

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

Program/Area: CalWORKs/Welfare-To-Work

Title: **Eligibility for Teens Turning Age 18**

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Approved:

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to provide instructions for determining continued CalWORKs eligibility for teens who turn age 18, including: evaluating an Assistance Unit (AU) member turning age 18, teens without children, and pregnant/parenting teens. This policy also provides guidance to ensure a seamless determination of eligibility, and underpayments for teens erroneously terminated at age 18.

**COUNTY
REQUIREMENTS**

A child meets the age requirement for CalWORKs eligibility until his/her 18th birthday. Existing policy requires counties to review cases for continuing eligibility when any AU member turns age 18. Teens receiving cash aid should not be automatically terminated upon their 18th birthday, as they may be eligible for continued benefits.

The [CW 2103](#) Reminder For Teens Turning 18 Years Old is sent to the senior parents/caretaker relatives of aided teens 60 days before the teens turn age 18 to inform them of possible continuing eligibility options. The [CW 2103](#) informs teens that:

- They can still receive benefits in their parent's/caretaker relative's AU after their 18th birthday if they meet the educational, training, and/or disability criteria.
- If they have children of their own, they may choose to remain in the senior parent's/caretaker relative's case if they meet the educational, training, and/or disability criteria outlined in the [Teens without Children](#) section of this policy, or they may apply for their own CalWORKs case. If they choose to have their own case they must be informed that:
 - Their grant will be increased in most cases.
 - They do not have to move out of their senior parent's/caretaker relative's home to start their own AU.
 - If the Maximum Family Grant (MFG) rule was applied to the minor parent's child, the minor parent's child can now be included when determining the cash aid payment

in the pregnant or parenting teen's case.

CalWIN ALERTS CalWIN will auto-generate the following alert in the Display Case Alert Window: "This individual, a CalWORKs Aided Pregnant/Parenting teen, is turning 18 in sixty days. Send the CW 2103 if appropriate." The alerted Intake/Continuing Worker must send the [CW 2103](#) to the senior parents/caretaker relatives. Refer to the [Alerts Resource Guide](#) for more information.

TEENS WITHOUT CHILDREN Mandatory inclusion rules apply to teens who receive aid as dependent children, have no children of their own, and are not pregnant. They must be aided in their parent's/caretaker relative's AU if they continue to meet at least one of the following educational, training, and/or disability requirements:

- They are enrolled full-time in high school and are expected to graduate before reaching age 19,
- They have not completed high school but are in a vocational or technical training program that does not result in a college degree, provided they are expected to complete the program before reaching age 19,
- They attend high school full-time or are in a vocational or technical training program and are not expected to graduate by age 19 from high school or vocational school due to being disabled. Disability criteria includes currently receiving or having received one of the following in the past:
 - a. SSI/SSP benefits,
 - b. Individual Education Plan (IEP),
 - c. Section 504 Plan,
 - d. Regional Center services,
 - e. Any other current or past disability benefit.

or

- They are foster children living with an approved caretaker relative, and are doing one of the following:
 - a. Completing high school or an equivalency program,
 - b. Enrolling in post-secondary or vocational school,
 - c. Participating in a program or activity that promotes or removes barriers to employment,
 - d. Employed at least 80 hours per month, or
 - e. Unable to participate in school or employment due to a documented medical condition.

Eligibility to CalWORKs benefits continues until one of the following

occurs (whichever occurs first):

- The teen graduates from high school or completes a vocational or technical training program,
- The teen turns 19, or
- The teen stops attending school full-time.

VERIFICATION

The following is acceptable verification confirming the teen is expected to graduate before his/her 19th birthday:

- The CalWIN generated CSF 37 School/Educational Institution Attendance Verification completed by the school/educational institution verifying the teen's expected date of graduation. Refer to [CalWORKs Policy 100-E4 School Attendance](#) for more information.

Acceptable verification of the teen's disability includes:

- A Social Security determination letter.
- A statement from the Regional Center regarding past or current receipt of services.
- A copy of the Individual Education Plan (IEP) or Section 504 Plan.
- The CalWIN generated CSF 37 School/Educational Institution Attendance Verification completed by the school/educational institution verifying the student currently has or has had an IEP or Section 504 Plan.

