

**County of Orange Social Services Agency
Family Self-Sufficiency & Adult Services Division**

Program/Area: CalWORKS/Welfare-To-Work
Title: Welfare-to-Work Program Activities and Participation Requirements
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PURPOSE This policy outlines CalWORKs Welfare-to-Work (WTW) allowable activities and participation requirements while providing an overview of the WTW Program.

POLICY WTW is a mandated program under the California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids (CalWORKs) Act. The program is designed to help adults receiving cash aid move from economic dependency to self-sufficiency through employment, education, and training activities focusing on goal achievement and skills development that lead to unsubsidized employment. WTW offers coaching and on-the-job training, career preparation and educational activities to assist participants in achieving their goals toward self-sufficiency.

The WTW program also offers specialized services that are designed to remove barriers to WTW participation for families experiencing a crisis or situation that destabilizes the family and impairs the participant's ability to meet work participation requirements.

WTW REQUIREMENTS All mandatory and voluntary participants must attend Orientation and Appraisal. Participants must be informed of their rights and responsibilities, the consequences for not participating in their assigned WTW activity(ies), and the criteria for successful completion of the program.

- For mandatory participants, include the mandated hours of participation and potential financial sanction if noncompliant.
- For voluntary participants, include the discontinuance of supportive services if noncompliant.

Mandatory participants are required to meet the minimum participation requirements in approved WTW activities to receive cash aid. Participation requirements do not apply to WTW exempt volunteers. The weekly average participation requirements for the Assistance Unit (AU) are as follows:

- Single parent AU with a child under 6 years old must participate an average of 20 hours per week.
- Single parent AU without a child under 6 years old must participate an average of 30 hours per week.

- Two-parent AU must participate an average of 35 hours per week (hours can be shared).

Employed participants whose activity hours are less than the required minimum hours of participation will need to participate in an additional activity to meet the minimum hours required.

The participation requirements also vary based on the AU structure, for example:

1. AU with Excluded Second Parent

AU consisting of an aided natural or adopted parent and an excluded parent in the home are considered a single-parent AU. The required hours of participation (20 or 30) are based on the age of the child.

2. AU with a Timed-Out Second Parent

AU consisting of an aided parent and a timed-out parent; the aided parent must participate to meet the minimum average of 35 hours per week.

3. AU with a Sanctioned Parent

AU consisting of an aided parent and a sanction parent; the aided parent must participate to meet the minimum average of 35 hours per week. Hours from the sanctioned parent cannot be combined with the aided parent's hours unless, the sanctioned parent successfully completes a curing plan and is added back to the AU.

4. Two-Parent AU

AU consisting of two aided parents (includes adopted, Registered Domestic Partners, and/or same sex marriage), the participation requirements depend on the structure of the AU:

- One parent with a disability-based exemption and a mandatory parent are considered a single parent AU. The required hours of participation (20 or 30) are based on the age of the child.
- One parent with an exemption not disability based and are considered a two parent AU. The average 35 hours can be shared when the exempt parent is volunteering.
- One parent is participating, and the other parent is excused from participation based on Spouse Meeting Participation (SMP) 35-hour participation requirement and may choose to volunteer to participate in WTW at any time.
- When two aided parents share the 35-hour to meet the participation requirement, the second parent will no longer be excused and becomes a mandatory participant.

Refer to WT 40 – Hourly Participation Requirements for CalWORKs and TANF for additional information.

WTW FLOW

CMs play a crucial role in the WTW Program, working directly with the participants throughout various stages to help them achieve self-sufficiency.

