

## DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

744 P Street, Sacramento, CA 95814



October 17, 2001

All County Letter No. 01-70

TO: ALL COUNTY WELFARE DIRECTORS  
ALL COUNTY WELFARE-TO-WORK  
COORDINATORS

SUBJECT: LEARNING DISABILITIES SCREENING  
AND EVALUATION IN THE CALIFORNIA WORK OPPORTUNITY AND  
RESPONSIBILITY TO KIDS (CalWORKs) PROGRAM

REFERENCE: ALL COUNTY LETTER NO. 98-41, 99-32, 99-80, and 01-42  
ALL COUNTY INFORMATION NOTICE NO. I-43-00 and I-116-00

The purpose of this letter is to transmit the protocols for screening and evaluating individuals with learning disabilities that were developed by the Advisory Workgroup on Learning Disabilities (see Enclosure). Counties must implement these changes as soon as possible (i.e., when appropriate staff have received training on the proper administration of the enclosed screening tool), but no later than March 15, 2002.

In early 2000, the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) established the Advisory Workgroup on Learning Disabilities to provide guidance and assistance to county welfare departments (CWDs) to improve services to CalWORKs participants with learning disabilities. The workgroup was comprised of key representatives from state agencies, CWDs, legislative staff, experts on learning disabilities and advocate groups. The workgroup's objectives were to make recommendations to CDSS on identifying and evaluating CalWORKs participants with suspected learning disabilities and examine alternatives, within existing CalWORKs statutes and regulations, to remove barriers that prevent individuals with learning disabilities from participating, to the fullest extent possible, in the CalWORKs Welfare-to-Work (WTW) program. Over the course of a year, the workgroup worked diligently and agreed upon the following:

- A definition of learning disability for the CalWORKs program;
- A protocol to screen all new and existing CalWORKs WTW participants for potential learning disabilities, which includes a recommendation for counties to use the "Learning Needs Screening" tool developed by the State of Washington;
- A protocol to refer CalWORKs WTW participants with potential learning disabilities for further evaluation, which includes a strategy for developing county resources to refer participants for evaluation or assistance; and

REASON FOR THIS TRANSMITTAL

- |                                     |   |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | State Law Change                                |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | Federal Law or Regulation Change                |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | Court Order or Settlement Agreement             |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | Clarification Requested by One or More Counties |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Initiated by CDSS                               |

- A recommended training plan to provide statewide “train-the-trainer” seminars to counties and/or their designated providers to educate workers and providers on use of the learning disabilities screening tool and the issues related to serving CalWORKs participants with learning disabilities.

(Please refer to the Enclosure for more details on the above-mentioned items.)

This implementation letter also incorporates key provisions from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office for Civil Rights’ (OCR) policy guidance to Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) agencies entitled, “Prohibition Against Discrimination on the Basis of Disability in the Administration of TANF” issued January 19, 2001. (Counties may obtain a copy of the policy guidance at <http://www/hhs/gov/ocr/prohibition.html>.) The OCR policy guidance states that up to 40 percent of the adult welfare population may have learning disabilities.

To comply with federal civil rights laws, a number of significant new requirements are included in this letter, some of which will be followed by changes in state regulations. The changes, which are discussed in more detail in the Enclosure, are as follows:

1. Mandatory screening for learning disabilities for all new and existing CalWORKs WTW participants by trained staff (participants may choose to decline the screening);
2. Use of a recommended learning disabilities screening tool that is widely recognized and validated;
3. Mandatory inclusion of learning disability evaluations when developing or amending WTW plans for CalWORKs participants with learning disabilities to determine appropriate accommodations and services;
4. Allowing fewer hours of participation in WTW activities when good cause exists based on a county’s determination that a condition or other circumstance temporarily prevents, or significantly impairs, an individual’s ability to be regularly employed or participate in WTW activities (refer to the good cause provisions in Manual of Policies and Procedures (MPP) Section 42-713.1);
5. Retrospective adjustment of the 18- and 24-month time clock for individuals with learning disabilities who participated in WTW activities in which they did not make satisfactory progress or find beneficial due to the lack of appropriate accommodations. The individuals affected by this change are those WTW participants who:
  - were not screened for learning disabilities before signing a WTW plan or were screened/evaluated and found to have learning disabilities, but their learning disability was not accommodated; and

- signed a WTW plan that did not fully consider the learning disability evaluation and/or need for reasonable accommodations;
6. Sharing the results from learning disabilities evaluations on inter-county transfers; and
  7. Determining the appropriateness of job search as a first activity for participants with verified learning disabilities.

This letter also clarifies when learning disabilities can be an exemption from WTW participation requirements and who can provide verification of a learning disability exemption.

### Screening

The enclosed Learning Needs Screening tool (please see Exhibit C (county copy) and Exhibit D (client copy)) was recommended for use in the counties by the workgroup. This screening tool was originally developed for use in the State of Washington for their TANF population and is nonproprietary. Counties may utilize other recognized and validated learning disabilities screening tools, if they wish, but their staff must be properly trained to administer them. Counties that choose to utilize a different screening tool from the one recommended by the Advisory Workgroup are asked to forward a copy of their preferred screening tool to:

California Department of Social Services  
Employment Bureau  
744 P Street, Mail Station 16-33  
Sacramento, California 95814  
ATTN: Yvonne Lee

The Department will be contracting with a qualified professional to provide regional “train-the-trainer” learning disabilities training to counties, which will include detailed instructions on how to administer the Learning Needs Screening tool. We anticipate that the training, which will be conducted on a regional basis, will start in January 2002 and conclude in February 2002. Rather than wait for the training, counties may choose to enter into contractual agreements with outside agencies that have staff trained to conduct learning disabilities screenings until county staff are fully trained. Or, counties may wish to provide training to their staff by directly contracting with a qualified professional trainer. Thus, some counties will be able to fully implement these instructions sooner than other counties. **Counties are cautioned not to utilize the Learning Needs Screening tool until appropriate staff are properly trained to administer it.**

Currently, there are no validated learning disabilities screening tools available for use with individuals whose primary language is other than English. Limited English proficient participants who are suspected of having a learning disability must be referred for evaluation, as required by MPP Section 42-711.58. As validated learning disabilities screening tools become available in other languages, counties will be notified so that

trained bilingual staff can administer the screening tool to participants in their primary language. CDSS and a small number of CWDs are participating in a federal study to test Spanish-language learning disabilities screening and evaluation tools, and the results from this study should be available in late 2002. The federal government also plans to test learning disabilities screening and evaluation tools in other languages sometime in the future.

We wish to acknowledge the Advisory Workgroup on Learning Disabilities for their valuable contributions in furthering the State's goal to address the employment barriers of the hardest-to-employ and to increase self-sufficiency of CalWORKs participants with learning disabilities. A number of county welfare departments were represented on the Workgroup and we thank them for their input and policy guidance.

We also wish to thank the counties of Kern, Orange, San Bernardino, San Diego, San Francisco, and Stanislaus for their participation in the important, yearlong study to test Spanish-language screening and evaluation tools. As learning disabilities screening tools in other languages are developed and tested, counties may be provided with the opportunity to participate in those studies as well.

If there are any questions concerning this letter, please contact Suzanne Nobles, Chief of the Employment Bureau, at (916) 653-7103, or Yvonne Lee, Unit Manager, at (916) 657-5039.

Sincerely,

***Original Document Signed By  
Bruce Wagstaff on 10/17/01***

BRUCE WAGSTAFF  
Deputy Director  
Welfare to Work Division

Enclosure

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## **I. Definition of Learning Disabilities**

*The following definition is based on a definition developed by the National Joint Committee on Learning Disabilities, and it was adapted for use as a working definition by the Advisory Workgroup on Learning Disabilities.*

“A heterogeneous group of disorders manifested by significant difficulties in the acquisition and use of listening, speaking, reading, writing, reasoning or mathematical abilities.

