



**Alameda County Social Services Agency**  
*Welfare to Work Participant Handbook*

## The Purpose of Welfare to Work

Alameda County designed the [Welfare to Work](#) program with you in mind. Its purpose is to prepare you for a job and a career. When you successfully make the transition to employment, you will be on your way to building a better future for you and your children.

As such, our purpose is to assist you to make the transition to the world of work. We designed these programs to assist you. If needed, you will gain skills and experience that will help you become a valuable employee. Welfare to Work staff will work with you to learn how to find and keep a job in today's work environment.

Welfare to Work staff will be with you every step of the way. They will provide you with the information and resources that will enable you to plan your career. They will provide you with the support and services such as childcare, transportation, and related expenses that will allow you to succeed on the journey to self-sufficiency.

By participating in Welfare to Work, everyone wins: you by increasing your ability to support your family; your children who can look forward to a better way of life; and your future employer who will be hiring an exceptional employee.

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## WAIVER OF DOMESTIC ABUSE

If someone in your household hurts you or has hurt you in the past making you unable to participate in Welfare to Work activities, we need to know that. We can provide you and your family services to assist you. The services you receive can be part or all of your Welfare to Work activities. The county may also waive certain CalWORKs rules and may stop your CalWORKs clock, which could give you extra months of aid and services.

## Who is exempt?

You are exempt and do not have to participate in Welfare to Work if:

- You are under 16 years of age or 60 years and older;
- You are a child 16, 17 or 18 and a full-time student;
- You have a disability<sup>1</sup> that is expected to last at least 30 days, actively seeking treatment and the disability would keep you from your Welfare to Work activity;<sup>2</sup>
- Pregnancy impairs your ability for employment;<sup>1</sup>
- You are an aided non-parent caregiver of a dependent or ward of the court or of a child at risk of Foster Care placement and the county finds, that taking care of the child keeps you from working or participating in Welfare to Work;
- You are the caregiver of an ill or incapacitated household member and this keeps you from working or participating in Welfare to Work;<sup>2</sup>
- You are caring for a child from birth to 23 months. You may be exempt for this reason only one time during a continuous period on aid;
- You are caring for a child 6 months old or younger.<sup>3</sup>

If you believe that you should be exempt from participating, ask your worker to give you a CW2186A form. An Employment Counselor can review your situation at any time.

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<sup>1</sup> Medical verification is required.

<sup>2</sup> This exemption may not apply if you are a pregnant or parenting teen required to participate in the Welfare to Work program.

<sup>3</sup> The county may extend this up to 12 months on a case-by-case basis.

## Who must participate?

### MANDATORY PARTICIPANTS

If you are a California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids (CalWORKs) recipient, and you are not exempt, you must participate in Welfare to Work. The county considers you a “mandatory participant.” Effective July 1, 2011, teens in or eligible for Cal-Learn are mandatory participants in Welfare to Work. If you are a mandatory participant, you must:

- Keep appointments made by your Employment Counselor;
- Sign a Welfare to Work Plan;
- Meet all Welfare to Work requirements, including the requirements in your Welfare to Work Plan;
- Not quit your job or lower your earnings;
- Provide proof of satisfactory progress in your assigned activity on a regular basis.

### YOU MUST PARTICIPATE IN WELFARE TO WORK WHEN:

- You apply for aid;
- Your eligibility is redetermined;
- You have a change in your exemption status.

### VOLUNTEERS

Even if you are not required to participate in Welfare to Work, you can ask to take part as a “volunteer.” Ask your Employment Counselor how you can get into Welfare to Work.



## Welfare to Work Services

There are many paths open to Welfare to Work participants. Your path may not involve every activity in Welfare to Work. Much depends on your education and job history. Remember, the purpose of Welfare to Work is to help you prepare for work and find a job so that you can help yourself and your family.

Below you will find the activities that Welfare to Work offers.

### ORIENTATION AND APPRAISAL

When you start participating in Welfare to Work, you will go to Orientation and Appraisal. During your Orientation and Appraisal activities, Employment Services staff will review your work history, education, need for supportive services, and other information to help you decide what your Welfare to Work activity or activities should be to obtain or maintain employment and reach your desired goals.

