

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

Program/Area: CalWORKs/Welfare-To-Work
Title: **Welfare-to-Work Plan**
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**PURPOSE AND
OVERVIEW**

This policy provides guidelines to assist Case Managers (CM) on developing an appropriate plan to help the participant achieve self-sufficiency. A Welfare-to-Work (WTW) plan is the written agreement between a mandatory or voluntary WTW participant and the County, which documents and designates agreed-upon WTW activity assignment(s), required hours of participation, and any supportive services the County will provide to assist the participant overcome barriers.

**PARTICIPANTS
REQUIRE
WTW PLAN**

Individuals who are mandated or who volunteer to participate in WTW activities must enter into a WTW plan.

- Mandatory WTW participants must sign a WTW plan after completing assessment. ([Refer to Policy 210 – Assessment](#))
- Individuals enrolled in Self-Initiated Programs (SIPs) are required to meet with their Case Manager (CM) and complete a WTW plan that is reflective of their educational program. ([Refer to Policy 223 – Vocational Education - Publicly Funded Postsecondary Educational Institutions](#))
- CalWORKs recipients who are exempt from mandatory WTW participation may participate voluntarily. Volunteers sign a WTW plan stating that they will finish their assigned activity. (Refer to [Policy 100-F1 – Welfare-to-Work Exemptions](#))
- Teens ages 16 and 17 who have completed high school or its equivalent and are not enrolled or planning to enroll in postsecondary education, vocational or technical program must sign a WTW plan.
- Teens ages 16 and 17 who have not graduated from high school, and are not regularly attending elementary, secondary, vocational, or technical school on a full-time basis must sign a WTW plan.
- **Note:** WTW participants with a break in aid of less than 30 days who had an active WTW plan when they left aid will continue in their plan, if appropriate.

The following individuals are not required to sign a WTW plan:

- Parents who have entered into a Family Reunification (FR) plan with

Children and Family Services (CFS) as a result of all the children being removed from the home, and the individual's WTW activities and services are provided as part of the FR plan. A WTW case remains open in order to provide services associated with the FR plan. (Refer to [Policy 403-A - CalWORKs Family Reunification Program](#))

UNIVERSAL ENGAGEMENT

All mandatory WTW participants must sign a WTW plan within Universal Engagement timeframes indicated below.

- Applicants are required to sign a WTW plan after attending assessment, but no more than 90 days from the date that their eligibility for aid is determined, or the date that they are required to participate in WTW activities.
 - For individuals determined eligible on the date they apply, the 90-day period starts on the date that eligibility for aid is determined. This date shall be the date on the notice of action (NOA) that informs the individual of his/her eligibility to aid.
 - For individuals not eligible on the date they apply, the 90-day period starts on the date the individual begins receiving aid, which is the same date that he/she can be required to participate in WTW activities.
 - Individuals attending Job Search Readiness (JSR) within 30 days of their approval for aid (NOA date) must sign a WTW plan within 90 days of completing JSR.
- Recipients must sign a WTW plan within 90 days from the date they are required to participate in WTW activities.
 - If the worker knows in advance that an individual is required to participate, the worker has 90 days from that date to develop and have the individual sign a WTW plan.
 - If the worker does not know in advance and the participation status change is:
 - Discovered/reported timely (within 30 days of the change), the worker has 90 days from the date of discovery to develop and have the individual sign a WTW plan.
 - Not reported timely (over 30 days), the worker has 90 days from the discovery date to develop and have the individual sign a WTW plan.

Exceptions:

- The 90-day period does not include time that an individual spends in good cause, compliance, and curing processes, including the participation time in activities to end a sanction.
- The 90-day period also excludes time between a Learning Disability Evaluation (LDE) appointment and the date the County receives the final report, up to 90 days. After the final report is received by the County, or on

the 91st day, the 90-day period resumes.

See Attachment 1 – [Universal Engagement Examples](#) for specific examples of Universal Engagement.

DEVELOPING THE WTW PLAN

The WTW program offers a broad range of employment, employment preparation and educational activities, behavioral health services, and other necessary activities to help participants achieve self-sufficiency. CMs should use the following guidelines when working with participants to develop a WTW plan:

- Assessment reports – Assessment results should be reviewed with the participant and used as a guide to create the WTW plan but should not exclusively dictate which activities they must attend.
- Personal goals – Participants should be encouraged to share their personal goals and preferences. The participant's aspirations, skill base, and activity availability should be considered when selecting appropriate activities.
- Strength-based approach – Emphasis should be placed on a strength-based approach that includes assisting participants in identifying their strengths, prioritizing needs, and developing the skills they already possess to create goals that are realistic and attainable. CMs should utilize the results of the Online CalWORKs Appraisal Tool (OCAT) to collaborate with the participant to develop the WTW Plan with appropriate training program, service provider(s), and supportive services.
- Education – If the CM determines that basic literacy, math, English as a Second Language (ESL), or a high school diploma/GED are necessary to remove barriers to employment, the participant will be assigned to participate in Adult Basic Education (ABE). Participants must maintain satisfactory progress in all educational activities.
- Appropriate activities – Participants should be encouraged to engage in work activities, however, if participation in barrier-removal activities such as Domestic Abuse, Mental Health or Substance Use Services is indicated, these activities and their assigned hours must be noted in the WTW plan.
- Supportive Services – Necessary supportive services are to be addressed and offered to assist participants in attending assigned WTW activities.
- 16- and 17-year-old teens – WTW plans for 16- and 17-year-old teens are written for the purpose of completing high school or its equivalency only. The teen may voluntarily participate in additional WTW activities, including Job Search, Job Readiness, and Assessment, but only to the extent that they do not interfere with their school program.
- Mandatory WTW participants who have a break in aid longer than 30 days must sign a new WTW plan upon return to aid.

SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

Participants may have barriers that, unless addressed, may interfere with the success of their WTW plan. Circumstances that should be discussed with the participant include, but are not limited to:

- Learning disability, mental health or substance use issues – If there is a concern that a learning disability, mental health, or substance use issue exists which will impair an individual’s ability to obtain or retain employment, or participate in WTW activities, an appropriate evaluation and assessment should be completed. Assessment results will be incorporated into the WTW plan to reflect appropriate activities and reasonable accommodations. (Refer to [Policy 210-A – Learning Disability Screening and Evaluations](#) and [Policy 401 – Behavioral Health Services](#))
- Domestic abuse – Individuals must be informed that services are available to assist current or past victims of domestic abuse. If the individual discloses the existence of domestic abuse and agrees to receive services, the WTW plan will be developed to reflect appropriate domestic abuse activities. ([Refer to Policy 402 – Domestic Abuse Services](#))
- Child’s school attendance – School attendance is compulsory for all children in the Assistance Unit. Any participation required of the parent by the school to ensure the child’s attendance will be included in the WTW plan.

COMPONENTS OF THE WTW PLAN

The WTW plan describes the participant’s assigned activities, supportive services the County will provide to support the assigned activities, and any other specific requirements, including participation hours.

When developing the WTW plan, the CM will review the following forms with the participant:

- [Welfare-to-Work Plan Rights and Responsibilities \(WTW 1\)](#) – Provides an overview of a participant’s rights and responsibilities. The CM reviews the WTW 1 with the participant and provides them with a copy of the completed and signed form. The form certifies that the participant understands the program and its requirements.
- Welfare-to-Work Plan Activity Assignment (WTW 2) –The WTW 2 includes:
 - Weekly participation hours assigned to each activity and total hourly requirements,
 - Location, schedule, and participation hours of each activity,
 - Supportive services that the County will provide.

The CM reviews the WTW 2 with the participant and provides them with a copy of the completed and signed form. The CM will explain that by signing the WTW 2, the participant is authorizing release of their information, and the WTW plan may

be shared with other agencies, organizations, or activity providers.

For instructions on how to complete a WTW 2 Plan, refer to the following:

- Attachment 2 – [Description of WTW 2 Variables](#).

PLAN LENGTH

WTW plans will be for the length of time that is appropriate to the activity and needs of the individual, but not to exceed 12 months. Six-month plans will be written when the individual is starting a new activity or participating in barrier-removal activities such as Domestic Abuse, Mental Health or Substance Use Services.

For individuals participating in a SIP or Vocational Educational Training (VTR) program, a new WTW 2 is required at the start of each school term (semester, trimester, or quarter) indicating the activities, hours of participation, and supportive services consistent with that term. When developing the plan for SIP or Vocational Education refer to the following policies.

- [Policy 223 – Vocational Education and Training -Privately Funded Post-Secondary Education Institutions](#)
- [Policy 223 A – Vocational Education and Training – Publicly Funded Postsecondary Education Institutions](#)

CHANGES TO THE WTW PLAN

Participants may request changes to their WTW plan under the following circumstances:

- Initial WTW plan – The participant has 30 days from the beginning of their initial WTW activity to request a change or reassignment to another activity. This 30-day grace period is available only once during the participant’s lifetime on CalWORKs assistance. The CM may grant the participant’s request for reassignment if another activity is available and consistent with the WTW plan, and if the CM determines the other activity will readily lead to employment.
- Initial and/or subsequent WTW plan – The participant has three working days after signing the plan to reconsider and request changes to the terms of the plan.

