STATE OF CALIFORNIA—HEALTH AND WELFARE AGENCY

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES
744 P Street, Sacramento, CA 95814

November 7, 1986

ALL COUNTY INFORMATION NOTICE NO. I-101-86

TO: ALL COUNTY WELFARE DIRECTORS

Turner v. McMahon Field Study of the Two Column Format

The State Department of Social Services with the help of several counties has completed a test of AFDC client reactions to the Notice of Action (NOA) two column format. The purpose of this letter is to transmit the results of the field test and notify counties that the Department's final decision is to adopt and implement the two column format.

The field test was conducted in 16 counties during the last two weeks of August 1986. State staff interviewed 403 clients; 299 had prior AFDC experience, 83 had no prior AFDC experience, and 21 others had unknown prior experience. Clients were asked questions specifically designed to test the two column format against the current format. The correctness of each response was recorded as well as the amount of time it took for each person to respond.

The findings indicate:

- Both clients who had prior AFDC experience and those without prior AFDC experience answered more questions correctly on the two column forms than on the current forms.

- Overall the respondents were able to answer the questions in less time while using the two column forms than when using the current forms.

The objective of the two column NOA format is to provide information to the client that is easy to read and understand. The test results clearly support this objective.

The Department has made its final decision to adopt the two column format as referred to in the Turner v. McMahon Implementation Plan. For your use in preparing for the May 1, 1987 implementation, the Department expects to transmit the following materials to you by November 14, 1986:

- NOA Messages from the Turner Implementation Plan in English and the five standard translations.

- Camera ready copies of the NOA forms in English and the five standard translations.

In addition the Department is preparing an AFDC NOA handbook containing all the approved forms and messages with specific instructions for use; form and message indexes; instructions for the use of the handbook and guidelines for writing simplified message language.

The Department will also conduct regional training sessions for county staff during February 1987. The purpose of the training will be to introduce county staff to the contents and use of the handbook and the Turner NOA requirements.

Counties are encouraged to ask the Department any NOA related questions which arise during their pre-implementation planning process. Turner implementation questions should be directed to Doris Keller at (916) 324-2655. Format study questions should be directed to Gilbert Somera at (916) 324-2012.

ROBERT A. HOREL
Deputy Director