### JOB SEARCH

Following Orientation/Appraisal, most participants are assigned up to four weeks of Job Search activities. However, the Job Search activities may be longer or shorter if the County and you agree that it would be beneficial to you.

### JOB SEARCH ACTIVITIES INCLUDE:

- **Job Club**, where you will learn how to uncover the “hidden” job market, discover what job skills you have, write a resume, and understand how to present yourself in an interview;
- **Supervised Job Search**, where you will have the help of an experienced Employment Counselor to find the job that will start you on the way to a career. You will have access to telephones, job orders, and referrals to employers;
- **Job Placement**, where you will receive referrals to jobs;
- **Job Development**, where you will look for a job by working one-on-one with an experienced Job Developer;
- **Employment Counseling**, where an Employment Counselor will help you decide what your reasonable and realistic job goals should be, based on your skills and abilities; and,
- Visiting your local **One-Stop Business and Career Center** to access their job services.

The following participants will not be required to participate in Job Search activities after Orientation/Appraisal, but may be asked to do so:

- A person who is working in an unsubsidized job or is participating in an approved Self-Initiated Program (SIP) if the job search schedule would keep him or her from working or participating in that SIP.
- A pregnant or parenting teen required to participate in the Welfare to Work program or a custodial parent, age 19, without a high school diploma or GED.

## ASSESSMENT

You will be sent to Assessment if:

- You do not get an unsubsidized job during your participation in Job Search or we decide that sending you to Job Search as your first activity would not help you;
- We decide to shorten your time in Job Search because it is not likely to lead to a job; or,
- Your Self-Initiated Program is not enough to meet the hourly requirements.

The purpose of Assessment is to put together a reasonable Welfare to Work Plan to help you get a job and move towards a rewarding career.

To do this the Assessor will:

- Look at your abilities, interests, work history and education;
- Assess your need for supportive services to get the most out of job and training services offered under the CalWORKs Welfare to Work program;
- Estimate your chances of getting a job, given your skills and the jobs available in your area;
- Evaluate any physical or mental problems you may have that limit your ability to work or to participate in Welfare to Work activities; and,
- List the services available so that you can complete your Welfare to Work Plan.

If you are in a Self-Initiated Program, we may set up your Welfare to Work Plan based on your Appraisal.

However, we may send you for an Assessment if we need to send you to another activity at the same time so that you are participating in Welfare to Work activities for the number of hours that is required of you.

## SPECIAL SERVICES

We will work with you and provide services based on your individual needs. If we offer you screening or services for special problems, such as learning difficulties, we hope you will accept them. These services can help you become successful.

We sometimes offer special work or training programs. If you are interested in any of the special programs, talk to your Employment Counselor.



## Welfare to Work Activities

### UNSUBSIDIZED EMPLOYMENT

This activity is a job in which only your employer pays your salary.

### SUBSIDIZED PRIVATE SECTOR EMPLOYMENT

This activity is a job with a private employer who gets money from a government program to help pay your salary.

### SUBSIDIZED PUBLIC SECTOR EMPLOYMENT

This activity is a job with a public agency employer who gets money from a government program to help pay your salary.

### WORK EXPERIENCE

This activity in a work setting will enable you to gain knowledge and experience to help you get a paying job.

### COMMUNITY SERVICE

This activity in a work setting will enable you to gain knowledge and experience to help you get a paying job, while providing a service to others.

### ON-THE-JOB TRAINING (OJT)

This activity is work in a job where your salary is paid by another agency.

### WORK STUDY

This activity is work in a college setting while you take college courses.

## SELF-INITIATED PROGRAMS

This activity is a training or education program you began on your own before your Appraisal. Your Employment Counselor must approve your program before it is considered acceptable as a Welfare to Work activity.

## ADULT BASIC EDUCATION

This activity includes education that will help you improve your reading and math skills and, perhaps, get a GED or high school diploma.

If you are a pregnant or parenting teen, your primary goal will be to attend full-time school programs that will lead to either a high school diploma or its equivalent.

## JOB SKILLS TRAINING DIRECTLY RELATED TO EMPLOYMENT

This activity will help you gain job skills that prepare you for work.

## VOCATIONAL TRAINING

This activity is short-term training designed to teach you a job that you can do for a private employer.

## JOB SEARCH AND JOB READINESS ASSISTANCE

This activity teaches you how to find work and gives you a chance to look for work with the help of Employment Counselors.