These disorders are intrinsic to the individual and presumed to be due to central nervous system dysfunction. Even though a learning disability may occur concomitantly with other handicapping conditions (e.g., sensory or mental impairment); or environmental retardation, social and/or emotional disturbance influences (e.g., cultural differences, insufficient/inappropriate instruction, psychogenic factors); it is not the direct result of those conditions or influences.

These disorders interfere with the participant’s ability to obtain or retain employment or enter and participate in the CalWORKs program.”

## II. Clarification of Terminology

### A. Screening

Screening is the first step towards identifying individuals with suspected learning disabilities. It involves the use of a recognized and validated learning disabilities screening tool that is administered by designated individuals who have been trained on how to properly administer the tool. All individuals who receive a score on the screening tool that indicates a possible learning disability must be referred for further evaluation (see Section II.B below). Individual judgement should not be substituted for the screening tool outcome.

Since no screening tool is 100 percent accurate, counties should observe the participant for other indications of potential learning disabilities, particularly if the results of the screening tool do not indicate the presence of a potential learning disability. Exhibit A is a listing of “Characteristics and Manifestations of Individuals with Possible Learning Disabilities” developed by Payne and Associates, Inc. that counties may use as a reference tool for this purpose.

### B. Evaluation

An “evaluation” is the process of determining whether an individual has learning disabilities and/or other co-existing disorders. It is described as follows in the Manual of Policies and Procedures (MPP) Section 42-711.58:

“A participant with a suspected learning or medical problem ... shall be referred to an evaluation. This evaluation shall be performed by a professional whose training qualifies them to determine whether the participant is unable to successfully complete or benefit from a current or proposed activity assignment....”

Refer to Section IV for the types of tests that should be administered in the evaluation process.

### C. Diagnosis

A diagnosis is the formal identification of the specific nature of a learning disability and/or co-existing disorder that could extend beyond the testing and measuring of aptitudes, performance, and vocational interests that are associated with a learning disabilities evaluation. Only a highly trained individual such as a psychologist, clinical psychologist, school psychologist, or psychiatrist may perform a diagnosis. It is recommended that a diagnosis, rather than a learning disabilities evaluation, be obtained when formal documentation of an accommodation is needed or the participant presents significant or multiple impairments.

#### D. Accommodations

Reasonable accommodations are modifications and adjustments that make it possible for a qualified individual with a disability to apply for or perform the essential functions of a job or to participate in assigned WTW activities. The CWD, and any service providers contracted by the CWD with CalWORKs monies, must make reasonable modifications of their services to accommodate CalWORKs participants who have a disability, including a learning disability. The accommodations should be specific to an individual's needs and must be provided free of cost to the recipient by the CWD and any service providers contracted directly or indirectly by the CWD. (Information on accommodations will be provided to counties at the learning disabilities training.)

When an individual is identified with a learning disability, the county and the individual will review the written learning disabilities evaluation and discuss the types of jobs or other WTW activities that might best match the individual's skills while working around his/her limitations. The written evaluation should include a range of reasonable accommodations for the individual.

In making an employment referral or assigning an activity, the county is required to comply with MPP Section 21-109 (Discriminatory Practices Prohibited). The county must provide a participant who has learning disabilities with an opportunity to participate in WTW activities through the provision of services that are comparable to those provided to a non-disabled participant. The county cannot deny access to an activity because of a participant's disability. For example, a county cannot eliminate education or training as an assigned WTW activity simply because a participant has a learning disability. In determining appropriate activities for a participant, the county must integrate the results from the participant's individualized assessment as well as the learning disabilities evaluation.

In determining which, if any, accommodations are needed to successfully perform a job or WTW activity, the individual's abilities and limitations must be considered relative to the specific requirements of the job or WTW activity. It may also be helpful to identify successful strategies the individual has used in the past at school and/or in other work settings that could be applied to new activities. Exhibit E offers some strategies that an employer may use with employees who have learning disabilities and some common assistive technologies and accommodations that might be provided to these employees. Similar accommodations may be needed for participation in WTW activities.

Under the Americans with Disabilities Act, an employer does not have to provide a reasonable accommodation to an individual with a disability if it would impose an undue hardship on the operation of the business. However, if a particular accommodation would impose an undue hardship, the employer must consider whether alternative accommodations are available that would not impose the hardship. Undue hardship is defined as an action that requires significant difficulty

or expense in relation to the size of the employer, the resources available, and the nature of the operation. Similarly, CWDs and their contractors must provide reasonable accommodations to individuals with disabilities to access their services, unless doing so would fundamentally change the nature of the service. (Information on when accommodations are and are not required will be provided to the counties at the learning disabilities training.)

#### Client disclosure of a disability and self-advocacy

The choice of whether to disclose a disability is up to the individual, and the individual is not required to disclose it unless s/he wants to request an accommodation. For many people, this level of self-advocacy may be uncomfortable and could be problematic when it comes to looking for a job or handling difficulties on the job.

To self-advocate successfully, an individual needs to know:

- His/her rights under the law;
- Facts about his/her disability;
- Essential and marginal job functions of jobs s/he is interested in;
- Potential accommodations that would allow performance of the essential job functions;
- Ways to approach employers that will encourage positive results; and
- Free resources that can assist an employee and/or the employer in developing a reasonable accommodation (e.g., the Job Accommodation Network at 1-800-526-7234 or the Pacific Disability and Business Technical Assistance Center at 1-800-949-4232).

(Tips on teaching clients to be self-advocates will be included in the learning disabilities training to counties.)

### III. Protocol to Screen Participants for Potential Learning Disabilities

#### A. Who Will Be Screened?

##### 1. All new CalWORKs Welfare-to-Work (WTW) participants:

All new CalWORKs WTW enrollees must be screened for potential learning disabilities at appraisal.

In determining when to administer the learning disabilities screening tool, counties are reminded of the requirements in MPP Section 42-711.523, which state:

*“...during the appraisal, the individual shall provide information about their employment history and skill, the need for supportive services, and any other relevant information the county welfare department (CWD) requires in order to assign welfare-to-work activities appropriately.”* [Italics added.]

##### 2. Existing CalWORKs WTW participants:

Existing WTW participants, who have not previously been screened, must be screened for potential learning disabilities either at the annual CalWORKs eligibility redetermination or at any earlier point when:

- a. Individuals request a screening, self-identify as having a suspected learning disability (e.g., were previously in special education in K-12 school), or seem to have auditory or visual difficulty processing information;
- b. Individuals are in the good cause determination, compliance, or sanction processes;
- c. Individuals fail to maintain satisfactory progress in their WTW activities, including employment, or fail to progress in their assigned activities;
- d. The county worker or WTW contractor suspects an individual may have a learning disability; or
- e. There are any other situations in which individuals appear to have suspected learning disabilities.

The county may also screen those individuals who fail to progress in their post-cash aid employment.

##### 3. Participants with limited English proficiency (LEP)

Currently, the existing recognized learning disabilities screening tools are validated only in English and can only be used for participants whose primary

language is English. Screening tools must be recognized and validated linguistically and culturally in the other languages before they can be utilized. As validated screening tools in other languages become available, CDSS will make them available to the counties. Therefore, counties must not attempt to translate an English-language screening tool for learning disabilities into other languages or utilize bilingual staff to translate it for LEP participants. However, counties must provide access to comparable learning disability screening and evaluation services for the LEP CalWORKs WTW population when it is suspected that a learning disability exists. Accordingly, counties must use alternative processes, such as referring a LEP participant to a qualified, bilingual professional for a learning disabilities evaluation. The criteria noted in Section III, A.2.a through e may be helpful in assessing whether to refer an LEP client for a learning disabilities evaluation.

