

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

Program/Area: CalWORKs
Title: Cal-Learn Program
Number: 100 C7 **Status:** Signature on file
Effective Date: 06/30/2009 **Revision Date:** 05/12/14
Approved:

PURPOSE The purpose of the Cal-Learn (CL) Program is to reduce the chances of long-term welfare dependency by serving pregnant and custodial teen parents under the age of 19 who have not obtained a high school diploma or equivalent and are receiving CalWORKs (CW). The Cal-Learn Program provides fiscal incentives and disincentives as well as needed supportive services and intensive case management to encourage these pregnant/parenting teens to stay in or return to school and graduate.

This policy will cover the CL Program eligibility including the participant's bonuses and/or sanctions and addressing transitioning out of the CL Program, while the [Cal-Learn/WTW Roles Policy 260](#) will focus on the Welfare-to-Work (WTW) role in Cal-Learn.

BACKGROUND Senate Bill (SB) 35 and SB 1078 established the Cal-Learn (CL) Program to address the unique educational, vocational, training, health, and other social services needs for the CalWORKs (CW) dependent pregnant teens and teenage parents to help them achieve self-sufficiency.

Effective January 1, 1998, Assembly Bill (AB) 1542 allowed pregnant and parenting teens to participate in CL instead of CW/WTW activities. On March 24, 2011 the California Legislature suspended the CL Program and the pregnant and parenting teens were enrolled in the Welfare-to-Work Pregnant and Parenting Teen Program (WTWT PPT) effective July 1, 2011.

Effective April 1, 2013, SB 1041 reinstated the CL Program. Refer to the [Transitioning WTW PPT Recipients to Cal-Learn](#) attachment for more information on reinstating the CL Program.

Social Services Agency/Family Self-Sufficiency Division and the Health Care Agency/Maternal Child/Adolescent Health/Adolescent Family Life Program (AFLP) partner to administer AFLP to the Cal-Learn clients.

PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS Participants will attend high school or an equivalent program on a full-time basis, as defined by the school, until they earn a high school diploma or its equivalent or turn 19-years old.

Note: An otherwise eligible teen that is 19-years of age may continue to participate in CL on a voluntary basis until he/she earns a high school diploma or its equivalent or turns 20 years old.

- An Assistance Unit (AU) with a teen parent or parents will receive a \$100 bonus up to four times in a 12-month period for each teen parent that makes satisfactory progress in his/her school program.
- Each teen parent earning a high school diploma or its equivalent before or within the month he/she turns 19-years old, or turns 20-years old for a voluntary 19-year old participant, will receive a \$500 bonus.

An AU with a teen parent or parents will receive \$100/\$50 sanction up to four times in a 12-month period for each teen parent who fails to make adequate progress in his/her school program without demonstrating good cause.

REQUIREMENTS FOR MANDATORY PARTICIPANTS Teens meeting all of the following criteria are considered mandatory participants unless exempt and must be enrolled in the CL Program.

- Be a CalWORKs recipient under the age of 19,
- Have not obtained a high school diploma or equivalent,
- Reside with his/her child and receive aid in the same AU, or be pregnant and the pregnancy is verified.

If both the mother and father are in the same AU and both meet all of the Cal-Learn eligibility requirements, they both must participate in the CL Program.

Note: For teens under the age of 18 years old not living with their senior parent(s), refer to [CW Policy 100-B10, Minor Parent AU](#).

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Intake/Continuing Worker

- Identify any CalWORKs pregnant or custodial parent under age 19 without a high school diploma or equivalent.
 - The mandatory Cal-Learn participant may be aided in his/her own case or in his/her parent/caretaker relative's case.
 - Obtain pregnancy verification, if applicable.
 - Flag case for assignment to a Specialized CL Continuing worker and CL Case Manager.
 - Narrate in CalWIN Case Comments.
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Specialized Cal-Learn Continuing worker only

- Process bonuses and sanctions when approved by the CL Case Manager (CM) (refer to the [Cal-Learn Bonus Issuance Resource Guide](#) or the [Cal-Learn Penalties Resource Guide](#)).
 - Evaluate and process supportive services limited to those services teen parents need to attend their school programs regularly.
 - Record and update Cal-Learn Participant School Name Entries in CalWIN based on information reported on the Cal-Learn Plan for Education, [F063-41-98](#).
 - Communicate with the assigned CL CM and AFLP CM changes about the Cal-Learn participant as needed via the Cal-Learn/AFLP Communication Document [F063-41-326](#).
 - Narrate in CalWIN Case Comments.
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Cal-Learn Program Case Managers (CM)