## EDUCATION DIRECTLY RELATED TO EMPLOYMENT

This is a school activity where you will learn job skills that will help you get or keep a job.

## SECONDARY EDUCATION OR GED INSTRUCTION FOR RECIPIENTS WITHOUT A DIPLOMA OR CERTIFICATE

This activity is short-term school to help you get a high school diploma or GED.

## MENTAL HEALTH, SUBSTANCE ABUSE AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE SERVICES

This activity provides you with counseling to get through the difficult times in your life and help you get yourself on the road to finding work. These services are free to you.

## Reappraisal

If you have finished the activities in your Welfare to Work Plan and you have not found a job, you may go to Reappraisal. In Reappraisal, we will decide if there were special circumstances that kept you from getting a job. If we decide that you did have special circumstances, we may send you to another activity. If we decide that you did not have special circumstances, you will have to participate in the following activities:

- Unsubsidized work
- Work experience
- Job skills training directly related to employment
- Self-employment
- Mental health, substance abuse, or domestic violence services



## Time Limits

### 60-MONTH LIFETIME CALWORKS LIMIT

Parents or caretaker relatives can only receive cash aid for a total of 60 months (5 years). This rule applies to cash benefits received in any California county or anyone coming from another state effective May 2022. Time limit rules do not apply to children.

### CALWORKS HOURLY PARTICIPATION REQUIREMENTS

As of May 1, 2022, there is a new CalWORKs Hourly Participation Requirement in Welfare to Work. This new participation requirement can be applied throughout your time on aid and you have more activities to choose from while participating in Welfare to Work. There are **no** required core hours of activities to participate to keep your cash aid.

## Hours of Participation under the CalWORKs Hourly Participation Requirements

### ONE-PARENT FAMILIES

If you are the adult in a one-parent CalWORKs case, with a child under six, you will have to participate in your assigned Welfare to Work activities for at least 20 hours per week or 30 hours if you have no child under six.

The hours of participation do not apply if you are a pregnant or parenting teen participating in the Cal Learn Program.

### TWO-PARENT FAMILIES

If you are adults in a two-parent CalWORKs case, you and/or the other parent will have to participate in your assigned Welfare to Work activity for at least 35 hours per week.

### SELF-INITIATED PROGRAMS

If you are in a Self-Initiated Program, you must participate at least 20 hours per week if you have a child under six, 30 hours per week with no child under 6 or generally, 35 hours per week in a two-parent household when only one parent is participating in a Self-Initiated Program.

Note: We may require you to participate in more than one activity at a time to bring you up to the required hours of participation.



## Satisfactory Participation

### ATTENDANCE

When you sign your Welfare to Work Plan, you agree to participate in your activities and complete them. If you are unable to do this due to illness, etc., you must call both the activity provider and your Employment Counselor as soon as you know you will not be attending. If you are in training or education, you must attend according to the standards of the training or education provider. We may expect you to provide weekly or monthly proof of attendance.

### SATISFACTORY PROGRESS

All Welfare to Work participants are required to make satisfactory progress toward completing their assigned activities. “Satisfactory Progress” means that you will meet the expectations of the employer or education and training provided. You may be required to provide proof of your progress on a regular basis. If you are a pregnant or parenting teen who is attending high school you maybe eligible to receive a bonus when you make satisfactory progress in school.

### COMPLETION OF ASSIGNMENT

We will expect you to complete each assignment you have agreed to do. If you have a problem and find you will not be able to complete the activities that you agreed to do, you should call your Employment Counselor right away.

If you are in an education or training program, we may expect that you earn a license, certificate, or degree that will lead directly to employment.

## Supportive Services

We understand that you may need more than just training and job counseling to successfully take part in Welfare to Work. That is why we will help you arrange or pay for your childcare, transportation, and work or training related expenses. If other funding sources are not available to pay for all of your supportive services expenses, we will pay for the supportive services as described below.

### ADVANCE PAYMENTS

If you qualify for Welfare to Work supportive services payments and you need your supportive services payment before you begin your activity, you may qualify for an advance payment.

### SUPPORTIVE SERVICES PAYMENTS INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING:

- **Childcare costs**, if the childcare is necessary for you to participate in Welfare to Work activities. You may get childcare for your eligible child or a child who lives with you but is not in your CalWORKs assistance unit. You can choose the kind of childcare you want, such as childcare centers, relatives, friends, or neighbors.

