

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

Program/Area: CalWORKS/Welfare-To-Work
Title: Subsidized Employment Programs
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PURPOSE This policy provides the Case Manager (CM) guidelines when evaluating Welfare-to-Work (WTW) participants’ skills, abilities, and interests for employment and training, making informed decisions about the participants’ career pathways, and referring them to one of the Subsidized Employment providers that aligns with their Employment Readiness Assessment report.

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SUBSIDIZED EMPLOYMENT Subsidized Employment (SE) is a post-assessment WTW activity that provides a paid employment opportunity in which the participant’s partial or full wages and/or training costs are reimbursed to employers through a government subsidy.

SE provides interested participants an opportunity to gain essential work experience and earn income while participating in the labor market, specifically to those who do not have the skills or knowledge needed for specific jobs. This opportunity provides access to employment and earnings while increasing work experience, skills, and connections that improve a participant’s employability after the subsidized employment period ends.

In addition to the hands-on work experience, the participant will:

- Learn basic job seeking skills such as developing a resume, preparing for an interview, dressing professionally, and communicating with employers.
- Learn job retention topics such as attendance and punctuality, social etiquette, productivity, common reasons for promotion and/or dismissal, employment problem-solving skills, and planning for handling common problems faced by new employees.

The SE programs offer paid employment opportunities, and paid structured training experience in public, non-profit, and private employment sectors.

- Public – Government jobs (e.g., Social Services Agency, Health Care Agency, Community Resources, Waste and Recycling, Public Works, Parks)
- Non-Profit – Includes community based, faith-based, not-for-profit, and charitable organizations (e.g., American Red Cross, Salvation Army, YMCA, Habitat for Humanity, Boys & Girls Club of America)
- Private – For-profit privately-owned businesses including retail, manufacturing, private counseling (e.g., Target, Western Dental, Pep Boys)

At the end of the activity, it is expected that the worksite employer will hire the participant into unsubsidized employment as a regular employee. The contractor will assist the participant with job search for unsubsidized employment if the participant is not hired by the worksite employer at the end of the subsidized employment period.

Orange County has a Contracted Provider that provides SE Programs:

- Public Subsidized Employment Program (PSEP)
- Work Experience (WEX)

Public Subsidized Employment Program (PSEP) offers paid employment opportunities in public, non-profit, or private employment sectors. However, PSEP's *primary focus* is placement in the public sector at local government worksites.

Participation in PSEP will:

- Provide participants basic job skills, knowledge, and experience to complete the local government recruitment process in addition to having the experience to secure other unsubsidized employment opportunities.
- Transition participants into unsubsidized employment.
 - At the end of the activity, if not hired by the employer, the contractor will assist the participant with 60 days of job search.

Work Experience (WEX) offers paid structured training experience in public, non-profit, or private employment sectors at a wide range of worksites.

Participation in WEX will:

- Provide or enhance participants with job skills related to the participant’s experience and desired work field.
- Transition participants into unsubsidized employment.
 - At the end of the activity, if not hired by the employer, the contractor will assist the participant with 30 days of job search.

Worker Tool (WT) 42 – Subsidized Employment Programs Comparison Chart outlines similarities and differences between the programs.

Worker Tool (WT) 90 – CalSAWS Activities is a guide for staff to utilize when entering WTW activities in CalSAWS.

CONTRACTED PROVIDER

Orange County’s SE programs are administered through partnerships between the County of Orange Social Services Agency (SSA) and Contracted Provider Equus Workforce Solutions (EWS).

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Participants to be referred to SE include those who:

- Reside in Orange County
- Are WTW mandatory or voluntary participants
- Meet CalWORKs (CW) eligibility criteria at the time of the placement
- Have sufficient Time on Aid (TOA) to participate in SE activity
- Have not exceeded the 52-week (12 months) cumulative SE time limit
- Have not secured unsubsidized employment sufficient to meet the minimum required hours of WTW participation as specified in Policy 200 – Welfare-to-Work Overview, Activities, and Participation
- Completed an Assessment and are suitable for the activity based on the assessment results (Refer to Policy 210 - Assessment)
- Are deemed suitable for the activity by the CM
- Agreed to participate by signing a WTW Plan

TIME LIMIT

Participation in SE is limited to a period of six (6) months of initial placement, with up to two (2) three (3)-month extensions, for up to a maximum of twelve (12) months.