B. Participants may decline the learning disabilities screening/evaluation

The county must not sanction a participant solely on the basis of his/her refusal to be screened/evaluated for learning disabilities. Instead, when a participant is hesitant to be screened/evaluated or declines a screening/evaluation, the county must offer an explanation of the following:

- the right to have or decline a learning disabilities screening/evaluation;
- the benefits of a learning disabilities evaluation (e.g., their right to ask for reasonable accommodations if a learning disability is verified); and
- the consequences for not meeting the WTW participation requirements.

To help put the client at ease about the learning disabilities screening/evaluation, the county should offer an explanation regarding:

- the indicators/facts of a learning disability (e.g., the difference between learning disabilities and mental retardation);
- the areas that will be tested (e.g., aptitudes, information processing, achievement, and vocational interests), who will perform the testing, and how long the evaluations can be expected to last; and
- the types of reasonable accommodations that are available (e.g., information on adaptive technology and work accommodations).

(Additional information on these topics will be provided to counties at the learning disabilities training.)

Should the participant decline the learning disabilities screening and/or evaluation, then the county will inform the participant that:

- his/her WTW plan activities will not reflect any accommodations for a learning disability; and

- s/he may ask for a learning disabilities screening and/or evaluation at a later time. If, at a later time, a learning disability is identified, the WTW plan will be modified to provide appropriate services and accommodations associated with the learning disability on a prospective basis only.

The county must provide Form WTW 17, Waiver of CalWORKs Learning Disabilities Screening and/or Evaluation (see Exhibit B), to the participant if s/he declines the screening and/or evaluation. The county should give the form to the participant in an appropriate accessible format (refer to ACIN 1-23-01 for further guidance on availability of forms in accessible format and ACL No. 01-42 on serving individuals with disabilities in the TANF program) to read along silently while the county worker reads it aloud to the participant. If, after explaining the information on the form, the participant still declines the learning disabilities screening and/or evaluation, the county will ask the participant to sign the form and give him/her a copy of the signed form.

C. Which learning disabilities screening tool will be used?

Only recognized and validated learning disabilities screening tools can be utilized. The Learning Needs Screening tool, Forms WTW 18 and WTW 19 (see Exhibits C and D), is the recommended tool that counties may use; it is short and simple for trained county staff to administer. This tool includes additional health-related questions to identify other possible medical conditions that may co-exist with learning disabilities that would also need to be evaluated. Counties have the option of utilizing other recognized and validated learning disabilities screening tools, but it will be the counties' responsibility to ensure that their staff are properly trained to administer them before implementing their use. (Training costs on the use of other validated screening tools are to be paid from a county's existing CalWORKs single allocation.) Counties that choose to utilize a different screening tool are asked to forward a copy of their preferred screening tool to CDSS' Employment Bureau at 744 P Street, Sacramento, CA 95814.

If the results of the county's learning disabilities screening and/or observations indicate that the participant has possible learning disabilities or other medical conditions that may be an employment barrier, the county must:

1. Refer the participant to the appropriate medical or service provider to address any concerns identified on the screening tool's health-related questions, as appropriate. (The learning disabilities training will include guidance to the counties on what steps to take depending on the answers provided by participants to the health inquiries.)
2. Ask the participant to provide any records of previous learning disabilities evaluations, attendance in special education, or medical condition(s), and, with the client's written consent, the county will forward the records to the learning disabilities evaluator for consideration. (Counties must assist participants in

obtaining this information if they appear to have problems in obtaining it on their own.)

Please note that Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (AD/HD) and learning disabilities can be co-existing disorders. In such cases, it is difficult to address the individual's learning disorder without addressing the individual's AD/HD. If the participant responds positively to the AD/HD question on the Learning Needs Screening tool, the county will need to explore this issue further (i.e., determine whether treatment is being received for the AD/HD and, if needed, make a referral to the individual's physician or mental health professional pursuant to MPP Section 42-711.56).

D. Who will provide the learning disabilities screening?

An individualized screening for potential learning disabilities will be conducted by a designated worker who has:

1. The training to appropriately administer the screening tool; and
2. To the degree possible, a working relationship with the participant.

It is the responsibility of each county to determine who will administer the learning disabilities screening tool (e.g., employment case managers, social workers, eligibility workers, contracted providers, etc.). Counties may contract with trained, qualified professionals to administer both the learning disabilities screening tool and evaluation tests.

#### **IV. Protocol for Referring Participants for Learning Disabilities Evaluations**

A. What is the referral process for a WTW participant with suspected learning disabilities, and when will they be referred?

1. As required under MPP Section 42-711.58, counties must refer for learning disabilities evaluation those CalWORKs participants who have a suspected learning disability. This includes, but is not limited to, those individuals who:
  - a. have a positive rating for potential learning disabilities based on the learning disabilities screening tool;
  - b. were previously identified as having learning problems (e.g., K-12 Special Education); or
  - c. are suspected of having a learning disability even though the results from the learning disabilities screening did not indicate a potential learning disability.
2. The referral for learning disabilities evaluation should take place as soon as administratively feasible after the learning disabilities screening indicates a potential learning disability.
3. The learning disabilities evaluation should take place either before or concurrently with the assessment process.

B. Participants may decline a learning disabilities evaluation

See Section III.B for procedures to follow when a participant declines a learning disabilities evaluation.

C. Who will do the learning disabilities evaluation and which providers should the county utilize?

1. The CalWORKs statute at Welfare and Institutions Code Section 11325.25 requires that CalWORKs recipients with suspected learning disabilities be referred for a learning disabilities evaluation.
2. MPP Section 42-711.58 requires counties to refer a participant with suspected learning or medical problems to a qualified, trained professional for an evaluation. Participants will be referred to locally identified professionals who are trained and qualified to conduct tests to identify learning disabilities and determine appropriate accommodations for individuals with learning disabilities. This may include, but is not limited to, the following, as appropriate:

- a. county staff or county-designated professionals who have the necessary training as a learning disabilities specialist or qualified professional who can administer and interpret the recommended learning disabilities tests described in Section IV.E below (the evaluation may be conducted as part of the CalWORKs assessment process),
  - b. trained and qualified staff at community/state colleges or universities,
  - c. professional private/corporate contractors or providers,
  - d. trained and qualified staff from community-based organizations that serve individuals with learning disabilities,
  - e. trained and qualified staff from an adult educational facility, or
  - f. staff from the Department of Rehabilitation.
3. Each county must develop resources to refer clients for learning disabilities evaluations and, as necessary, enter into agreements with qualified service professionals who specialize in performing evaluations for learning disabilities. Counties may wish to enter into regional contracts with other counties for professional services when there are limited resources, such as bilingual professionals, in their counties.

D. Strategies for developing learning disabilities resources

The county should develop a list of learning disabilities resources that can be used to refer CalWORKs participants for learning disability evaluations and/or assistance with issues related to learning disabilities.

1. Factors to consider in developing a learning disabilities resource list include:
  - a. acceptable qualifications/credentials of the provider which establishes that s/he has the necessary training to administer and interpret learning disabilities tests, such as the ones recommended in Section IV.E below;
  - b. number of participants to be served and the provider's capacity to serve them; and
  - c. cost of the learning disability evaluation or service.
2. Possible sources that counties may contact to develop resource lists include, but are not limited to, the following:
  - a. local city/county public schools,
  - b. local offices for the Superintendent of Schools,

- c. local county offices of education,
- d. associations specializing in learning disabilities (e.g., educational therapists),
- e. support groups,
- f. community colleges/universities,
- g. private specialists/corporations,
- h. Department of Rehabilitation,
- i. adult schools,
- j. mental health agencies, and
- k. community-based organizations that serve individuals with learning disabilities.