The age limit for childcare is 0–10 years of age. If a child has exceptional/special needs because of a physical or mental disability or is under court supervision, we may extend the age limit up to age 21. We cannot pay for childcare if you choose somebody in your CalWORKs assistance unit, the child's legal guardian, the parent, or somebody under 18 years old as the caregiver. We may make payments to a licensed childcare provider and, in some cases, to persons who are not licensed. If your provider is not licensed, he or she must be fingerprinted and apply for Trustline registration, unless your provider is your child's aunt, uncle, or grandparent. The most we can pay is the rate based on the going rate for childcare in the area.

- **Transportation costs** up to a certain amount, for travel to and from your Welfare to Work activity.
- **Work or training related costs** for books, tools, and special clothing you need as a part of your Welfare to Work activity.



If you need **personal counseling** to help you participate in Welfare to Work, and services are available, we will refer you to those places in the community that may be able to help you.

*NOTE: If Welfare to Work pays more childcare, transportation costs, or work or training related costs than you need to participate, you will have to pay Welfare to Work back. However, you may not have to pay Welfare to Work back while you are in Welfare to Work if doing so would keep you from participating in the program.*

### ALTERNATIVE PAYMENT PROGRAM

Once your situation becomes stable or you leave aid, we may transfer your childcare case to the local Alternative Payment Program. However, your childcare provider does not have to change once you go to work or transition off aid. If you still need help with your childcare costs after you have been off aid for two years, you may be eligible, depending on the amount of your income, to continue to get help from the Alternative Payment Program.

The Alternative Payment Program will use a sliding fee scale to decide how much of your childcare costs you will pay and how much will be paid for you. The Alternative Payment Program will pay your caregiver directly.

See your Employment Counselor for more information on having your childcare paid.

## Your Welfare to Work Plan

Your Welfare to Work Plan is important. It tells you how we will work with you, so that you can compete for and find a job. The plan will make sure that you receive the agreed upon services and training for as long as you are taking part in Welfare to Work and receiving cash aid. Your plan tells you what you must do, and what we must do to make Welfare to Work work for you.

Your Employment Counselor will help you review each of the following parts of your Welfare to Work Plan:

- 1 The Welfare to Work Plan Rights and Responsibilities form tells you about Welfare to Work, our responsibilities, and your rights and responsibilities as a participant. This agreement applies as long as you are in Welfare to Work;
- 2 This Welfare to Work Participant Handbook;
- 3 The CalWORKs Agreement—Activity Assignment tells you about the Welfare to Work activity in which you are participating. You will sign a new activity assignment each time you begin a new Welfare to Work activity;
- 4 The Welfare to Work Plan—Activity Assignment tells you about the activities you agreed to do in your Welfare to Work Plan.

Read all of the parts of your Welfare to Work Plan, including this Welfare to Work Participant Handbook, carefully. If you have any questions, be sure to ask your Employment Counselor. Both you and your Employment Counselor will sign each agreement.

## Reasons for Not Participating

We recognize that you may have a good reason for not signing your Welfare to Work Plan, for not taking part in one of the Welfare to Work activities that you agreed to in your activity assignment, for not accepting a job offer or job referral, for quitting a job, or for reducing your earnings. Some of the reasons are related to you personally, and some may be related to the assignment.

### SOME REASONS RELATED TO YOU:

- You need transportation or work or training related expenses paid to participate, and these have not been provided;
- You are the victim of domestic violence and participating would be harmful to you or your family;
- Licensed or exempt childcare is not reasonably available during your training, employment, or travel time for:
  - A child 10 years old or younger;
  - A child who is in foster care
  - Any substantial or compelling reason as determined by the Agency.

### SOME REASONS RELATED TO ACTIVITY ASSIGNMENT OR JOB:

- Discrimination at the job or training because of age, sex, race, color, religion, national or ethnic origin, physical or mental disability, political affiliation, marital status or sexual orientation.
- Travel to work or training from your home is more than two hours round trip by car, bus or other transportation, or more than two miles round trip if you have to walk because other transportation is not available.
- The limit on travel and mileage does not include transportation time or mileage to take family members to and from school or to and from other care providers.