When a teen's disability cannot be verified by the criteria noted above, the parent/caretaker relative can provide:

- Independent verification of a current or past disability by a health care provider or trained qualified learning disabilities evaluation professional.
- A completed [CW 61](#) Medical Report to obtain information to verify the teen's disability. Refer to [CalWORKs Policy 100-F1 Welfare to Work Exemptions](#) for more information.

**PREGNANT/
PARENTING
TEENS**

Pregnant or parenting teens turning 18 may choose to establish their own AU or continue to be aided in their parent's/caretaker relative's AU provided educational and/or training requirements continue to be met.

If the teen chooses to establish his/her own AU, the beginning date of aid is the first of the month following the month he/she turns age 18. If the teen turns 18 on the first calendar day of the month, the AU

can be established on the day the teen turns 18.

CAL-LEARN PARTICIPANTS

Pregnant and parenting teens under the age of 19 without a high school diploma must be enrolled in the Cal-Learn Program and are considered mandatory participants until they earn a high school diploma or its equivalent or turn 19 years old.

Note: An otherwise eligible teen who is 19 years old may continue to participate in the Cal-Learn Program on a voluntary basis until he/she earns a high school diploma or its equivalent or turns 20 years old.

Upon reaching the age of 18, the mandatory Cal-Learn participant may choose to be aided in his/her own AU or in his/her parent's/caretaker relative's AU provided educational and/or training requirements continue to be met.

If the Cal-Learn participant chooses to establish his/her own AU, the beginning date of aid is the first of the following month he/she turns 18. If the teen turns 18 on the first calendar day of the month, the AU can be established on the day the teen turns 18.

Refer to [CalWORKs Policy 100-C7 Cal-Learn Program](#) for more information.

SEAMLESS TRANSITION INTO PREGNANT/PARENTING TEEN'S OWN AU

The transition of the pregnant/parenting teen turning 18 into his/her own AU must be as seamless as possible. To ensure no loss of aid, the process of determining eligibility for the teen should begin up to 60 days before the teen's 18th birthday.

To ensure there is no loss of aid when transitioning a pregnant/parenting teen to his/her own case, complete the following steps:

- Contact the teen to inform him/her of the option of establishing his/her own case, or remaining in the senior parent's/caretaker relative's case if he/she meets the educational and/or training requirements.
- If the teen chooses to establish his/her own case, or does not meet the educational, training, and/or disability criteria, send the [F063-30-938](#) Referral for 18 Year Old Teen to the Intake Board Clerk 30 days before the teen turns 18 for assignment. The Intake Board Clerk will coordinate with the DET HUB to process case clearance and complete the application/registration process. A new case number will be assigned (using the same CIN and CWIN) for the teen and his/her child(ren).

The senior parent's/caretaker relative's CalWORKs Continuing Worker will:

- Mail out a [CW 2103](#) to the senior parent/caretaker relative 60 days before the teen turns 18.
- Mail out the School/Educational Institution Attendance Verification Letter (CalWIN generated CSF 37) 30 days before the teen turns 18.

If the teen is a Cal-Learn participant, refer to the [Cal-Learn Cases – Operational Direction](#) attachment in CalWORKs Policy 100-C7.

Upon receiving application from the Board Clerk, the Intake Worker will:

- Mail the 18 year old teen an appointment letter for a face-to-face interview. Send a checklist for any additional needed information that is not in the senior parent's/caretaker relative's case.
- If the teen is eligible, process and authorize benefits without a break in aid for the pregnant/parenting teen and his/her child(ren).

Note: If a teen's AU is not established for any reason, including failure to show for the interview or provide verification, the teen remains in the parent's/caretaker relative's case provided the teen continues to be otherwise eligible (he or she meets the educational, training, and/or disability criteria).

If the teen is a Cal-Learn participant, the Intake Worker shall also:

- Narrate in CalWIN Case Comments once the CalWORKs case is approved and immediately transfer the new Cal-Learn case to the assigned Cal-Learn Case Manager (CM) per current business process. Include the case number from the senior parent's/caretaker relative's case in the narration.
- If the CalWORKs application is denied, narrate in CalWIN Case Comments and immediately notify the assigned Cal-Learn CM and the senior parent's/caretaker relative's CalWORKs Continuing Worker (if applicable).

