

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

Program/Area: CalWORKS/Welfare-To-Work
Title: **Extraordinary Circumstances**
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PURPOSE The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance for the determination of eligibility for Extraordinary Circumstances (EC) services.

POLICY Extraordinary Circumstances (EC) services allow for short term supportive services funding that is otherwise unavailable due to ineligibility to the CalWORKs Welfare to Work (WTW) program.

The Family Self-Sufficiency & Adult Services (FSS-AS) Division provides services to WTW participants and their families. There are some extraordinary circumstances that warrant issuance of EC services to non-WTW participants. These occurrences require an administrative approval prior to the issuance of EC services to non-WTW families.

EC services may include, but are not limited to:

- Employment Support Services, provided by FSS contractors
- Linking to community organizations for services within the community
- Assignment of a WTW social worker for a specific period of time
- Children and Family Services (CFS) intervention to avoid danger to a child(ren)

EC services are not the same as “Special Needs in CalWORKs”. “Special Needs”, such as Pregnancy Special Needs, are for CalWORKs recipients.

EC services are for CalWORKs recipients that are exempt and not currently participating in WTW, as well as non-recipients (those individuals that are not eligible to CalWORKs).

EXTRAORDINARY CIRCUMSTANCES FACTORS EC services are intended to be for emergency, short-term needs, not for ongoing long-term services.

Some issues that would lead to an EC determination include:

- Homeless, without a local support system
- The parent’s and/or child(ren)’s physical health and safety are at risk
- Urgency of circumstances

Before approving EC, all efforts will be made to find community resources that would alleviate the need for services.

ELIGIBILITY

An individual may be eligible for EC services if they are:

- Exempt and not currently participating in WTW
 - Voluntary participation in WTW should be explored so that WTW supportive services can be used instead of EC funds
- or-
- Not eligible for CalWORKs, but in a CalWORKs eligible Assistance Unit (AU), such as:
 - CalWORKs timed-out adult
 - CalWORKs Family Reunification case
 - Undocumented non-citizen (when the need is in relation to the child's safety and basic needs)

FAMILY SUPPORT ASSESSMENT PROCESS

Prior to EC approval, it is recommended that the initiating party participate in the Family Support Assessment (FSA) process. A Family Support Team (FST) meeting should be convened to evaluate the need for EC services. The FST meeting may include the available Public Health Nurse (PHN), local Behavioral Health Services (BHS) provider, Employment Services contractor and/or any additional service providers as needed, as well as the CalWORKs Eligibility Technician/Employment & Eligibility Specialist/Case Manager involved with the family. EC services may be authorized prior to convening an FST meeting if the urgency eliminates the possibility of an immediate FST meeting.

Refer to Policy [408 - Family Support Assessment Process](#) for further guidance.

APPROVAL OF EXTRAORDINARY CIRCUMSTANCES

The FSS-AS Director, Deputy Directors, and Administrative Manager IIs (AMIIIs) have the authority to determine and approve EC services. Once the determination has been made, it is the responsibility of the region to contact the appropriate providers to initiate and coordinate EC services for the family.

COMMUNICATION

Once EC services are approved by the AMII, a regional representative will communicate the case details to the FSS-AS PQA manager overseeing the EC assignment. Once EC services are completed, the initiating regional manager will communicate the outcome to the FSS-AS PQA manager for record keeping.

MUTUAL CLIENTS

If the person evaluated to receive EC has been identified as also being a "mutual client" (an individual who has been working with a Children and Family Services [CFS] Senior Social Worker [SSW] and has an open or pending CalWORKs case) the FSS and CFS workers need to evaluate if CFS funds are available to provide the necessary service(s) and are to coordinate their efforts to avoid duplication of services.

CALWORKS FAMILY REUNIFICATION

Eligibility to EC services is targeted to ensure the child's safety and provision of the basic needs are met.

EC services for CalWORKs Family Reunification cases are available when the following has been met:

- Staff has collaborated with the CFS SSW and has exhausted CFS funding resources
- Services are needed for reunification

ZERO PARENT CASES

Undocumented non-citizens may be eligible for EC the same as any other non-WTW client as long as **services are targeted to ensure the child's safety and provision of the basic needs.**

- CalWORKs recipients who are WTW exempt may receive EC for themselves
- Undocumented non-citizens may not receive EC for themselves; however, they may receive EC for the family when the need is in relation to the child's safety and basic needs

BEST PRACTICE EC services are unique. No fixed or ordered series of actions are required for EC approval. While the FSA process is highly encouraged, the regional AMII will ultimately determine the appropriateness of EC. When the need for EC services is identified, the identifying staff member will communicate the need to their region's leadership via the chain of command.
