

In Brief

✓ **CalWIN Update.** On April 18th, an eligibility worker did a face to face interview with a CalWORKs applicant and found the family to be eligible for benefits. The computer issued benefits for the month of April, 2005 but refused to authorize the issuance of benefits for May because according to the computer, the applicant had failed to keep a scheduled appointment. There had been no appointment scheduled.

✓ **IHSS Protective Supervision News.** At a DSS sponsored workshop regarding IHSS it was revealed that 23 counties require the providers of protective supervision to complete a 24 hour form. The providers, who provide services 24 hours a day while being paid for less than 10 hours a day, are being asked by the counties to prove how they provide protective supervision for the 14 hours a day that they are not compensated. Counties say it is voluntary, but in reality they threaten to terminate protective supervision. **NOTE:** The regulations only require that the IHSS recipient have a need for 24 hours. There is no regulation that states the IHSS recipient shall have 24 hour care. Why? Because the state/county does not pay for 24 hour care.

Sacramento County's CalWIN computer system "went live" on March 1, 2005. After two months of living with CalWIN, there are a few pointers that we advocates in Sacramento County can provide to the other 17 CalWIN counties.

One of our most useful tools to get through CalWIN implementation is to have a county contact person; a specific county intermediary whom we can email problem cases in order to remedy.

Advocates are used to dealing with the worker or the worker's supervisor. After CalWIN, all bets are off. Most of our clients have talked to their workers, supervisors, bureau chiefs, etc. At each level the worker knew there was a problem with the case. But none of these people knew how to get CalWIN to work. The CalWIN

IHSS PLUS INFORMATION

If you want to come to the IHSS Plus Workshop to participate in the formulation of state policy to implement the federal medicaid waiver for the IHSS Plus Program, just go to http://www.dss.cahwnet.gov/dapd/SB1104-IHS_2097.htm. This web page has dates and times for all of the meetings, including minutes of previous meetings. The meetings are open and accessible.

For more information on the waiver you can go to a federal web page <http://www.cms.hhs.gov/medicaid/1115/ihss.asp> and read all about the waiver and the conditions of this waiver.

CalWIN UPDATE

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Publisher: CCWRO.
Reporters: Kevin Aslanian and Grace Galligher.
Contributors: Steve Goldberg and Diane Aslanian.

technical people had to either correct the action or find a way around the system by a paper process or "work around".

Some GA/GR clients did not receive their March and April food stamps until mid-April. Workers told folks to be patient because its a computer problem, and they were right. When LSNC and CCWRO went to Loaves and Fishes, a nonprofit which provides shelter, free meals, showers, and counseling, we were asked if we could help get their benefits. When we emailed the clients names to the welfare department, they got their benefits within 2-3 days.

Food Stamp aid paid pending has also been a problem, primarily for GA/GR clients. Some clients did not get their March aid pending until mid-April.

Sacramento County admitted to us that there are some CalWIN system problems with aid paid pending and the vendor is trying to solve the problems. Again, contacting the intermediary with specific cases is the most effective means of getting the clients aid.

Pre CalWIN, an application interview took about one hour. Now, it can take as long as five hours to complete, with most interviews being between three and four hours long. As such, expedited food stamps were not being process within three days, because there were insufficient staff to conduct the interviews.

We have almost sued them twice within the last three months and are closely monitoring the County now.

CCWRO is now beginning to see the CalWIN forms. CalWIN is printing obsolete forms for Quarterly Reporting and the Food Stamp Repayment Notice for Admin Errors (after 3/1/00). The Food Stamp Repayment Notice for Admin Errors form was made obsolete as a result of Lomeli v. Saenz for which there is a mandatory, no substitute permitted form.

The next headache, I mean problem, is the translation of forms. CalWIN can print up to nine languages. Advocates would assume that the 18 CalWIN counties will be able to print all of the DSS mandated languages. Not true.

San Luis Obispo, San Mateo, Santa Cruz (which went live 5/2) and Sonoma Counties opted to print forms in English and Spanish.

Yolo County (which went live on 5/2) will print forms in English, Spanish and Russian.

Orange County will print forms in English, Spanish and Vietnamese.

San Francisco County will print the forms in English, Spanish, Chinese, Vietnamese and Russian.

Contra Costa will print the forms in English, Spanish, Vietnamese, Russian, Farsi and Laotian.

Placer County (which went live January) said it can print the forms in all of the mandated languages.

Assuming arguendo that counties could opt out of providing forms which have been translated by CDSS, one would assume that counties would use the translated paper forms that CDSS provides to the counties. Not necessarily true.

In Yolo County's case if a person whose primary language is Chinese enters the welfare department, the County will not use a paper form. Instead, they will issue all forms and notices in English and "will make a translator available" to the Chinese speaker. For example, after completing a four hour application interview for CalWorks and Food Stamps, Yolo County would have us believe that the translator will fully and completely translate the 24 page Statement of Facts verbatim to the Chinese client who will then sign an English form under penalty of perjury.

The counties that I did not mention did not respond to my request for information. You should contact your county to find out what it plans to do.

CCWRO is talking to Civil Rights about this problem. Hopefully this particular problem will be corrected before many more counties come on line.

For Sacramento, a CalWIN translated form is not necessarily what you think. The Russian translated forms are bi-lingual with both Russian and English. Unfortunately, the En-

English part of the form contains important information to the client that is not repeated in Russian.

Sacramento County had a primary-Spanish speaking applicant for food stamps sign and receive a copy of the English language SAWS1 even though CalWIN showed his application on the computer to be in Spanish. Subsequently, he received English notices. Sacramento County had assured us that once Spanish or some other mandated language had been identified as the primary language of the client, notices would be issued only in that primary language.

If you have questions or need assistance concerning CalWIN, let us know. Call Grace Galligher at CCWRO.

County Client Abuse Report

Ms. O.T of Sacramento County is disabled. On 5/6/05 she applied for CAPI, the State program for the elderly, blind and disabled. She is not client over 65 years old, thus, she applied as a disabled person. On the application she did clearly state that she was **DISABLED**.

On her application she clearly stated that she did not speak English and requested forms in the Russian language.

On May 11, 2005, she received a letter in English from her CAPI worker stating, "You are not age 65 or older, blind, or disabled." Needless to say, Ms. O.T. could not read the notice.

Ms. O.T has filed for a state hearing to find out why the CAPI application was denied without even making a disability evaluation.



State Budget UPDATE

On May 9, 2005, Governor Schwarzenegger released his May Revise State Budget. This is the May revision to his January 10, 2005 proposed budget.

The revised budget continues the unprecedented attack on the poor by proposing to repeal the CalWORKs COLA and reduce benefits by 6.5%. The Budget also includes the proposal to reduce the wages of IHSS providers down to minimum wage - a Schwarzenegger attack on the working poor.

The Governor did delete his proposal to reduce the earned income disregards for working CalWORKS recipients.

The Governor's January budget assumed that the State Legislature would change the law to impose full family sanctions and save \$12 million a year. The Governor now states that he will restore that money and wait for the Administration to "...work with advocates, counties, and the Legislature to develop a revised policy that better promotes personal responsibility and self-sufficiency."

The Governor's budget proposes to hold back 5% of the county allocations then give it back to those counties that meet certain outcomes in their employment programs. This was opposed by counties. The Governor's May revise also proposes to set aside \$30 million for counties in the form of so-called "Pay-for-Performance". Counties are sanctioning about 50% of the unduplicated participants in the Welfare to Work program, and often not paying 50% of the participants transportation services.