Below is an example of an initial WTW program flow:

1. Orientation where the participant will learn about the program, requirements, and their rights and responsibilities.
2. Appraisal to assess participant's goals, employment and education history, job skills, potential barriers to employment such as substance use and mental health issues, and supportive service needs.
3. Refer participant to Family Stabilization Program, Behavior Health Services, and Domestic Abuse Services, if the need is identified during Appraisal.
4. Refer participant to Job Search Readiness, if applicable.
5. Refer participant to Assessment, if needed. If additional training or education is required, a more in-depth assessment is conducted to explore work history, skills, and goals which will inform the development of a personalized plan.
6. Develop a personalized WTW plan based on the assessment results that outline specific activities (education, training, job search, or work experience) needed to overcome barriers and achieve employment goals. The plan also specifies the number of weekly hours the participant is expected to participate in activities, which varies based on the family structure and age of the child.
7. Review and offer supportive services such as childcare, transportation, ancillary, and other resources to facilitate participation in WTW activities.
8. Case management by monitoring participant's progress in WTW plan, providing support, coaching, and addressing any challenges or barriers encountered. Refer to Policy 201.2 – Monthly Contact for additional information.

Refer to WT 86 – Orange County CalWORKs WTW Program Flowchart for additional information on the WTW workflow.

**DETERMINING
WTW
ACTIVITIES**

Appropriate WTW activities will be assigned upon mutual agreement between the CM and participant, along with an evaluation of participation barriers utilizing the following as applicable:

- CalWORKs 2.0 – A New Approach to Empowerment
- OCAT Appraisal Summary and Recommendation (ASR) results

- WTW Self-Appraisal Form – F063-41-03

When working with participants, the CM will emphasize the concept of self-sufficiency and enroll each participant in WTW activities to meet their goals.

CM should review Time on Aid (TOA) with Employment Eligibility Specialist (EES) to determine if activity being referred is appropriate based on the length of remaining TOA.

WTW activities include, but not limited to:

1. Employment
 - Self-Employment
 - Unsubsidized Employment (UEM)
2. Subsidized Employment
 - Public Subsidized Employment Program (PSEP)
 - Work Experience Program (WEX)
 - Work Study
3. Unpaid Work Experience
 - Community Service Program (CSP)
 - Experience Provides the Resources for Tomorrow (EXPT)
 - Home Visiting Program (HVP) – Non-Paid WEX
4. Job Search and Job Search Readiness Assistance
 - Appraisal/Reappraisal
 - Assessment (ASMT)
 - Behavioral Health
 - Mental Health Services
 - Substance Use Services
 - Domestic Abuse Services
 - Independent Job Search (IJS)
 - Job Search Readiness (JSR)
 - Job Skills
 - Orientation
 - Striving Towards Elevating Personal Success (STEPS)
5. Vocational Education
 - Cal-Learn
 - General Education Development (GED) Academy
 - Privately Funded Postsecondary Educational Institutions
 - Adult Basic Education (ABE) – Post-ASMT
 - English as a Second Language (ESL) – Post-ASMT
 - Self-Initiated Program (SIP) – Self-enrolled prior to Appraisal
 - Publicly Funded Postsecondary Educational Institutions
 - Adult Basic Education (ABE) – Pre-ASMT
 - English as a Second Language (ESL) – Pre-ASMT

- Vocational Training – Contractor
6. Other- Activities
- Children & Family Services (CFS)
 - Children & Family Reunification (CFR)
 - Department of Rehabilitation (DOR)
 - Family Stabilization Services (FS)

Participation in barrier removal activities is voluntary and can be counted as participation. The participant must agree to these services before a referral can be sent.

Refer to WT 15 – WTW Activities Matrix and WT 90 – CalSAWS Activities for additional information on WTW activities.

CALCULATION OF PARTICIPATION HOURS

Weekly Hours

The method used to calculate the average number of hours per week in the month for CalWORKs participation is as follows:

1. Add up the total number of participation hours in all WTW activities for the month,
2. Divide the total by 4.33, then round to the nearest whole number. Calculate the Average Number of Participation Hours Per Week – F063-41-418 worksheet will assist CMs when determining whether the family met the minimum hourly participation requirements. The completed worksheet must be imaged to Hyland Perceptive Experience (HPE) to support the CMs determination.

For paid activities, participation hours may be projected for up to six months. Refer to the Period of Projected Hours Processing Guide for information on how to project participation hours.

For vocational educational allowable work participation hours, refer to Policy 223 Vocational Education – Privately Funded Postsecondary Institutions and Policy 223-A – Publicly Funded Postsecondary Institutions.