*NOTE: If you do not take a job or participate in an assigned activity because of this reason(s), you will have to participate in Community Service.*

- The job requires more daily or weekly hours than is normal or customary.
- Conditions at your job or training violate health and safety standards or could cause you serious injury or death.
- The job or work activity does not provide Worker's Compensation Insurance.
- Accepting a job or work activity would interrupt or interfere with an approved education or training assignment, except Work Experience or Community Service.
- Accepting a job or work activity would cause you to violate the terms of your union membership.
- Any substantial or compelling reason as determined by the County.

## What Happens If You Do Not Participate?

As you know, participation in Welfare to Work is mandatory for all able-bodied CalWORKs recipients. Exemptions are listed in the section titled, "Who is Exempt?" If, for any reason, you do not do what Welfare to Work requires, the following steps will be taken:

### CAUSE DETERMINATION

If you do not meet Welfare to Work requirements, you have the right to explain why. The Agency will

decide if it is a good reason. (See the section titled, "Reasons for Not Participating.")

If you have a good reason for not doing what Welfare to Work requires, your Employment Counselor may try to help you so that you can meet Welfare to Work requirements. If changes cannot be made so that you meet the Welfare to Work requirements, you will (temporarily) not be required to participate in Welfare to Work.

### COMPLIANCE

If you do not meet Welfare to Work requirements, we will send you a notice. You will have 20 calendar days, after the date of the notice, to meet with or call your Employment Counselor to give a good reason for not doing what is required, or to agree to sign a compliance plan to do what you are required to do, if you do not have a good reason. If you meet the requirements of the plan, no penalties will be applied to you.

### FINANCIAL SANCTIONS

If you are a mandatory participant (see the section titled, "Who Must Participate?"), your family's cash aid will be lowered if you fail or refuse to meet Welfare to Work requirements without a good reason and do not resolve the problem by signing and completing a compliance plan.

Your family's cash aid will be lowered if anybody who must participate does not meet Welfare to Work requirements. This financial sanction will happen only if the person does not have a good reason, or they fail to sign or complete a compliance plan. The person who gets a financial sanction will not receive cash aid for a period of time.

If your household is a two-parent family getting cash aid because of unemployment, there are special rules for financial sanctions. If a parent who must participate in Welfare to Work causes a financial sanction, both parents will lose their cash aid. But the parent who did not cause the sanction can keep his or her cash aid if he or she participates in Welfare to Work, or is exempt, or has good cause for not participating.



At any time when the county sanctions you, your family's aid will be lowered until you do what Welfare to Work requires and apply again for cash aid. To stop your sanction you must agree to do what the County says about meeting the Welfare to Work rules. You can contact your Employment Counselor at anytime to stop your sanction.

If you are a pregnant or parenting teen that is required to participate in the Cal Learn, you must show proof that you are making satisfactory progress in order to avoid a financial sanction.

## EXEMPT VOLUNTEERS

Individuals who are exempt from participation (see the section titled, "Who is Exempt?") may choose to volunteer to participate in Welfare to Work. If you volunteer for the Welfare to Work program, but fail to meet Welfare to Work requirements without a good reason, you may not be allowed to participate in Welfare to Work for a period of time. This is the exclusion period.

## Your Child's School Attendance

All school age children must attend school on a regular basis. If they do not do so regularly, your family's cash aid will be lowered.

If your household has a pregnant or parenting teen that is required to participate in the Welfare to Work program and he/she is not attending school full-time, your family's cash aid may be lowered.

## What if you disagree?

### 1. STATE HEARING

If you disagree with any County decision regarding a Welfare to Work sanction, your status (standing) in Welfare to Work, your Welfare to Work activity, or your Welfare to Work supportive services, you can ask for a State Hearing.



Your Employment Counselor can also help you file for a state hearing if you want one. You can request a hearing by completing the back of the Notice of Action and mailing it in or by calling the toll free number 1-800- 952-5253. You can request a rehearing if you do not agree with the state hearing decision.

- If you file for a state hearing before the penalties start, penalties will not be applied while the hearing is being decided.
- If you file for a state hearing for any other County action, different rules apply. The Welfare to Work hearing rights form on the back of the Notice of Action explains those rules.