- Provide case management services for Cal-Learn participants.
- Monitor progress in school; determine exemptions, deferrals, and good cause.
- Complete monthly contact with Cal-Learn participant and document on the Cal-Learn Case Manager Monthly Checklist [F063-41-331](#).
- Determine bonus or sanction based on the Cal-Learn participant's educational plan.
- Ensure that CalWIN entries have been made to set up the approved bonus or sanction prior to sending the Cal-Learn/CalWORKs Communication Document [F063-41-78](#) to the Continuing worker to issue bonus or sanction.
- Send Cal-Learn/CalWORKs Communication Document to the Continuing worker to issue bonus (refer to [Cal-Learn Bonus Issuance Resource Guide](#)) or sanction (refer to [Cal-Learn Penalties Resource Guide](#)).
- Complete and submit Cal-Learn/AFLP referral ([F063-41-334](#)) to the AFLP Program within 5 working days of completing the Cal-Learn Orientation or sending the CL 2 Cal-Learn Program Requirements to the teen.
- Send supportive services referral to assigned Specialized Cal-Learn Continuing worker for processing.
- Send a copy of the Cal-Learn Plan for Education, [F063-41-98](#), to the assigned Specialized Cal-Learn Continuing worker and provide information about the CL Plan to the AFLP CM via the Cal-Learn/AFLP Communication Document [F063-41-326](#) no later than 90-days after the start date of the Cal-Learn Program.
- Provide the assigned Specialized Cal-Learn Continuing worker with revised Cal-Learn Plan for Education, [F063-41-98](#) and provide the revised information about the CL Plan to the AFLP CM via the Cal-Learn/AFLP Communication Document [F063-41-](#)

- 326, as needed.
 - Communicate with the assigned CL Continuing worker and AFLP CM changes about the Cal-Learn participant as needed via the Cal-Learn/AFLP Communication Document [F063-41-326](#).
 - Narrate in CalWIN Case Comments.
 - Complete the STAT 45 Cal-Learn Program Monthly Status Report on a monthly basis and utilize the STAT 45 Monthly Log to manage the CL cases and provide accurate statistics.
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AFLP Case Managers (CM)

- Provide intensive case management services in accordance with Adolescent Family Life Program Standards (AFLP) for Cal-Learn participants. The intensive case management services shall include the following:
 - Linking each parent to needed health and social services available in the teen parent's community, including, but not limited to those designed to:
 - Reduce the incidence of maternal and child morbidity and mortality, including the incidence of low birth weight infants;
 - Enhance the teen parent's parenting skills;
 - Facilitate an effective ongoing relationship between the teen parent, the noncustodial parent and the child where it is in the best interest of the child and the teen parent; and
 - Assess the suitability of the teen parent's living situation including, but not limited to, the physical and emotional health and safety of the teen parent and child.
 - Providing teen parent-centered, culturally appropriate and goal oriented services.
 - Involving the teen parent and the teen parent's family, significant others, and support persons as equal partners with the Case Manager to identify needs and defining ways to meet those needs.
 - Communicating with the assigned Specialized Cal-Learn Continuing worker and/or Cal-Learn CM changes about the Cal-Learn Participant, as needed via the Cal-Learn/AFLP Communication Document [F063-41-326](#).
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CalWORKs Program

- Provide program oversight and policy development.
- Assist in policy interpretation.

School Districts

School districts and other providers of services to pregnant/parenting teens may identify and refer teens to CL.

Note: If the region has a specialized Cal-Learn caseload, transfer the

case after the required changes have been completed.

REQUIREMENTS FOR VOLUNTARY PARTICIPANTS

Individuals who meet all of the following conditions may participate in CL on a voluntary basis:

- Is a CalWORKs recipient 19 years of age;
- Was participating in CL prior to becoming 19 years of age;
- Has not obtained a high school diploma or equivalent;
- Is attending high school or an equivalent program on a full-time basis, as defined by the school, unless SSA determines that the teen has good cause for not complying with this requirement;
- Resides with his/her child in the same AU or is pregnant and the pregnancy is verified.

An individual who is voluntarily participating in CL is eligible for the same benefits as an individual who is mandatory.

An individual who chooses not to voluntarily participate in CL is subject to WTW activities and time limits.