Good Cause (GC) Hours

GC is a temporary situation or circumstance that prevents a participant from meeting their WTW requirements, such as attending a scheduled activity or working a specific number of hours. The CM can grant GC for not participating in WTW activities on a case-by-case basis when appropriate. Refer to Policy 240 – Noncompliance Process and WTW 27 – Request for Good Cause Determination for more information.

GC may be granted for but not limited to the following reasons:

- Educational appointments
- Temporary illness or injury of the participant

- Medical appointments for a parent or child
- Scheduled appointments for CalWORKs, CalFresh, or Medi-Cal case
- Transportation related issues
- Childcare related issues

Excused Absence Hours

Excused absences are instances where a participant is absent from an activity, but the absence is considered acceptable due to a valid reason falling under the umbrella of “good cause”. Excluding the ten allowable holidays listed below, excused absences are limited to 80 hours in a 12-month period, with no more than 16 hours occurring in a single month during the preceding 12-month period.

Holiday Hours

Scheduled hours in **unpaid** activities can be counted as actual hours of participation when the participant is scheduled to participate on the day of or the observed day of the following holidays:

1. New Year’s Day
2. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
3. President’s Day (Washington’s birthday)
4. Memorial Day
5. Independence Day
6. Labor Day
7. Veterans Day
8. Thanksgiving Day
9. Day After Thanksgiving
10. Christmas Day

Note: Holiday hours in **paid** activities will be allowed only if the participant is paid for the hours of a holiday, the actual paid hours are countable as participation.

To count a GC, holiday, or excused absence as actual countable hours of participation, the participant must have been scheduled to participate in the countable unpaid work activity for the period of the absence that is reported as participation.

Documentation and Verification

Verification of GC/holiday/excused absences must be imaged into HPE. CalSAWS Journal entries must document the counting of GC, holiday, and/or excused absence hours as actual participation hours, any verification provided, activity attendance, case updates, and all participant contacts.

REFERENCES

- Policy 201 – Appraisal/Re-Appraisal
- Policy 204 – Job Search and Job Readiness Assistance (JSR)
- Policy 210 – Assessment
- Policy 211 – Welfare-to-Work Plan
- Policy 212 – Employment Activities
- Policy 214 – Job Skills

- Policy 215 – Subsidized Employment Programs (PSEP/WEX)
- Policy 216 – General Educational Development (GED) Academy
- Policy 217 – Striving Towards Elevating Personal Success (STEPS)
- Policy 223 – Vocational Education – Privately Funded Postsecondary Educational Institutions
- Policy 223-A – Vocational Education – Publicly Funded Postsecondary Educational Institutions
- Policy 226 – Independent Job Search (IJS)
- Policy 240 – Noncompliance Process
- Policy 260 – Cal-Learn Management
- Policy 275 - Vocational Training – Contracted Provider (VT)
- Policy 286 – Department of Rehabilitation (DOR)
- Policy 289 – Experience Provides the Resources for Tomorrow (EXPRT)
- Policy 291 – Community Service Program (CSP)
- Policy 301 – CalWORKs Stage One Child Care Program
- Policy 310 – Transportation Supportive Services
- Policy 315 – Ancillary Supportive Services
- Policy 401 – Behavioral Health Services
- Policy 402 – Domestic Abuse Services
- Policy 403 – FSS and CFS Mutual Clients Collaboration
- Policy 403-A – CalWORKs Family Reunification Services
- Policy 406 – CalWORKs Home Visiting Program
- Policy 407 – Family Stabilization Program

ATTACHMENTS

- Calculate the Average Number of Participation Hours Per Week – F063-41-418
- CalWORKs 2.0 A New Approach to Empowerment
- Period of Projected Hours Processing Guide
- WT 15 – WTW Activity Matrix
- WT 40 – CalWORKs and TANF Hourly Participation Requirements
- WT 86 – Orange County CalWORKs WTW Program Flowchart
- WT 90 – CalSAWS Activities
- WTW 27 – Request for Good Cause Determination
- WTW Self-Appraisal Form – F063-41-03