STATE OF CALIFORNIA--HEALTH AND WELFARE AGENCY

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES
744 P Street, Sacramento, CA 95814
(916) 924-2534

September 30, 1982

ALL COUNTY INFORMATION NOTICE I-135-82

TO: ALL COUNTY WELFARE DIRECTORS

SUBJECT: SPAN Project Status and its Impact on County EDP Development

Due to the recent legislative actions concerning the SPAN Project, a number of county concerns have surfaced regarding the status of SPAN and its impact on future county EDP development.

The Joint Legislative Conference Committee considerably reduced the SPAN Project appropriation for the 1982-83 fiscal year. This action has resulted in the suspension of the development of the SPAN Project by the Department of Social Services. In addition, the Conference Committee adopted budget language instructing this Department to take the following actions:

1) Continue to operate the SPAN demonstration project in Placer and Nevada Counties testing the Case Data System with an automated central index in a multi-county environment.

2) Contract with the Auditor-General for a Special Project Team to be recruited from the private sector. This team will be responsible for reassessing the feasibility of the Los Angeles' WCMIS/IBPS system or the Case Data Sytem or a combination of these two to serve as the baseline system for a statewide SPAN system. A revision of the January, 1981 SPAN Feasibility Study Report (FSR) is due April 15, 1983.

The Department will provide any information and documentation requested by the Special Project Team. It is expected that this team will also wish to solicit input from a county perspective. Should the team request assistance from the Department in making appropriate county contacts, we will give ample notice of expected information needs and desired timelines. Your cooperation in providing assistance to this Special Project Team would be appreciated.

Some concern has been expressed regarding the Department's policy should the Special Project Team recommend that a private sector firm be selected for continued SPAN development. This Department is concerned with both reduced administrative costs and with effective and efficient management of its programs. The Department will review the Special Project Team's

recommendation for future SPAN development and, provided it meets the criteria stated above, the Department will support whatever methodology is recommended. Before the revised FSR is presented to the Legislature next year, there will be a change in the Executive Branch and the new administration's position will have to be developed at that time.

Another area of concern for many counties has been the Department's policy regarding county EDP development. Be assured that this Department will be as aggressive as possible to encourage county EDP development during this year and in the future, provided it is cost beneficial. The Department is committed to automation as an effective solution to the problems inherent in dwindling resources. Specifically, we will pursue the following activities:

1) Encourage under-automated or non-automated counties, where it is cost beneficial, to consider implementing the Case Data System and possibly utilizing the Health and Welfare Data Center for service.

2) The development of an automated on-line Food Stamp Issuance System.

3) Encourage counties, particularly the Case Data Counties, to implement a central index and to link as many of these counties as possible.

4) Encourage small, single applications which would be cost beneficial for specific problems in counties where it would not be cost beneficial to implement total systems.

5) The Department has approved a one-year extension of the Alpha Beta Association contract for Case Data System maintenance and is working closely with the Joint Maintenance Committee to develop an RFP to provide the maintenance in future years.

Finally, there appears to be some questions regarding what counties should do with all the volumes of SPAN materials they have received. We would encourage counties to systematically retain their SPAN documentation. While this is an individual county decision, it may be helpful to know what effort the Department is making to ensure that all documentation for the SPAN Project is retrievable.

A library is being established containing all SPAN publications, including those which were not completed or released. In addition, complete documentation of all facets of the Project is being compiled and will be retained for future use. Should anyone desire access to this material it can be requested through the Information Systems Management Divison. Address any request to:

Department of Social Services
Information Systems Management Division
Attn: Eleanor Kemp,
744 P Street, MS 19-52
Sacramento, CA 95814

We continue to believe the SPAN system is vital and necessary to effective administration of public welfare programs in California. Whether SPAN is completed by this Department or an alternative organization, we believe all counties should plan to resume SPAN related activities in the 1983/84 FY or shortly thereafter.

If you have any questions not addressed in this Information Notice regarding the SPAN Project or County EDP development, please contact me at the above address or (916) 924-2534.

JAMES L. MILLER
Acting Deputy Director
Information Systems
Management Division