3. Counties are encouraged to share their resource lists with other counties.

E. What types of tests will be used in the learning disabilities evaluation?

Specific Testing Instruments

Only validated testing instruments can be used in the determination of a suspected learning disability. The learning disabilities evaluator shall use basic instruments to measure the following areas:

- Aptitudes/information processing, e.g., Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale (WAIS), Woodcock-Johnson;
- Achievement, e.g., Wide Range Achievement Test (WRAT 3), Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE), Nelson-Denny (reading); and
- Vocational interests, as needed, to assist in the development of the WTW plan.

The type of tests administered are at the discretion of the learning disabilities evaluator's professional judgement and should match, to the extent possible, a participant's goals. For example, if obtaining a General Education Diploma (GED) is a participant's goal, then the learning disabilities evaluation should include the appropriate tests to identify the services and accommodations needed for the participant to attain his/her goal.

The results of the learning disabilities evaluation should be taken into consideration during the CalWORKs assessment process and used to help develop the WTW plan. In those situations when the evaluation is conducted by someone other than the CalWORKs assessment worker, the worker will need to collaborate with the evaluator and utilize the results from the learning disabilities evaluation and CalWORKs assessment to develop the best WTW plan for the individual.

F. What kind of information should be included in the written learning disabilities evaluation report?

1. Core Information:

- a. relevant vocational/educational background and history;
- b. general aptitude/cognitive level;
- c. other issues, e.g., physical/mental problems;
- d. areas of strength;
- e. areas of deficit;
- f. range of recommended accommodations/assistive technology for the participant's WTW plan; and
- g. summary (including severity of disability; areas of potential impact; rationale for learning disabilities determination/diagnosis; and recommendations for additional services, as appropriate).

2. Optional Information:

- a. identification of local resources;
- b. documentation of accommodation/assistive technology needs for other purposes (e.g., driver's license exam, GED exam); and
- c. discussion of participant's short/long-term employment goals and general/specific vocational recommendations, to the extent that the evaluator feels qualified to address these issues. (If the learning disabilities evaluator does not include this information on the client's written evaluation, the county will need to ensure that these issues are addressed in the assessment process.)

G. What must the county do with the written learning disabilities evaluation?

1. The county must review the written learning disabilities evaluation to determine if there are any learning disabilities or other disabilities.
2. If the written learning disabilities evaluation establishes that the participant does not have a learning disability, then the county must inform the participant of the findings and the participant will begin/resume the activities specified in his/her WTW plan.
3. If the written learning disabilities evaluation establishes that the participant has a learning disability, the county must:
  - a. Ensure that the assessment tests have been administered and the results from the assessment tests and the learning disabilities evaluation are integrated into the WTW plan, which is developed jointly with the client.

- b. Provide a copy and an explanation of the evaluation test results to the participant, including any recommendations for reasonable accommodation(s) identified in the evaluation. Whenever possible, it is recommended that the learning disabilities evaluator be included in the discussion to answer questions and receive feedback from the participant.
- c. Discuss the appropriate WTW activities and reasonable accommodations needed to help the participant be successful in his/her WTW activities. The county must exercise caution to not limit the range of services or WTW activities simply due to a participant's learning disabilities.
- d. Develop or modify the WTW plan to reflect appropriate WTW activities and necessary reasonable accommodations based on the mutual agreement of the county and the participant.

The costs of providing necessary accommodations may be paid for with CalWORKs funds as a supportive service. The county and the participant should also consider other funding sources to pay for needed accommodations, such as a community college if the participant is enrolled in the college, employers if the participant is working, or U.S. Department of Labor Welfare-to-Work Grant or Workforce Investment Act (WIA) funds if the participant meets the eligibility criteria for those programs. To the extent that they are available, WTW Grant and WIA funds may also be used to pay for learning disability evaluations for program-eligible participants.

- e. If the learning disability is confirmed during an individual's good cause determination or compliance process, the county will consult with the learning disabilities evaluator to determine if the disability contributed to the participant's failure to participate. If so, the participant shall be considered to have good cause and shall not be sanctioned. The county will also review the WTW plan and modify it in accordance with sections IV.G.I.3.a through d above.
  - f. If the learning disability is confirmed for an individual who is attempting to cure his/her sanction, the county will determine whether the learning disability was a contributing factor to the participant's noncompliance. If so, the county will rescind the sanction and issue any benefits to which the individual is eligible. The county will also review the WTW plan and modify it in accordance with sections IV.G.I.3.a through d above.
4. If the written learning disabilities evaluation indicates that the participant may have a physical, mental, developmental or behavioral condition, with or without a co-existing learning disability, that could affect the participant's ability to successfully participate, then the county must:
- a. Discuss the findings with the participant;

- b. Refer the participant for evaluation and treatment of the other conditions, as appropriate; and
  - c. Develop a Welfare-to-Work plan and provide appropriate accommodations for verified disabilities, as discussed in Section IV.G. 3 above.
5. In addition to providing the written evaluation, the county must also provide the participant with written documentation that s/he can present to employer(s), schools, etc. as verification of his/her learning disability and need for reasonable accommodations and/or services.

#### H. Consultations with learning disabilities specialists

After a county receives an individual's written learning disabilities evaluation, counties may have questions or concerns about it. Such concerns may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Are additional tests needed?
- How significant is the individual's learning disability and will it affect his/her ability to participate in WTW activities?
- Are the participant's proposed or current WTW activities appropriate?
- What types of accommodations, assistive technologies or services does the client need to successfully participate in WTW activities?
- Are there suspected co-existing disorders?
- What types of local learning disabilities resources are available to help the client?

When these questions or concerns arise, a county should consult with a learning disabilities specialist, preferably the same evaluator who had completed a participant's learning disabilities evaluation, and take appropriate action as needed.

#### I. Appeal Rights

Pursuant to MPP Section 42-711.582, a participant must be involved in the decisions made during the learning disabilities evaluation and will have the same right to appeal through the state hearing process, as specified in MPP Section 42-721.5, as other program participants.

Similarly, if a participant states that discrimination occurred during the learning disabilities evaluation, s/he may file a discrimination complaint in accordance with MPP Section 21-203. Instances for filing the complaint could include, but are not limited to, situations in which:

- the test administrator appeared to be biased, and/or

- the test results:
  - appear to be biased (e.g., the test instruments used had contained cultural biases),
  - are invalid (e.g., improper procedures were used in administering the tests), or
  - are incorrect (i.e., the scores recorded in the report were calculated differently from the original scores).

## V. Other Significant Policy Changes and Clarifications

The following policy changes are effective immediately, some of which will be followed with amended state regulations.

### A. Determining the appropriateness of job search as a first activity

CalWORKs WTW program regulations specify that job search is generally the first activity to which counties assign participants after appraisal (refer to MPP Section 42-711.532). However, in accordance with MPP Section 42-711.531(a), exceptions to this requirement include cases in which the county determines that participation in job search will not be beneficial for an individual. Recipients who fall under this exception, such as some individuals with learning disabilities, should not be required to participate in job search as their first CalWORKs activity. Therefore, counties must screen new applicants at appraisal for potential learning disabilities.

In determining whether job search is beneficial for an individual with a verified learning disability, a county must consider, at a minimum, all of the following factors on a case-by-case basis:

1. The employability skills of the individual;
2. Whether available jobs in demand occupations in the local area are suitable to the individual's level of skills;
3. The individual's employment history and the effect that learning disabilities may have had on the individual's work history (e.g., numerous short-term, low-wage jobs); and
4. Whether the individual is aware of the types of jobs and job-settings in which s/he can likely obtain and retain employment.