### 2. INDEPENDENT ASSESSMENT

- If you do not agree with the results of your Assessment or Welfare to Work Plan, someone who is not a County representative will review your Assessment and do another one, if necessary. The results of this independent Assessment will be used to set up your Welfare to Work Plan.
- If you have an independent Assessment done, penalties will not be applied while you await the results of the review.

### 3. FORMAL GRIEVANCE

- The County Board of Supervisors sets the criteria for Formal Grievances. An Employment Counselor will tell you how this grievance process works. If you use the formal grievance process, you must continue to meet Welfare to Work requirements. No penalties will be applied while the grievance is being decided.

# Welfare to Work Services Participant Handbook Glossary

**\*Activity:** See the definition for component.

**Adult Basic Education:** A Welfare to Work activity, which includes instruction in reading, writing, arithmetic, high school proficiency, or general educational development certificate instruction, and English as a Second Language (ESL).

**Alternative Payment Program:** Once a participant is off aid, they are allowed to continue childcare, with the aid of this program, based on a sliding scale and amount of their income.

**Appraisal:** A Welfare to Work activity, which includes program information on the participant's employment history, skills and need for supportive services.

**Assessment:** A Welfare to Work activity, which includes obtaining the participant's work ability, educational history and current level, need for supportive services, local data market information, and identification of resources and completion of Welfare to Work plan.

**Cal Learn Program:** A program for CalWORKs recipients who are under 19; have not obtained a high school diploma or equivalent and (1) resides with his or her child or (2) pregnant and the pregnancy is verified.

**\*CalSAWS:** The computer system that provides for the automated determination of eligibility for public assistance programs and the delivery of program benefits.

**CalWORKs:** California Work Opportunity and Responsibility for Kids is the State name for public assistance or cash aid.

**\*Career Development Specialist I:** An Alameda County employee who is responsible for identifying job training and employment needs for individuals, providing services, or making appropriate referrals to target programs.

**Cause Determination:** A decision by an Employment Counselor as to whether a participant had an acceptable reason for refusal or failure to cooperate with Welfare to Work requirements.

**Childcare Payment:** The provision of Welfare to Work funds for necessary childcare services for eligible Welfare to Work participants.

**Childcare Resource and Referral Agency:** An agency, which contracts with the California Department of Education to provide information to parents about available childcare and to coordinate community resources for the benefit of parents and local childcare providers.

**Community Service:** A Welfare to Work training activity that is temporary and transitional, is performed in the public or private nonprofit sector under the close supervision of the activity provider, and provides participants with basic job skills that can lead to employment while meeting a community need.

**\*Component:** Any education, training, work or job search activity associated with the Welfare to Work program.

**Conciliation:** A process through which a participant who has failed or refused to cooperate without good cause is given an additional opportunity to cooperate with Welfare to Work requirements. The Employment Counselor must make every reasonable effort to resolve the dispute before a financial sanction is imposed.

**\*Doctor:** A health care professional that is licensed by a state to diagnose/treat physical and mental impairments that can affect an individual's ability to work or participate in Welfare to Work activities. Also includes, but is not limited to, doctors of medicine, osteopathy, chiropractic, and licensed/certified psychologists.

**Domestic Abuse:** Assaultive or coercive behavior, which includes physical abuse, sexual abuse, psychological abuse, economic control, stalking, isolation, threats, or other types of coercive behaviors occurring within a domestic relationship.

**\*Eligibility Technician:** An Alameda County employee who is responsible for determining eligibility for public assistance, including computing budgets and approving issuance benefits.

**Employment Counselor:** An Alameda County employee who is responsible for guiding and tracking the participant's progress through the Welfare to Work program from orientation to conciliation, including participant contracts and referrals to supportive services.

**Employment Counseling:** Counseling, primarily on a group basis, to assist Welfare to Work participants with overcoming barriers to Welfare to Work participation or to labor market (re) entry. Counseling will include: peer support groups, referrals to existing resources for personal counseling, stress management and assistance in making the transition to self-sufficiency.

**\*Employment Plan:** An agreement between the Social Services Agency and the participants on job goals to be reached through the Welfare to Work Plan.

**Exclusion Period:** A three (3) month period of time in which an exempt volunteer is not allowed to participate in Welfare to Work due to failing to meet Welfare to Work requirements without a good reason.