Examples:

- A teen left CL at age 17 because her family went off CalWORKs. She is now 19-years old and reapplying for CalWORKs. If she meets all other eligibility requirements, she may again participate in CL on a voluntary basis until age 20.
- A 19-year old teen is receiving CalWORKs for the first time. Since he/she did not previously participate in CL, he/she cannot volunteer for CL.

PREGNANT-ONLY TEENS

A pregnant teen with no other children (AU of one) that has entered the Cal-Learn program is eligible for CalWORKs and Pregnancy Special Need (PSN) payment from the date of application.

Note: During the suspension of Cal-Learn from July 1, 2011 through June 30, 2012, CalWORKs applications for Pregnant Woman Only (PWO) teens with no high school diploma or equivalent were denied if the application was received within the first two trimesters of the pregnancy.

For a CalWORKs Semi-Annual Reporting (SAR) case, the PSN payment will continue through the end of the SAR Payment Period in which the child is expected to be born. However, if a recipient voluntarily reports the birth of the child mid-period, the PSN is discontinued at the end of the month prior to the month the newborn

child is added to the AU. The newborn is added to the AU the first month following the month the birth is reported.

If the recipient voluntarily reports the birth of the child mid-period, but adding the newborn would not result in an increase to the cash grant due to application of Maximum Family Grant (MFG) rules, the PSN shall continue to the end of the SAR Payment Period in which the birth was expected.

For a CalWORKs AR/CO case, the PSN Payment will continue through the end of the month prior to the month in which the newborn child is added to the AU.

- If the birth of the child is reported mid-year, the PSN is discontinued at the end of the month prior to the month the newborn child is added to the AU regardless of whether it is an increase or decrease to the cash grant because changes in household composition is a mandatory report for AR/CO cases.

Refer to [CalWORKs Policy 100-D2 PSN Based Aid](#) for more information.

TIME LIMITS

Cal-Learn participants are exempt from the CalWORKs 48-month time limit and the WTW 24-Month Time Clock. Any month of participation in Cal-Learn does not count toward the CalWORKs 48-month time limit or the WTW 24-Month Time Clock. If the Cal-Learn participant is aided in his/her own AU, the TANF clock ticks. If the Cal-Learn participant is not aided in his/her own AU, the TANF clock does not tick.

Refer to [CalWORKs Policy 100-E3 Time on Aid](#) and CalWORKs

BONUS ISSUED ON OPEN CASE

A bonus is a supplement to the CalWORKs grant that was earned by the Cal-Learn participant.

- The Continuing worker takes action to issue a bonus upon receipt of the Cal-Learn/CalWORKs Communication Document ([F063-41-78](#)) from the CL CM. The Continuing worker telephones or e-mails the CM if additional information is needed.
- A Cal-Learn bonus should not be included in the calculation of an overpayment adjustment, or Homeless Assistance payment.

Bonuses

- \$100 bonus is issued when the report card reflects satisfactory progress. The bonus may be authorized four times per year. The bonus is issued to the CL participant via warrant when the teen is not the head of household or issued via EBT when the teen is the head of household.
- \$500 bonus is issued when Cal-Learn participant graduates from high school with a diploma or equivalent. Issuance is one time only. The bonus is issued to the CL participant via warrant when the teen is not the head of household or issued via EBT when the teen is the head of household.

Note: Do not issue \$100 satisfactory progress bonus when the Cal-Learn participant will receive a \$500 graduation bonus for the same report card period.

TIME FRAME FOR ISSUANCE OF A BONUS

Cal-Learn/CalWORKs Communication Document ([F063-41-78](#)) is received by the Continuing worker at any time during the month. Issue bonus no later than the following month.

Example: Communication document received November 9th; the Continuing worker will issue the bonus no later than December 31st. The Cal-Learn Approval Bonus Notice of Action is automatically generated in CalWIN and the Continuing worker will have to complete the manual variables.

BONUS ISSUED ON CLOSED CASE

Issue a bonus on a closed case if it was earned while the CalWORKs case was active.

Case closed and in Continuing worker caseload number:

- Continuing worker issues the bonus.

Case closed and in Caseload #XXOB:

- Contact FSS Program for further instructions on issuance of the bonus.

SANCTIONS IMPOSED ON OPEN CASE

The Continuing worker takes action to impose a sanction upon receipt of the Cal-Learn/CalWORKs Communication Document ([F063-41-78](#)) from the CL CM. The Continuing worker should call or e-mail the CM if additional information is needed.

Do not include a Cal-Learn sanction in the calculation of an overpayment adjustment, or Homeless Assistance payment.