When the county determines that job search will not be beneficial for an individual with a verified learning disability, the county should advise the individual of the reasons for this determination and promptly refer the individual to assessment and learning disabilities evaluation, if not already initiated. However, individuals may always choose to participate in job search, even if the county has determined that job search is not likely to be beneficial.

If the county determines that job search may be an appropriate first activity, counties should inform each participant with verified learning disabilities, orally and in writing, that the job search period may be shortened if it proves not to be beneficial, and the process for shortening the job search period. This should be done prior to, or at the start of, job search.

Once an individual is placed in job search either as a volunteer or as required by the county, s/he will be subject to the same requirements and have the same rights as other job search participants.

B. Fewer hours of participation

A written learning disabilities evaluation may include a recommendation that an individual with a verified learning disability be temporarily assigned to fewer hours of participation as a reasonable accommodation. Counties may allow fewer hours of participation in WTW activities when good cause exists based on a county's determination that a condition or other circumstance temporarily prevents, or significantly impairs, an individual's ability to be regularly employed or participate in WTW activities (refer to good cause provisions in MPP Section 42-713.1).

Counties, however, should first explore with the individual any options that would allow fewer hours of participation in the individual's primary activity, supplemented with hours in other allowable activities, that will enable the individual to meet his/her work participation requirements. Any supplemental activities must support the participant's employment goals and must be consistent with his/her learning disabilities evaluation and WTW plan. These activities may include, but are not limited to, remedial training, literacy tutoring, and if allowable under the county's CalWORKs plan or as a reasonable accommodation, study time for participants who are in non-self-initiated educational programs.

Counties are reminded that good cause does not stop the 18- and 24-month time clock. (Refer to Section V.F for discussion on when it would be appropriate to exempt an individual with learning disabilities from WTW participation requirements.)

C. Retrospective adjustment of the 18- and 24-month time clock

As discussed earlier, information from an individual's learning disability evaluation is critical to his/her assessment process, WTW plan development, and subsequent WTW assignment. Prior to the counties' implementation of these protocols, individuals with learning disabilities may have signed WTW plans and participated in WTW activities without the appropriate accommodations. Consequently, there are individuals who participated in WTW activities, but were not afforded the opportunity to develop an appropriate WTW plan that took into consideration their learning disabilities and need for appropriate activities, services, and accommodations. There are also participants who may have been previously screened, evaluated, and found to have learning disabilities, but were not afforded reasonable accommodations in their WTW activities. In both instances, these individuals may have inappropriately accumulated time on their 18- and 24-month time clocks.

To account for these situations, counties must retrospectively adjust an individual's 18- or 24-month time clock when the individual meets all of the following criteria:

1. Has a verified learning disability; **and**
2. One of the following applies:
  - a. Was not screened and evaluated for learning disabilities before signing the WTW plan; **or**
  - b. Was screened by the county, evaluated, and found to have a learning disability; **and**
3. Signed a WTW plan and participated in WTW activities, but without appropriate accommodations for his/her learning disabilities; **and**
4. Did not make satisfactory progress or benefit from the WTW activities.

When these four factors are present, the county will adjust the individual's 18- or 24-month time clock as follows:

- Amend the WTW plan to include appropriate WTW activities, services and/or accommodations;
- Credit back one full month to the 18- or 24-month time clock for every partial or full month that the individual participated in WTW activities without appropriate accommodations and did not make satisfactory progress or benefit from his or her WTW activities; and
- Provide the individual with written notice on the number of months credited back to his/her 18- or 24-month WTW time clock, the number of months remaining on his/her 18- or 24-month time clock, and the reason for the adjustment (see Exhibit F, Notice of Adjustment of the 18- or 24-Month Welfare-to-Work Time Clock, Form WTW 21).

Individuals who refuse to be screened, evaluated, or accommodated are not eligible for an adjustment of their 18- or 24-month time clock. Existing CalWORKs policies governing the 60-month time limit are unaffected by the policy changes to the 18- and 24-month time clock discussed in this section.

Example:

An individual with a signed WTW plan was not previously screened for learning disabilities. The individual's approved WTW activity is to attend a community college to become a Certified Nurse Assistant, but no accommodations were identified and she did not receive any accommodations in school. The individual continues to struggle through her classes to keep up with the coursework, is falling behind in her classes and is receiving failing grades.

The county screens the individual for possible learning disabilities since she is not progressing in her WTW activity and refers her for a learning disabilities evaluation. The written evaluation verifies that the individual has learning disabilities (i.e., auditory processing problems) and requires the services of a note-taker, written instructions, and more time to take tests. The county determines that since the individual's learning disabilities were not identified before she signed the WTW plan and she did not progress in her WTW activities, as indicated by her failing grades, and she was not provided appropriate accommodations, the individual's 18-month clock needs to be adjusted.

The county will credit back all the months the individual spent in the WTW activity prior to the determination that the individual has a learning disability that needs to be accommodated. In addition, the county will amend the WTW plan to incorporate information from the written learning disabilities evaluation, including the accommodations that need to be provided. The county will also issue a written notice (Form WTW 21) advising the individual of the number of months credited back to her 18-month WTW time clock, the number of months remaining on her time clock, and the reason for the adjustment.

D. Inter-county transfers

When a WTW participant with an identified learning disability moves from one county to another, the county must, with the client's written permission, forward to the receiving county a copy of the written learning disabilities evaluation. Upon receipt of the written evaluation, the receiving county will develop a WTW plan or amend the existing WTW plan and determine appropriate activities, services, and accommodations using information from the written learning disabilities evaluation and information obtained through discussions with the client.

E. Confidentiality of medical records and learning disabilities evaluation

Counties are reminded that medical records and written learning disabilities evaluations must be treated as confidential documents and should be shared with counties, other learning disabilities evaluators, outside agencies, and WTW partner agencies on a "need-to-know" basis. Counties must use Form WTW 20, Permission to Release Learning Disabilities Information (see Exhibit G), to obtain the participant's written consent to share this information with individuals outside of the CWD.

F. Clarification of when a learning disability can be an exemption from the WTW participation requirements

Generally, individuals with learning disabilities are able to meet WTW participation requirements when the learning disabilities are properly identified and necessary accommodations and/or assistive technologies are provided.

However, there are some individuals who have learning disabilities (alone or in combination with other disabilities) that are so severe that they significantly impair the individual's ability to be regularly employed or participate in WTW activities. In such instances, the county would exempt such individuals from the participation requirements on a case-by-case basis if verification of the impairment(s) is provided by a health care professional who is licensed by the State to diagnose/treat physical and/or mental impairments (refer to MPP Sections 42-712.44 and 42-701.2(d)(2) for the criteria to exempt an individual based on disability).

Please note that health care professionals, such as Licensed Clinical Social Workers and Licensed Marriage and Family Therapists are qualified to provide verification of a learning disability exemption to the extent that they are licensed by the state and are specialized in diagnosing and treating learning disabilities. The county will need to determine, on a case-by-case basis, whether a specific licensed professional has the qualifications to diagnose and treat learning disabilities. On the other hand, Disabled Student Program Specialists (DSPS) at the local colleges and universities are not licensed and are precluded under state law from verifying a disability exemption. DSPS are, however, qualified to conduct learning disability evaluations.

## VI. Forms

Several new forms and an informing notice to be used by the counties are enclosed with this letter. Most of these forms and the informing notice are referenced in earlier sections of this letter. All of the new forms and the notice are briefly discussed below.