Amending WTW Plan – When the participant completes their WTW Plan, and it is determined that continuing the activity will benefit the participant and lead to employment, the WTW Plan may be amended if there is no other change to the term of the plan. A new WTW plan is required when a participant begins any new WTW activity, when a concurrent activity is being added to an existing activity, or when there is any change within the existing activity (e.g., change in participation hours, location, or activity start time).

**WTW
ACTIVITIES**

Case Managers are responsible for engaging participants in allowable activities, verifying that the participant is meeting required weekly participation hours, and documenting in the case record.

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

- [CalWORKs 2.0 – A New Approach to Empowerment](#)
- [Employment Readiness Assessment Results](#)
- [Online CalWORKs Appraisal Tool \(OCAT\)](#)
- [Self-Appraisal Form \(F063-41-03\)](#)

The CM will encourage the participant to provide information about their employment history, education, skills, and need for supportive services, including any other relevant information to assign appropriate WTW activities. When working with participants, the CM will emphasize the concept of self-sufficiency and enroll each participant in WTW activities to meet their goals.

If an activity is not immediately available, the participant will be assigned to another activity such as job search and/or job readiness until the activity designated in the plan becomes available. (Refer to [Policy 200 – WTW Program, Activities and Participation Requirements](#))

**PARTICIPATION
HOURS**

Refer to [Policy 200 – WTW Program, Activities and Participation Requirements](#) for additional information regarding participation hour requirements and activity assignment.

**SUPPORTIVE
SERVICES**

A description of the supportive services must be included in every WTW plan. Mandatory and voluntary WTW participants may receive necessary supportive services, including childcare, transportation, and work or training-related expenses, to attend WTW appointments or participate in assigned activities.

Participants must also be provided with a written notice of the availability of childcare ([CCP 7](#)) when signing a WTW plan. (Refer to [Policy 302 Child Care Services – Stage One](#))

**MONTHLY
CONTACT**

CMs are required to complete a monthly contact with each participant to ensure progress in and compliance with their WTW plan. The contact is also an opportunity for the CM to provide support, motivation, and encouragement to the participant, as well as an opportunity to identify potential barriers to the participant's successful attainment of their WTW goals. (Refer to [Policy 201.2 – CalWORKs/Welfare-to-Work Monthly/Cal-Learn Monthly Contacts](#))

NONCOMPLIANCE A mandatory WTW participant who fails, without good cause, to participate as required in their assigned activity is subject to the noncompliance process, which may lead to WTW sanction. (Refer to [Policy 240 – Noncompliance Process](#))

Teens ages 16 and 17, who have not completed high school, or its equivalent must comply with school attendance requirements **and** mandatory activities outlined in their WTW plan. (Refer to [Policy 100-E4 – School Attendance](#))

CASE COMMENTS

Case comments must detail how the plan was developed, any identified special needs, activity assignment with specific information on hours of participation, and supportive services.

CMs must also record every subsequent participant contact, including monthly contacts and receipt of progress reports.

CALWIN ENTRIES

CalWIN entries must be made each time a WTW plan is developed. Refer to [Welfare-to-Work Plan/Adding Activities With/Without Plan Resource Guide](#) for detailed instructions.

REFERENCES

- [Policy 100-E4 – School Attendance](#)
- [Policy 100-F1 – Welfare-to-Work Exemptions](#)
- [Policy 201.2 – CalWORKs/Welfare-to-Work/Cal-Learn Monthly Contacts](#)
- [Policy 200 – WTW Program, Activities and Participation Requirements](#)
- [Policy 210 – Assessment](#)
- [Policy 210-A – Learning Disability Screening and Evaluations](#)
- [Policy 223 – Vocational Education -Privately Funded Post-Secondary Education Institutions](#)
- [Policy 223 A – Vocational Education – Publicly Funded Postsecondary Education Institutions](#)
- [Policy 240 – Noncompliance Process](#)
- [Policy 302 - Child Care Services – Stage One](#)
- [Policy 401 – Behavioral Health Services](#)
- [Policy 402 – Domestic Abuse Services](#)
- [Policy 403-A – CalWORKs Family Reunification Program](#)
- [Welfare-to-Work Plan/Adding Activities With/Without Plan Resource Guide](#)

FORMS AND ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1 – [Universal Engagement Examples](#)
Attachment 2 - [Description of WTW 2 Variables in CalWIN Welfare-to-Work Plan Rights and Responsibilities WTW 1 \(12/05\) Welfare-to-Work Plan Activity Assignment \(WTW 2\).](#)