Sanctions

\$100 sanction is imposed when:

- Full-time credits not met
- No Good Cause found for Less than Adequate Progress
- No Report Card Received

\$50 sanction is imposed when:

- Good Cause found for Less Than Adequate Progress and no Good Cause found for late submission of a Report Card reflecting Less Than Adequate Progress
- No Good Cause found for late submission of a Report Card reflecting Adequate Progress or better

Cal-Learn sanctions are applied to the AU grant over two consecutive months following timely notice. If a \$100 sanction is imposed, \$50 will be deducted from the CalWORKs grant each month. If a \$50 sanction is imposed, \$25 will be deducted from the CalWORKs grant each month.

CL sanction is considered a County-Initiated Action and may occur at any time during the Semi-Annual/Annual Payment Period. CL sanction shall be initiated mid-period/year only after timely and adequate notice of action can be provided to the client.

Example: The SAR Payment Period established is January, February, March, April, May, and June. On January 22nd, the Cal-Learn participant provides a report card that shows Less than Adequate Progress. The Continuing worker will be notified by the CL CM to initiate a \$100 sanction; however, there is not enough time to issue a 10-day NOA in January to reduce February benefits, so the sanction becomes effective March 1. CL sanction will end effective April 30.

TRANSITIONING OFF CL

The CL CM is required to assist the teen parent in transitioning to participate in WTW activities when it is known that the teen parent is approaching the end of participation in the CL Program.

When a teen parent has reached the end of his/her CL participation, the CL CM shall discontinue the Cal-Learn Program in CalWIN per the [Cal-Learn CalWIN Instructions Resource Guide](#) and notify the CL Continuing worker. The CL CM will also notify the AFLP worker via [F063-41-326](#) Cal-

Learn/AFLP Communication Document form.

The Cal-Learn Continuing worker will Register the participant in the WTW Program and complete a 41-70 to assign the WTW case per current business process.

Note: Prior to Registering the participant in the WTW Program, the CL Continuing worker will evaluate if the participant meets a WTW exemption. Refer to [CalWORKs Policy 100-F1 WTW Exemptions](#).

CALFRESH

Bonuses and sanctions shall be treated as follows in the CalFresh Program:

Bonuses

The \$100 and \$500 bonuses are exempt from income. They are considered a non-recurring lump sum payment and counted as a resource in the month received.

Sanctions

The actual CalWORKs grant received is to be considered in CalFresh. When the CalWORKs grant is reduced, use the reduced amount.

CORRECTIVE ACTION WHEN THE COUNTY FAILS TO ENROLL A PREGNANT OR PARENTING TEEN IN CL PROGRAM

When it is discovered a teen was not enrolled in the CL Program, follow these steps:

- Deem notification to have occurred as of the date the teen would have been noticed, if they had been properly referred to the CL program.
- Restore bonuses that would have been issued during the time the teen was erroneously not in CL.
- Reimburse the teen for any child care, transportation, and ancillary expenses incurred during this time.
- Retroactive bonuses and supportive services are not considered income or property in the month received or the following month.
- Retroactive bonuses cannot be used to offset any overpayments; however, the teen may voluntarily repay a supportive service overpayment.
- No sanction shall be retroactively applied since the teen lacked proper notice and the supportive services to help motivate them to make adequate progress in school.
- Existing CL NOAs are to be used to inform the teen of retroactive payments.

FORMS

- [Cal-Learn/CalWORKs Communication Document \(F063-41-78\)](#)
- [Cal-Learn Plan for Education \(F063-41-98\)](#)
- [Cal-Learn/AFLP Communication Document \(F063-41-326\)](#)
- [Cal-Learn Case Manager Monthly Checklist F063-41-331](#)
- [Cal-Learn/AFLP Referral Form \(F063-41-334\)](#)

REFERENCES

- EAS Manual 42-762 – 42.769
- ACIN I-10-02
- ACL 12-60, 12-25, 12-49
- [CW Policy 100-B10, Minor Parent AU](#)
- [CalWORKs Policy 100-E3 Time on Aid](#)
- [CalWORKs Policy 207 WTW 24-Month Time Clock](#)
- [Cal-Learn Bonus Issuance Resource Guide](#)
- [Cal-Learn Penalties Resource Guide](#)
- [Cal-Learn CalWIN Instructions Resource Guide](#)
- [Transitioning WTW PPT Recipients to Cal-Learn](#)
- [Comparison of WTW PPT Program and CL Program](#)
- [Cal-Learn Cases - Operational Direction](#)
- [Cal-Learn Questions and Answers](#)