- **Waiver of CalWORKs Learning Disabilities Screening and/or Evaluation, WTW 17** (Exhibit B). This form is to be read aloud by the county worker to the client when s/he is reluctant to be screened or evaluated for learning disabilities. If a client is apprehensive about the screening and/or evaluation process, the county should put the person at ease by offering information regarding the nature of learning disabilities, the type and length of tests generally used for the evaluations, and who conducts the screening/evaluation. If the client still declines the screening or evaluation after the form has been read and explained, the county will have the client sign the form and give him/her a copy.
- **Learning Needs Screening (County Copy), WTW 18** (Exhibit C). This form is to be completed by the designated county worker who will administer the learning disabilities screening tool. The worker must read the form aloud to the client and should not allow the client to complete the form by himself/herself.
- **Learning Needs Screening (Client Copy), WTW 19** (Exhibit D). The questions on this form are identical to the county's copy of the screening tool and are in larger size print with additional white space. This form is to be provided to the client to read along during the learning disabilities screening process.
- **Permission to Release Learning Disabilities Information, WTW 20** (Exhibit F). Before a county worker can obtain or release a written learning disabilities evaluation, the client's permission must first be obtained. This form contains several sections:
  - The top section of this form allows the CWD to obtain a copy of the written evaluation or tests from the learning disabilities evaluator to whom the individual has been referred. The county should complete this form with the client when the client is referred to a learning disabilities evaluator. The information can only be used for the purpose of developing or amending the client's WTW plan and/or obtaining employment-related services and/or job training for the client.
  - The middle section of this form allows the CWD to release learning disabilities-related or medical records provided by the individual, the written learning disabilities evaluation report, or related tests to:
    - Professionals who are involved in the learning disabilities evaluation;
    - The new receiving county when an individual moves to a different county;

- Other state and/or local employment or job training agencies, such as Employment Development Department, One-Stop Centers, Local Workforce Investment Areas, the Department of Rehabilitation, or local/state/private colleges who may be providing employment-related or job training services and who need to know about the learning disabilities to determine appropriate activities or provide appropriate services/accommodations; and/or
- Other agencies that need information on the individual's learning disabilities in order to provide appropriate services and accommodations to the individual.

To be valid, the county cannot alter any sections of the form after it has been signed by the individual. The individual must give his/her express consent before any information can be released to other learning disabilities evaluators, outside agencies, and WTW partner agencies. The signed authorization form expires one year from the date it is signed by the individual, and the client may void the authorization at any time.

- **Notice of Adjustment of the 18- or 24-Month Welfare-to-Work Time Clock, WTW 21** (Exhibit G). This notice is to be completed and issued to a client whenever the county adjusts the client's 18- or 24-month time clock for the reasons described in Section V.C. The county must verbally read/explain the notice to the client.

### Implementation

The forms are under review by the CalWORKs Forms Committee. When finalized, the forms will be printed and made available through the CDSS Warehouse. A separate ACIN and camera-ready copies of the final forms will be issued when they are finalized. As indicated earlier in this ACL, counties are cautioned not to utilize the Learning Needs Screening tool until their staff are properly trained to administer it.

The Learning Needs Screening tool will not be translated into other languages since it is validated for use only in the English language. As screening tools for learning disabilities in other languages are validated and become available, CDSS will advise the counties.

Counties are not permitted to substitute language on the following forms:

- the 13 core questions on page two of the Learning Needs Screening (county copy);
- the Waiver of CalWORKs Learning Disabilities Screening and/or Evaluation; and
- Permission to Release Learning Disabilities Information.

### Camera-Ready Copies and Translations

After counties receive camera-ready copies of the English forms, they should allow six to eight weeks for the forms to be translated and mailed to their CalWORKs Forms Coordinators. Language Translation Services (LTS) will mail camera-ready copies of the following forms in Spanish, Vietnamese, Chinese, and Russian:

- Waiver of CalWORKs Learning Disabilities Screening and/or Evaluation,
- Notice of Adjustment of the 18- or 24-Month Welfare-to-Work Time Clock, and
- Permission to Release Learning Disabilities Information.

Counties do not need to initially request the forms from LTS. To order additional camera-ready forms in Spanish, Vietnamese, Chinese, or Russian, counties must send requests to LTS by fax at (916) 657-3429 or by e-mail to [LTS@dss.ca.gov](mailto:LTS@dss.ca.gov).

For additional camera-ready copies of English forms, please call the Forms Management Unit (FMU) at (916) 657-1907. If your office has Internet access, you may obtain various forms from the CDSS web pages at [www.dss.cahwnet.gov](http://www.dss.cahwnet.gov). FMU is currently in the process of making forms available on the Internet. If the name, mailing address or e-mail address of your CalWORKs/Welfare to Work Forms Coordinator changes, please contact FMU by telephone at (916) 654-1282 or by e-mail to [fmu@dss.ca.gov](mailto:fmu@dss.ca.gov).

Your CalWORKs Forms Coordinator is to distribute translated forms and messages to each program and location. Each county shall provide bilingual/interpretive services and written translations to non-English or limited-English proficient populations as required by the Dymally-Alatorre Bilingual Services Act (Government Code Section 7290 et seq.) and by State regulations in MPP Section 21-115.

Adapted from Materials Provided by Payne & Associates, Inc.

**CHARACTERISTICS AND MANIFESTATIONS  
of Individuals with Possible Learning Disabilities**

**(Interviews, Orientations, and Case Management Environments)**

**ATTENTION:**

- Short attention span
- Fidgets or is easily distracted
- Appears impulsive
- Responds without thinking
- Consistently has uncompleted activities
- Excessive talker, rambles
- Interrupts
- Has difficulty waiting
- Difficulty following through
- Restlessness

**REASONING & PROCESSING:**

- Trouble transferring or generalizing information
- Frequent verbal and written errors
- Trouble following oral information
- Difficulty interpreting written information
- Problems using maps, charts and graphs
- Extremely early or late
- Gets lost easily

**MEMORY:**

- Difficulty recalling personal history
- Problems repeating information
- Trouble recalling information presented orally
- Trouble remembering information read
- Hard to recall multiple directions
- Problems sequencing events (previous job, schools, etc.)

**ORAL COMMUNICATION:**

- Uses words inappropriately
- Sentences are short and very simple or are phrases
- Problems explaining things logically
- Trouble expressing thoughts concisely
- Trouble communicating via phones
- Frequently misunderstands information

**READING:**

- Trouble reading applications, forms, and letters
- Difficulty with basic skills assessment
- Skips lines, words, letters, and numbers
- Problems keeping place on test answer sheets
- Poor comprehension
- Difficulty tracking from test booklet to answer sheet

**WRITING & SPELLING:**

- Problems writing legibly
- Trouble copying from board/projection screen or book
- Poor spelling
- Trouble filling out applications and forms

**MATHEMATICAL CALCULATIONS & APPLICATION:**

- Difficulty performing simple mental calculations
- Trouble with basic skills assessment
- Cannot use a calculator
- Difficulty with money management and budgeting
- Reversal or confusion of numbers or number order

**COORDINATION & MOTOR FUNCTION:**

- Trouble filling in bubbles on answer sheets or applications
- Confuses right and left
- Poor handwriting (letter formation inconsistent)
- Clumsy or accident prone
- Difficulty with simple visual-motor computer functions (mouse)

**SOCIAL COMPETENCE & EMOTIONAL MATURITY:**

- Inappropriate social interaction
- Too aggressive or too withdrawn
- Low self-confidence
- Poor self-evaluation skills

**SELF-CONCEPT:**

- Lacks self reliance
- Often says "I can't" or has an excuse
- Low tolerance
- Low self-esteem
- Indifferent or self-defeating attitude
- Can't describe successes

Adapted from Materials Provided by Payne & Associates, Inc.