SE time counts when a participant is placed at a worksite and receives wage subsidies.

CM will utilize the Subsidized Employment Activities Tracking Sheet (F063-41-433) to track participant's SE time.

If the placement is terminated, and the participant later returns to a SE activity, they should be eligible for a six (6)-month placement if they have not reached the maximum SE time limit.

EXTENSION

If a participant completed their initial SE assignment and has not reached the maximum SE time limit (12 months), the CM will evaluate if an extension would increase their opportunity to obtain unsubsidized employment.

CM can evaluate and grant up to two three-month extensions, when the participant meets all requirements:

- Has not exceeded the SE time limit.
- Has sufficient TOA remaining to participate in SE extension.
- Will be more likely to obtain unsubsidized employment with the additional experience gained through the extension.
- Will obtain specific skills and experience relevant for unsubsidized employment in a particular field.

When all requirements are met and the SE extension is approved, the CM will:

- Update the Subsidized Employment Activities Tracking Worksheet (F063-41-433).
 - Image into Hyland Perceptive Experience (HPE)
- Complete a new WTW plan.
- Notify the contractor that the SE extension has been granted with the new End Date.
- Complete a CalSAWS Journal entry to justify the SE activity extension, and whether it is a first or second extension approval.

When the SE extension request is denied, the CM will:

- Collaborate with the participant to determine another appropriate WTW activity.

- Notify the contractor of the extension request's outcome.

**CASE MANAGER
RESPONSIBILITIES**

The CM will:

- Incorporate CW 2.1 – A New Approach to Empowerment, as appropriate, to assess the participant's situation, identify potential barriers and service arrangement needs.
- Review SE benefits with the participant, including the differences in the private vs public sector. (For a comparison of different SE programs, refer to WT 42 – Subsidized Employment Comparison Chart).
- Confirm participant has ability to produce necessary right to work documents and begin program once referred.
- Verify that participant has sufficient TOA remaining to participate in SE activity.
- Collaborate with the participant to develop and sign a WTW Plan in accordance with Policy 211 – Welfare-to-Work Plan.
- Review all SE activity history and complete the Subsidized Employment Activities Tracking Worksheet (F063-41-433).
- Image into Hyland Perceptive Experience (HPE).
- Review Policy 210 – Assessment to ensure appropriateness of activity assignment.
- Make appropriate referrals to contractor by completing the Referral to Contracted Provider for Vocational Education and/or Subsidized Employment Programs (F063-41-322), attach a copy of the Employment Readiness Assessment results to the email, and send to the contractor.
 - Participant must be ready to attend an orientation for the SE program within three business days of sending the referral, produce right to work documents, and begin the program once orientation has been completed.
- Coordinate with the Continuing Employment Eligibility Specialists (CEES) and the contractor to ensure participants receive necessary service arrangements to participate in the program.
- Schedule the participant to the appropriate SE activity.
- Review the Vocational Training/Subsidized Employment Program Attendance Report (F063-41-380).
- Monitor the participant's attendance and progress.
- Update CalSAWS Journal and include service arrangement needs, if any.
- Coordinate, collaborate, and communicate with the contractor on the participant's attendance, progress, and case status changes.

- Evaluate and determine if a SE extension is appropriate, following guidelines in the Extension section above.

Note: The CM will collaborate with the participant and the contractor at least two weeks prior to the current SE assignment end date.

- Provide at least two weeks notification to the contractor when a CalWORKs case is scheduled to close, the participant needs to be returned to the CM, and the SE activity is terminated.
 - Notify the participant of the activity ending earlier than expected.
 - Complete a CalSAWS Journal entry.

Note: Timely notification applies to participants who are actively participating in their scheduled activity, and not for participants who are nonresponsive and/or noncompliant. However, the CM should maintain communication with the contractor to monitor participant’s progress.

- SSA Integrated Job Services Contractor & Regional Liaisons Contact List is available to contact the offices.

DOCUMENTATION AND VERIFICATION

Actual attendance and participation hours are monitored and verified monthly by the contractor and CM, and documentation is imaged into HPE. CM keeps track of activity using the Subsidized Employment Activities Tracking Worksheet (F063-41-433).

Acceptable Verification/Documents

- Vocational Training/Subsidized Employment Program Attendance Report (F063-41-380)
- Additional email, phone contact, etc. between the contractor and CM may be used to support documentation

For paid activities, hours may be projected. Refer to the Period of Projected Hours Processing Guide for more information.

