubsidized employment. It is the intent of the Solano County SolanoWORKs program to enable participants to transition into unsubsidized employment prior to reaching their maximum life time limit of 60 months. Unless exempt, participants may no longer receive CalWORKs once the 60-month CalWORKs clock has expired.

CHANGE IN ASSIGNMENT/REASSIGNMENT

On an individualized basis, if the participant shows slow progress in meeting the desired goals, the assignment location and/or activity may be moved to another worksite. This decision will be made jointly by the county Assessment Counselor, the client and the community service provider.

BREAK IN AID

If an individual has received aid for a cumulative period of more than 18 or 24 months, and returns to aid after a break in aid of at of at least one month, the county Assessment Counselor will review the case to decide whether the recipient will be required to participate in community service or in welfare-to-work activities. The individual's job history, behavioral/physical health, language/culture, education/aptitude, and social compatibility will be taken into account before deciding what course of action would most likely lead to self-supporting unsubsidized employment.

INFORMING

All participants will be given a Participant's Handbook and information regarding community service and the expectations of the county. The community service activity will be included in the Employment Development Plan. The authorized worksite representative will have signed the worksite agreement and the worksite supervisor will be given a Supervisor's Handbook.

The county provides a WtW Handbook to each recipient. This handbook informs the recipient of community service requirements.

The county publishes a monthly *Bridges* newsletter. Community Service Program information will be published in this newsletter on a quarterly basis.

SUPPORTIVE SERVICES

Childcare, transportation, ancillary, and personal counseling shall be provided to community service participants. If necessary supportive services are not provided, the recipient will have good cause for not participating. In addition, lack of supportive services creates barriers to employment and discourages the recipient from working towards becoming self-supporting.

Detailed procedures are outlined in the county PREP Policies & Procedures Manual and The Goodwill Industries Scope of Services, which may be provided upon request.

If you have any questions about the Solano County Community Service Plan please contact:

Ava E. Williams, Community Service Coordinator

301 Georgia Street, MS: 40-100

Vallejo, CA 94590

707-553-5696