## KEY QUESTIONS TO ASK TO DETERMINE WHETHER A POSSIBLE LEARNING DISABILITY EXISTS

- ▶ Have the problems and difficulties currently observed persisted over a long period of time?
- ⇒ Have the problems and difficulties resisted customary or standard education and instruction?
- ⇒ Has there been significant and/or multiple interference in the education process and learning (i.e., numerous moves, changes in schools, illnesses, absences, allergies, sinus problems, family needs, etc.)?
- ⇒ Are patterns of irregular performance observable and consistent?
- ⇒ Do the problems or difficulties appear to interfere with critical life activities, especially learning (academic, training, developmental)?
- ⇒ Are there clear strengths and attributes in other areas (life skills, art, sport, music, hands-on activities, etc.)?

If the answers to these questions are yes, then the participant should be referred for learning disabilities evaluation.

## WAIVER OF CalWORKs LEARNING DISABILITIES SCREENING AND/OR EVALUATION

Read this form very carefully with your county worker. Be sure to ask questions about anything you do not understand. If you decide to not be screened or evaluated for learning disabilities at this time, you will be asked to sign this form and be given a copy to keep.

### Benefits of a Learning Disabilities Screening and Evaluation

It is very important to screen and evaluate you for possible learning disabilities to help you succeed in finding, keeping, and moving up in a job.

Getting a screening and evaluation for learning disabilities will help you and your caseworker decide which activities are best for you and if you will need extra help or services.

Getting screened and evaluated for learning disabilities may get you the kind of help and services you will need to meet the welfare-to-work rules.

If you do not meet the welfare-to-work rules, your cash aid and food stamps will be stopped or reduced. You can get them back again if you meet the rules or are excused from them.

### If You Decide to Not Be Screened or Evaluated for Learning Disabilities...

- You will have to meet the welfare-to-work rules like any other person on CalWORKs who does not have a learning disability.
- You may change your mind and ask for a learning disabilities screening and evaluation at any time.
- If you are later found to have a learning disability, the county will get you the help and services you need starting with the date you sign a new welfare-to-work plan prepared by you and your caseworker.

I have read this form and have had it read to me. I understand the information on this form. I do not want to be screened or evaluated for learning disabilities at this time.

PRINTED NAME OF PARTICIPANT	SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER
SIGNED NAME OF PARTICIPANT	DATE

# LEARNING NEEDS SCREENING

INTERVIEW DATE

COUNTY COPY

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

CLIENT NAME		BIRTH DATE	INTERVIEWER NAME
GENDER <input type="checkbox"/> MALE <input type="checkbox"/> FEMALE	HOUSEHOLD TYPE <input type="checkbox"/> SINGLE PARENT <input type="checkbox"/> TWO PARENTS		COUNTY
SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER	COUNTY CASE NUMBER		
COMPLETED YEARS OF FORMAL EDUCATION			

DEGREE(S) ATTAINED

- HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA  
  GED  
  TECHNICAL/VOCATIONAL  
  AA DEGREE  
  OTHER (SPECIFY): \_\_\_\_\_

WHAT KIND OF JOB WOULD YOU LIKE TO GET?

DO YOU HAVE EXPERIENCE IN THIS FIELD OR A RELATED FIELD?

WHAT MAKES IT HARD FOR YOU TO GET OR KEEP THIS KIND OF JOB?

WHAT WOULD HELP?

**LEARNING NEEDS SCREENING  
COUNTY COPY**

BEFORE PROCEEDING TO THE QUESTIONS, READ THIS STATEMENT ALOUD TO THE CLIENT:

**“We are going to ask your questions about your school experiences and your health. Your answers will help us figure out what services you will need to be successfully employed and to help you and your caseworker develop your Welfare-to-Work plan.**

**“It is very important that you answer these questions so that you can be placed in the right kind of Welfare-to-Work activities and get the help and services you may need to succeed.”**

If the client does not want to be screened, read Form WTW 17 (Waiver of CalWORKs Learning Disabilities Screening and/or Evaluation) to the client and explain the importance of a learning disabilities screening and evaluation. If, after reading the WTW 17, the client still does not want to be screened or evaluated, have the client sign the form. The county will give a copy of the form to the client and retain the original in the case file.

**SECTION I**

**YES      NO**

- 1. Have you had any problems learning in middle school or junior high? . . . . .
- 2. Do you have difficulty working from a test booklet to an answer sheet? . . . . .
- 3. Do you have difficulty or experience problems working with numbers in a column? . . . . .
- 4. Do you have trouble judging distances? . . . . .
- 5. Do any family members have learning problems? . . . . .

Count the number of “YES” answers for Section I. Multiply by 1. . . . . \_\_\_\_\_ = \_\_\_\_\_

**SECTION II**

**YES      NO**

- 6. Have you had any problems learning in elementary school? . . . . .
- 7. Do you have difficulty or experience problems mixing mathematical signs (+/x)? . . . . .

Count the number of “YES” answers for Section II. Multiply by 2. . . . . \_\_\_\_\_ = \_\_\_\_\_

**SECTION III**

**YES      NO**

- 8. Do you have difficulty or experience problems filling out forms? . . . . .
- 9. Did you experience difficulty memorizing numbers? . . . . .
- 10. Do you have difficulty remembering how to spell simple words you know? . . . . .

Count the number of “YES” answers for Section III. Multiply by 3. . . . . \_\_\_\_\_ = \_\_\_\_\_

**SECTION IV**

**YES      NO**

- 11. Do you have difficulty or experience problems taking notes? . . . . .
- 12. Do you have trouble adding or subtracting small numbers in your head? . . . . .
- 13. Were you ever in a special program or given extra help in school? . . . . .

Count the number of “YES” answers for Section IV. Multiply by 4. . . . . \_\_\_\_\_ = \_\_\_\_\_

-----  
If 12 or more, refer for further evaluation. . . . . \_\_\_\_\_ **TOTAL**

LEARNING NEEDS SCREENING

COUNTY COPY

LEARNING DISABILITIES SCREENING  
ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS

EDUCATION:

Were you ever in special education classes in school? .....  YES  NO

GLASSES:

Do you need or wear glasses? .....  YES  NO

Was your last eye examination within two years? .....  YES  NO

HEARING:

Do you need or wear a hearing aid? .....  YES  NO

Have you had your hearing tested in the last 12 months? .....  YES  NO

SPEECH:

Do you have trouble pronouncing any words? .....  YES  NO

MEDICAL/PHYSICAL:

Have you experienced any of the following:

- multiple, chronic ear infections .....  YES  NO
- multiple, chronic sinus problems .....  YES  NO
- serious accidents resulting in head trauma .....  YES  NO
- prolonged, high fevers .....  YES  NO
- diabetes .....  YES  NO
- severe allergies .....  YES  NO
- frequent headaches .....  YES  NO
- concussion or head injury .....  YES  NO
- convulsions or seizures .....  YES  NO
- attention deficit with or without hyperactivity .....  YES  NO

Are you taking any medications that affect the way you function? .....  YES  NO

If YES, what are you taking? \_\_\_\_\_

How often? \_\_\_\_\_

Do you need medical or follow-up services? .....  YES  NO

County referrals needed/made: \_\_\_\_\_

**LEARNING NEEDS SCREENING****EXHIBIT D****CLIENT COPY**

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What kind of job would you like to get?

Do you have experience in this field or a related field?

What makes it hard for you to get or keep this kind of job?

What would help?

**We are going to ask you questions about your school experiences and your health. Your answers will help us figure out what services you will need to be successfully employed and to help you and your caseworker develop your Welfare-to-Work plan.**

**It is very important that you answer these questions so that you can be placed in the right kind of Welfare-to-Work activities and get the help and services you may need to succeed.**

1. Have you had any problems learning in middle school or junior high?
2. Do you have difficulty working from a test booklet to an answer sheet?
3. Do you have difficulty or experience problems working with numbers in a column?
4. Do you have trouble judging distances?
5. Do any family members have learning problems?
6. Have you had any problems learning in elementary school?
7. Do you have difficulty or experience problems mixing mathematical signs (+/x)?
8. Do you have difficulty or experience problems filling out forms?
9. Did you experience difficulty memorizing numbers?
10. Do you have difficulty remembering how to spell simple words you know?