SERVICE ARRANGMENTS

Participants are eligible to receive all service arrangements necessary to participate in SE, which include childcare, transportation, and ancillary.

Refer to Policy 301 – CalWORKs Child Care Program, Policy 310 - Transportation Supportive Services, and Policy 315 – Ancillary Supportive Services for information.

**CONTRACTOR'S
STAFF
RESPONSIBILITIES**

Contractor's staff will:

- Screen referral for completeness, ensure the referred participant has not reached SE time limit, and service arrangements are in place.
- Engage the participant immediately upon receipt of referral.
- Provide one-on-one Orientation to evaluate skills (includes translation services in the participant's primary language, if participant requests)
- Offer workplace and Employment Readiness workshop to ensure that participants understand the program and are prepared to be successful in the program.
- Match participant's skillset with potential worksite assignment, according to the Employment Readiness Assessment recommendations, referral, and interview with participant.
- Introduce participants to employers and schedule job interviews.
- Monitor attendance and progress, work directly with worksites to address barriers; and provide support to participants such as resume and job search preparation.
- Contact the CM via email/phone if participant missed an appointment or is absent from assignment.
- Report attendance and progress to CM via the Vocational Training/Subsidized Employment Program Attendance Report (F063-41-380) by the 10th calendar day of the following month.

**CALWORKS CASE
CLOSURE - DUE
TO SUBSIDIZED
EMPLOYMENT
INCOME**

If the CalWORKs case closes due to SE income, the participant may continue in SE activity until the end of the placement.

The CM will notify the contractor to send the Vocational Training/Subsidized Employment Program Attendance Report (F063-41-380) to FSS-AS Operations and Policy Team (OPT).

The attendance report will be imaged into Hyland Perceptive Experience (HPE) to track the SE 52-week time-limit and monitor for statistical reports.

**CALWORKS
GRANT
CALCULATION –
TREATMENT OF
SUBSIDIZED
EMPLOYMENT
INCOME**

For CalWORKs recipients, income received from participation in SE is counted as regular earned income.

Note: EES will immediately notify CM of CalWORKs case discontinuance due to SE income and complete CalSAWS Journal entry.

Reapplication for CalWORKs:

When a CalWORKs family is discontinued from aid due to the subsidized employment income and reapplies for CalWORKs:

- If reapplies within three (3) calendar months of the SE placement ending, the family is considered CalWORKs *recipients*

- Being considered current recipients means that the IEES shall apply *the recipient* earned income disregard rather than *the applicant* income disregard, and the 100-hour work rule shall also not apply
- If reapplies after three (3) calendar months of the SE placement ending, family is considered CalWORKs *applicants*.
 - The applicant income disregard, and the 100-hour rule shall be applied to the CalWORKs grant calculation.

Refer to Policy 100-B2 – Treatment of Income from AU/Non-AU Family Members for more information.

WORKERS' COMPENSATION

Contractor will ensure that all participants are covered by Workers' Compensation Insurance as determined by the California Department of Social Services (CDSS).

Note: CM must immediately notify the contractor when a participant reports an injury that occurred during the SE activity.

ATTACHMENTS

- CW 2.0 – A New Approach to Empowerment
- SSA Integrated Job Services Contractors & Regional Liaisons Contact List
- WT 42 – Subsidized Employment Programs Comparison Chart
- WT 90 – CalSAWS Activities

FORMS

- Referral to Contracted Provider for Vocational Education and/or Subsidized Employment Programs (F063-41-322)
- Subsidized Employment Activities Tracking Worksheet (F063-41-433)
- Vocational Training/Subsidized Employment Program Attendance Report (F063-41-380)

REFERENCES

- Eligibility and Assistance Standards (EAS) Manual of Policies and Procedures (MPP): 42-701, 42-716, 42-717, and 42-750
- All County Letter (ACL): 12-15, 13-81, 14-81, 14-81E, 16-95, 16-95E, 17-03, 17-03E, and 20-36
- Policy 100-B2 – Treatment of Income from AU/Non-AU Family Members
- Policy 200 – WTW Program Overview, Activities and Participation
- Policy 210 – Assessment
- Policy 211 – Welfare-To-Work Plan
- Policy 301 – CalWORKs Stage One Child Care Program

- Policy 310 – Transportation Supportive Services
- Policy 315 – Ancillary Supportive Services