**Exempt:** A CalWORKs applicant or recipient who is not required to register for or participate in Welfare to Work as a condition of eligibility.

**Financial Sanction:** The discontinuance of aid for a recipient or for the parents when the recipient fails or refuses to cooperate with Welfare to Work requirements without good cause.

# Welfare to Work Participant Handbook Glossary

**Independent Assessment:** An evaluation by a designated impartial third party to develop a binding Welfare to Work plan when the participant and the assessor have been unable to reach an agreement on developing Welfare to Work plan.

**\*Job Developer:** An Alameda County employee who is responsible for providing assistance to clients and other participants in finding employment, and contacting employers and community organizations to determine availability of employment.

**Job Readiness:** A Welfare to Work activity that provides a participant with training to learn basic job seeking and interviewing skills, to understand employer expectations, and to learn skills designed to enhance an individual's capacity to move toward self-sufficiency.

**Job Search:** A Welfare to Work activity in which the participant's principal activity is to seek employment.

**License – exempt:** Childcare providers who care for their own children (or those of a relative) and children from only one other family are not required to have a license.

**Participant:** A mandatory or voluntary CalWORKs recipient who is actively participating in the Welfare to Work program.

**Provider:** Any organization, including community-based organizations (CBO), that provides employment and training services, which usually include an intake process, testing, counseling, job training and job placement.

**Registration:** The process whereby a CalWORKs recipient is registered for Welfare to Work.

**Satisfactory Progress:** Meeting the expectations/standards of the employer or education/training provider.

**Self-Initiated Program:** An education or vocational training program that a participant is enrolled in at the time of appraisal. Such programs may or may not be an approved Welfare to Work activity.

**State Hearing:** A process that a participant can request to be heard if he/she is not in agreement of why the sanction/penalty or action was placed on his/her CalWORKs case.

**Subsidized Employment:** Employment in which the Welfare to Work participant's employer is partially or wholly reimbursed for wages and/or training costs.

**Successful Completion:** The satisfactory achievement or fulfillment of the provider's standard of attendance, progress

and performance requirements in employment, job training and educational services of the Welfare to Work program.

**Supportive Services:** Childcare costs, transportation costs, ancillary expenses, and, as available and needed, referrals to mental/behavioral health, alcohol and other drugs (AOD), **personal counseling.**

**\*TANF:** Temporary Assistance for Needy Families is the federal term for CalWORKs.

**Time on Aid:** A CalWORKs recipient is limited to a lifetime of 60 months of aid, also known as the Time Clock. The clock can stop for certain exemptions and be extended for specific reasons..

**TrustLine:** California's registry of in-home childcare providers, tutors and in-home counselors who have passed a background screening. All caregivers listed with Trust Line have been cleared through a fingerprint check of records at the California Department of Justice for disqualifying criminal convictions or substantiated child abuse reports in California.

**Unsubsidized Employment:** Full or part-time employment in the public or private sector that is not subsidized by TANF or any other public program. Unsubsidized employment includes self-employment.

**Vocational Training:** A Welfare to Work activity, which includes a short-term training designed to teach a job skill that can be completed for a private employer.

**Volunteer:** A CalWORKs applicant or recipient who, though not required to participate in the Welfare to Work program, chooses to participate.

**Welfare to Work Plan:** A plan developed by the Social Services Agency and the participant that specifies the program activities in which a participant shall engage and the services that will be provided to the participant.

**Work Experience:** A Welfare to Work training activity in the public or private sector under the close supervision of the activity provider that helps provide basic job skills enhance existing job skills in a position related to the participant's experience, or provide a needed community service that shall lead to unsubsidized employment.

**Work Study:** A federally funded program that allows participants to work at or through the school. The hours of participation count towards requirements.

\*Terms that are defined but not included in the Welfare to Work Participant handbook.

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## A final word...

We wrote this handbook to explain how Welfare to Work can work for you so that you can get the most out of this program. The handbook should answer many of the questions you have about your rights and responsibilities, your Welfare to Work Plan, what activities are available to you, and what you can do if you disagree with any action taken. If you still have questions, please be sure to ask your Employment Counselor. Alameda County Social Services staff is here to help you, and your family gain self-sufficiency.

### **REMEMBER**

*The goal of Welfare to Work is to help you prepare for work and find a job so you can support yourself and your family*



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