11. Do you have difficulty or experience problems taking notes?
12. Do you have trouble adding or subtracting small numbers in your head?
13. Were you ever in a special program or given extra help in school?
14. Were you ever in special education classes in school?
15. Do you need or wear glasses?
  
16. Was your last eye examination within two years?
17. Do you need or wear a hearing aid?
18. Have you had your hearing tested in the last 12 months?
19. Do you have trouble pronouncing any words?
  
20. Have you experienced any of the following:
  - multiple, chronic ear infections
  - multiple, chronic sinus problems
  - serious accidents resulting in head trauma
  - prolonged, high fevers
  - diabetes (high blood sugar)
  - severe allergies
  - frequent headaches
  - concussion or head injury
  - convulsions or seizures
  - serious health problems
  - attention deficit with or without hyperactivity
  
21. Are you taking any medications that would affect the way you function?  
If yes, what are you taking? How often?
  
22. Do you need medical or follow-up services?

## WORKPLACE ACCOMMODATIONS FOR ADULTS WITH LEARNING DISABILITIES

The following are some common strategies that an employer might use and some common assistive technologies and accommodations that may be provided to an individual with learning disabilities:

- 1. Difficulty with Time Management and Following Directions**
  - Break down large tasks into smaller, more manageable ones.
  - Give step-by-step, specific directions verbally and in writing.
  - Use a checklist and, when appropriate, suggest estimated time allotments for each task to be completed.
  - Start off with smaller tasks and increase the level of difficulty over time.
  - Demonstrate the different steps needed to complete a task.
  - Provide timing devices, personal organizers, or computer software with schedule reminders.
  
- 2. Difficulty Understanding Language and Organizing**
  - Try to keep the work area as quiet as possible (both in terms of activity and noise) to prevent distraction.
  - Maintain eye contact during conversation.
  - Review what was said during meetings and, when appropriate, have the employee restate what he or she heard.
  
- 3. Difficulty Organizing and Understanding Visual Information**
  - Use color-coded files.
  - Help and encourage the employee to keep the work environment as neat and well organized as possible.
  - Use software applications that have unique (i.e., not graphically similar) symbols and icons.
  
- 4. Difficulty Reading or Writing**
  - Make sure that important safety signs are easily recognized.
  - Provide and allow for the use of talking computer software or calculators.
  - Provide verbal instructions.
  - Use graphics to explain tasks.
  - Use software that enhances the individual's ability to complete tasks (e.g., spell check).
  - Allow extra time for difficult tasks.
  - Provide a reader or proofreader who can read material aloud or check over work.

**5. Difficulty with Social Skills**

- Establish a set of signals to let the individual know (without embarrassment) when inappropriate behavior occurs.
- Encourage the use of a notebook to record thoughts rather than interrupting conversations or workflow.

**6. Difficulty with Attention Span or Hyperactivity**

- Plan frequent, short breaks in work routines.
- Break larger tasks into smaller, more manageable units.
- Provide a workplace with as little extraneous stimulation as possible.
- Minimize interruptions while the individual is working on a task.
- If feasible, allow for flexible scheduling so that the employee can do some work at home or can work at the office during less hectic times.

**7. Some Management Principles that Could Benefit All Employees, Particularly Individuals with Learning Disabilities**

- Provide frequent, specific feedback; acknowledge even small improvements.
- Assign tasks that utilize an employee's strengths.
- Allow use of computers, talking computer software, calculators, organizers, tape recorders, and other assistive devices.
- Create an atmosphere where employees feel comfortable seeking help.
- Keep workplace tasks as structured as possible and discuss any changes in routine before they occur.
- Set up frequent informal performance reviews; encourage self-evaluation.

Abstract from the *NCLD News*, Spring/Summer, 1999, Volume 9, Number 2, published by the National Center for Learning Disabilities, 381 Park Avenue South, Suite 1401, New York, NY 10016, [www.LD.org](http://www.LD.org).

## EXHIBIT F

**PERMISSION TO RELEASE LEARNING DISABILITIES INFORMATION***(Place the original in the case file and give a copy to the participant.)*

PARTICIPANT'S NAME	SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER
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**RELEASE OF INFORMATION TO COUNTY WELFARE DEPARTMENT**

I give permission for \_\_\_\_\_ County Welfare Department to receive a copy of any

NAME OF COUNTY

written reports or tests pertaining to my evaluation for possible learning disabilities. This information can only be used for the purpose of developing or amending my Welfare-to-Work plan and/or obtaining educational and/or employment-related services and/or job training.

**RELEASE OF INFORMATION FROM COUNTY WELFARE DEPARTMENT**

I give permission for \_\_\_\_\_ County Welfare Department to release written reports

NAME OF COUNTY

or tests pertaining to learning disabilities that I may have for purposes of developing or amending my Welfare-to-Work plan and/or obtaining employment-related services and/or job training.

The County Welfare Department may release the information to *(check all that apply)*:

- Persons who will be testing me for possible learning disabilities.
- New County Welfare Department if I move to another county.
- State and/or local employment and/or job training agencies, such as *(check all that apply)*:
- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Employment Development Department | <input type="checkbox"/> One-Stop Centers             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Local Workforce Investment Areas  | <input type="checkbox"/> Department of Rehabilitation |
- Local, state, or private colleges.
- Other *(specify)*: \_\_\_\_\_

**PARTICIPANT'S SIGNATURE**

- This information is needed to comply with Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and Welfare and Institutions Code Section 11325.4.
- This information shall be kept confidential by the person(s) authorized to receive it, and will not be disclosed without my signed consent for each disclosure, unless the disclosure is specifically required or allowed by law.
- I understand that this authorization form, except for action already taken, may be voided by me at any time. If I do not void this form, it will expire one year from the date of my signature.
- I have read this form *(or had it read to me)* after it was completed and before I signed it.

PARTICIPANT'S SIGNATURE	TODAY'S DATE
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## NOTICE OF ADJUSTMENT OF THE 18- or 24- MONTH WELFARE-to-WORK TIME CLOCK

Participant's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Participant's  
Social Security Number: \_\_\_\_\_

County: \_\_\_\_\_

County Case Number: \_\_\_\_\_

The county welfare department has given back \_\_\_\_\_ months on your 18- or 24-month Welfare-to-Work time clock.  
(NUMBER OF MONTHS)

This means that starting \_\_\_\_\_, you have a total of \_\_\_\_\_ months remaining on your 18- or 24-month time clock.  
(MONTH/YEAR) (NUMBER OF MONTHS)

When you have months on the 18- or 24-month time clock, you may be able to meet the Welfare-to-Work rules through a wider range of allowable activities than after the 18- or 24-month time limit is reached.

Allowable activities during the 18- or 24-month period include, but are not limited to, subsidized work, work experience, basic education classes, and job training.

Your county worker will talk with you about your Welfare-to-Work activities. Your activities will be based on the results of your CalWORKs assessment, learning disability evaluation, and your education and employment background.

When your 18- or 24-month time clock ends, you can only meet the Welfare-to-Work rules through unsubsidized work and/or community service work.

This adjustment to your 18- or 24-month time clock was made because you:

- Have a verified learning disability; **and**
- Have a signed Welfare-to-Work plan and did Welfare-to-Work activities that did not consider your learning disability evaluation and need for reasonable accommodations; **and**
- You did not make satisfactory progress or benefit from your Welfare-to-Work activities.

*(County must read and explain this notice to the participant.)*