Note: If the CalWORKs application is denied for any reason, including failure to show for the interview or provide verification, the mandatory Cal-Learn participant will remain in his/her parent's/caretaker relative's case provided the teen continues to be otherwise eligible (he/she meets the educational, training, and/or disability criteria).

IMAGING SYSTEM (SFIS) System (SFIS) requirements.

Children receiving benefits who turn age 18 after application are considered adults and are to be imaged no later than the next reinvestigation (RRR). The Intake/ Continuing Worker should have the individual complete the SFIS process if he/she is in the district office for any reason.

If the individual fails or refuses to complete the SFIS process, the entire family's CalWORKs benefits will be discontinued with a 10-day notice.

MAXIMUM FAMILY GRANT (MFG) CHILD

A child or children born to a minor parent aided in a parent's/caretaker relative's case who has the Maximum Family Grant (MFG) rule applied will no longer be subject to MFG once the teen parent establishes his/her own AU. Refer to [CalWORKs Policy 100-H3 Maximum Family Grant \(MFG\)](#) for more information.

TIME ON AID

If a separate AU is established for the teen, the CalWORKs and TANF time clocks for getting cash aid will begin unless the teen meets a qualifying CalWORKs/WTW exemption.

Note: Cal-Learn participants are exempt from the CalWORKs Time On Aid (TOA) limit.

Refer to [CalWORKs Policy 100-E3 Time On Aid](#) for more information.

BUDGETING

Teens who establish their own AU are treated as Recipients when determining their income limits, resource limits, disregards, and deprivation. The applicant Financial Eligibility Test is not applied.

Information on the teen's application is used to reasonably anticipate income and determine benefits for the next Semi-Annual Reporting (SAR) Payment Period.

The SAR cycle is established based on the teen's beginning date of aid. Refer to [CalWORKs Policy 100-E5 Semi Annual Reporting \(SAR\)](#) for more information.

UNDERPAYMENTS

The beginning date of aid for the teen's AU is the first of the month the teen is transferred into his/her own AU. An underpayment will be provided for any pregnant/parenting teen who had previously been aided as a dependent child and who had a break in aid between being aided in their parent's/caretaker relative's case and establishing his/her own case. Eligibility for the underpayment is contingent upon the teen remaining otherwise eligible for aid for the time period in question. Anytime an underpayment is discovered, an action must be taken to correct the case as soon as it is discovered.

OVERPAYMENT RECOVERY

Underpayments made to the teen parent as head of his/her own AU are offset against existing cash aid overpayments only in his/her own AU. However, do not use these underpayments to offset supportive service overpayments. Refer to [CalWORKs Policy 100-B15 Overpayments and Underpayments](#) for more information.

SUPPORTIVE SERVICES INCLUDING CAL-LEARN

Benefits and payment of supportive services, including all applicable Cal-Learn bonuses for teens enrolled in Cal-Learn prior to discontinuance from the parent's/caretaker relative's case, must be issued for any months in which the teen would have been eligible even if a signed application is not on file. These payments are not considered as income or property in the month received or the following month. Cal-Learn sanctions cannot be retroactively assessed for this time period.

ATTACHMENTS

1. [Cal-Learn Cases – Operational Direction](#)
 2. [CW 2103](#) Reminder For Teens Turning 18 Years Old
 3. [CW 61](#) Medical Report
 4. [F063-30-938](#) Referral for 18 Year Old Teen
 5. [ACA Evaluation for CalWORKs Aged Out Children Processing Guide](#)
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REFERENCES

ACL 01-77; ACL 04-33; ACL 04-50
ACIN I-71-02
EAS Manual 42-101; 40-171.11
[Alerts Resource Guide](#)
[CalWORKs Policy 100-B15 Overpayments and Underpayments](#)
[CalWORKs Policy 100-C7 Cal-Learn Program](#)
[CalWORKs Policy 100-E3 Time On Aid](#)
[CalWORKs Policy 100-E4 School Attendance](#)
[CalWORKs Policy 100-E5 Semi Annual Reporting \(SAR\)](#)
[CalWORKs Policy 100-F1 Welfare to Work Exemptions](#)
[CalWORKs Policy 100-H3 Maximum Family Grant \(MFG\)](#)