

CalWORKs Time Limits

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CALWORKS TIME LIMITS

Adult CalWORKs participants are limited to 48 cumulative months of cash assistance in their lifetime, with very few exceptions. Children may continue to be eligible in the "Safety Net" program once the parent(s) are removed from aid.

As many participants approach the CalWORKs 48-month time limit, it is critical to ensure they are provided with intensive services that lead to self-sufficiency. The participant may request evaluation for any time limit exemptions or extenders if not already identified by the Case Manager (CM) or the Ongoing Services Worker (OSW).

Participants are informed of time limits requirements, exemptions, and extenders at application, at RRR and individually at regular intervals. Participants are notified via Notices of Action of their individual cumulative number of countable months :

- At application
- At RRR
- At the individual's 42nd and 46th month of aid (effective January 1, 2012)
- At the individual's 48th month of aid (effective July 1, 2011)
- When any action is taken on the case due to Time on Aid
- Upon a participant's request

CASE MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES

There are many ways in which a CM or OSW may help prepare a participant when reaching his/her time limit and transitioning to the Safety Net program.

With time on CalWORKs limited to 48 months for most participants, it is important that participants and their families be allowed every opportunity to achieve self-sufficiency through his/her WTW participation. The CM plays a vital role in this objective throughout the 48 months that a participant receives aid.

The CM and OSW will begin **intense** time limit discussions with the participant no later than his/her 36th month on aid, and will assess the participant's WTW activities. Strategies the CM and OSW may use are:

- Engage the participant in the discussion.
 - At every contact, remind the participant how much time is left.
 - Discuss the following consequences of timing out:
 - The participant is no longer eligible to CalWORKs.
 - The participant is no longer eligible to employment services.
 - Cash grant decreases; family may become ineligible.
 - May not be able to reapply in the future.
 - Discuss the benefits the participant remains potentially eligible to after he/she has timed out such as Post-Aid Child Care Services, CalFresh and Medi-Cal.
 - Discuss exemptions and extenders with the participant.
 - Review the WTW Plan and activities to ensure there is a solid path to self-sufficiency and create a new plan when appropriate.
 - Recommend that marginally employed participants seek better employment opportunities within their current jobs by requesting cross-training, increased responsibility and/or experience that will improve their prospects for promotion.
 - Offer marginally employed participants the opportunity to attend Assessment to receive a professional evaluation of their needs and skills to create a WTW Plan customized to benefit the participant.
 - Coordinate a Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT) to address issues that present barriers to the participant (Refer to Policy 228 - Multi-Disciplinary Team).
 - Conduct home visits to identify any potential barriers.
- Communicate time limit information to any WTW activity service provider - this is critical to ensure proper services are provided.**

**CALWORKS
48-MONTH TIME LIMIT
EXEMPTIONS**

Any month in which the parent/caretaker relative meets one of the following conditions for any period during the month is not counted on his/her CalWORKs 48-month time limit:

- Age 60 or older
- Verified disability expected to last at least 30 days
- Caretaking responsibilities that impair the participant's ability to be regularly employed or participate in welfare-to-work activities because he/she:

Provides care for an ill or incapacitated household member

Is the non-parent caretaker relative of either a dependent child of the court or a child the county determines is at risk of placement in foster care

- Eligible for, participating in or exempt from the WTW PPT/Cal-Learn Program whether in his/her parent's Assistance Unit (AU) or his/her own AU.
- Victim of domestic abuse and the county determines good cause exists to waive the CalWORKs 48-Month Time Limit (Domestic Abuse Waiver)
- Unaided (out of AU) for any reasons other than exceeding the CalWORKs 48-month time limit
- Cash aid for the month is fully reimbursed by child support, whether collected in that month or any subsequent month
- Overpayment month, an entire month of aid in which there was no eligibility, is fully repaid
- Former participant receiving child care payments only
- Does not receive a cash payment for the month because the grant amount is less than \$10.00 for any reason
- Caring for a child 12 to 23 months or 2 or more children under 6 years old (Refer to Policy 100-F1A -Temporary Welfare-to-Work Exemptions)
- Caring for a child zero through 11 months of age due to lack of available Supportive Services (Refer to Policy 100-F1A -Temporary Welfare-to-Work Exemptions)

**CALWORKS
48-MONTH TIME LIMIT
EXTENDERS**

Once a participant has been aided as an adult parent for a cumulative total of 48 months on CalWORKs, that parent will no longer be eligible unless **all** parents, aided stepparents, and/or aided caretaker relatives living in the home of the aided child meet any of the following CalWORKs 48-month time limit extender conditions:

- Age 60 or older
- Receiving disability benefits and the disability significantly impairs the participant's ability to be regularly employed or participate in WTW activities. Qualifying disability benefits for one or both parents include State Supplementary Program (SSP), In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS), State Disability Insurance (SDI) and Temporary Disability Insurance (TDI) Benefits
- Payment (SSP), In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS), State Disability Insurance (SDI) and Temporary Disability Insurance (TDI) Benefits.
- Caretaking responsibilities that impair the participant's ability to be regularly employed or participate in welfare-to-work activities because he/she:

Provides care for an ill or incapacitated household member

Is the non-parent caretaker relative of either a dependent child of the court or a child the county determines is at risk of placement in foster care

- Unable to maintain employment or participate in WTW activities based on the county's assessment and finding that the individual has a history of participation and full cooperation in WTW activities (Refer to *Adults Not Able to Work* section of this policy)

**CALWORKS
48-MONTH TIME LIMIT
WAIVER**

If the participant is a victim of domestic abuse and the Domestic Abuse Social Worker (DASW) in collaboration with the CM determines that the situation prevents or impairs the participant's ability to work or participate in WTW activities or that the participant has good cause, the CalWORKs 48-month time limit may be waived and cash aid and WTW services can continue. This is to be considered the same as a *time limit exemption and time limit extender*. The months will not count towards the CalWORKs 48-month limit. If the individual has already timed out, follow the Extraordinary Client Circumstances Policy D-V.7 for Safety Net CalWORKs adults.

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ADULTS NOT ABLE TO WORK

The CM in conjunction with the members of an MDT, if necessary, may determine that a participant is "unable to maintain employment." The determination to extend time may begin for a participant who has a history of participation and full cooperation in WTW activities **and** is impaired, not so severely that it meets exemption criteria, but nevertheless limits the participant's physical or mental ability to maintain employment. The participant must meet **one** of the following definitions:

1. The participant has met satisfactory WTW participation, attendance, and progress requirements and they do not have an instance of noncompliance that resulted in a WTW sanction.

Or;

1. The participant has had a WTW sanction or sanctions, however, he/she has also maintained a sustained period or periods of WTW participation despite the presence of an impairment or combination of impairments such as mental health, substance abuse, learning disability/developmental disability or domestic abuse issues.

Note: Six months or two or more periods of WTW participation within a consecutive 24-month period, including participation in orientation/appraisal, job search, assessment, and post-assessment activities that total 6 months or more, shall be considered a sustained period.

If the CM determines that the participant meets one of the above criteria, the next step for the CM is to determine the participant's **current** ability to maintain employment or participate in WTW activities. A participant who is fully participating (participation, attendance and progress are all satisfactory) in his/her WTW activity when they reach the CalWORKs 48-month time limit shall be considered able to maintain employment or participation in WTW activities unless the participant's WTW activity has been significantly modified to the participant's impairment.

If the CM believes that the participant may not be able to maintain employment or fully participate in WTW activities and the WTW activity has not been tailored to the participant's impairment, the CM will:

- Discuss the situation with his/her supervisor.
- With supervisor concurrence, the CM will:

Determine if the participant has recently had a MDT and if he/she is currently working on goals outlined in the MDT Action Plan.

If so, the extender will be granted. If the participant has either never had an MDT or had one that is no longer current, coordinate an MDT to review the participant's history and make a determination whether to extend the time limit

If the MDT determines that a participant is unable to maintain employment or participate in WTW activities, they will produce a written summary, including the reason for the extension, a re-evaluation date in six months, and the recommended Case Plan with goals set for the CM

- When there is a recommendation to extend the time limit based on the participant's inability to work or participate the participant will receive support for any barrier identified by the MDT
- When there is a recommendation to extend the time limit based on the participant's inability to work or participate, the extensions shall be made for six-month intervals and must be reviewed
- The CM will enter the case under exempt status in CalWIN, in the Employment Services Tab with the exemption reason of Unable to Maintain Employment or Participate in WTW Activities; there is no minimum participation requirement and all services and activities are voluntary
- The participant will continue to receive a cash grant for the duration of the extender
- The case remains with the CM and the OSW during the extension
- A WTW Plan is not required for services received under the extender. The MDT Plan will become the Case Plan
- The participant can receive supportive services for any approved WTW activity
- Upon review of an extended case, the MDT will convene again and determine the need for further extension or discontinuance
- The decision(s) to extend will be documented in case comments in CalWIN. Case comments will include the participant's history of compliance with WTW, the impairment or barrier that prevents the participant from obtaining or maintaining employment, who was present at the MDT, the determination of the MDT and the date the extender will be reviewed.

CALWIN ENTRIES

Activities/Components and referrals will be entered in CalWIN during any extender. The OSW will update Display Time Limit Summary on CalWIN to indicate the extender months.

REFERENCES

EAS 42-302

Policy 100-E3 - Time On Aid

Policy 228 - Multi-Disciplinary Team

Policy 100-F1A - Temporary Welfare-to-Work Exemptions

Extraordinary Client Circumstances Policy D-V.7

CalWIN Resource Guide - Viewing/Inquiring on an Individual Detail Time Clock

ATTACHMENTS

1. CW 2184 - CalWORKs 48-Month Time Limit
2. CW 2186A - CalWORKs Time Limit and WTW Participation Exemption Request Form
3. CW 2186B - CalWORKs and WTW Time Limit Exemption Determination

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