

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

Program/Area: Family Self-Sufficiency and Adult Services
Title: **Expanded Temporary Homeless Assistance**
Number: 100-H2-B **Status:** Signature on File
Effective Date: 08/27/2018 **Revision Date:** 12/02/2019
Approved:

PURPOSE The purpose of this policy is to provide eligibility criteria and guidelines for the utilization of California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids (CalWORKs) Expanded Temporary Homeless Assistance (ETHA) to assist domestic violence victims who are fleeing their abusers.

POLICY Assembly Bill (AB) 557 expanded CalWORKs Temporary Homeless Assistance benefits for domestic violence victims who are fleeing their abusers. Effective July 1, 2018, a CalWORKs (CW) applicant who provides a sworn statement of past or present domestic abuse and is fleeing his/her abuser shall be **deemed** homeless and eligible for up to 32 days of temporary Homeless Assistance (HA) benefits regardless of their abuser's income or assets. There shall be no other requirements to verify homelessness beyond a sworn statement that he/she is fleeing domestic abuse.

Once the CW case is approved, clients will no longer be eligible for ETHA as they are no longer deemed applicants. CW recipients shall be evaluated for both regular once-a-year Temporary and Permanent HA and HA based on a once-a-year exception due to domestic abuse if they continue to be homeless.

ETHA benefits are allowed only once in a lifetime, these benefits are in addition to regular temporary and permanent HA benefits, and do not count against the once-a-year HA exceptions, including exceptions based on domestic abuse. CW ETHA applicants are exempt from providing proof of their search for permanent housing.

INFORMING REQUIREMENTS CW applicants must be informed that ETHA benefits are available when they self-disclose that they are fleeing their abusers, even if he/she has not yet spent a night homeless or has a joint bank account that they claim belongs to their abusers.

AB 557 mandates that CW applicants must be informed verbally and in writing of the availability of Domestic Abuse Services. Refer to [Policy 402-Domestic Abuse Services](#) for additional information.

EXPANDED TEMPORARY HOMELESS ASSISTANCE ELIG To be eligible to receive ETHA, the applicant must meet the following criteria:

- AB 557 applicants must be eligible, or **apparently** eligible, to CW or

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

be an eligible non-citizen. “Apparent Eligibility” means that the information provided on the statement of facts indicates that the applicant would be eligible for CW if the information on the statement of facts was verified.

- Any income and assets available to the applicant (such as cash in hand) to meet their needs at the time of the application will be evaluated toward the \$100 liquid resources limit for Temporary Homeless Assistance (THA) referenced in **THA Eligibility Requirement Section of [Policy 100-H2 Homeless Assistance](#)**.

The abuser’s income and property, if unavailable to the applicant, are not to be evaluated when determining eligibility for ETHA benefits*. The applicant must either have a child or provide medical verification of pregnancy.

- The applicant or the applicant’s child must have a Social Security number or be an eligible non-citizen.
- Provide a [sworn statement](#) of domestic abuse and is fleeing their abuser even if he/she has not yet spent a night homeless.

To apply for ETHA benefits, applicants must complete the following:

- [Initial Application for CalFresh, Cash Aid and/or Medi-Cal/Health Care Programs \(SAWS1\) /Application for CalFresh, Cash Aid, and/or Medi-Cal/Health Care Programs \(SAWS2 PLUS\)](#)
- Homeless Assistance Application ([CW42](#))
- [Sworn Statement of Homelessness](#)

* Not all applicants will end up being eligible for CW; however, as long as they are determined apparently eligible for ETHA benefits at the time they received them, the HA payment will not be considered an overpayment.

If the CW case is approved, the recipient in receipt of ETHA should be evaluated for both regular once-a-year HA and HA based on a once-a-year exception due to domestic abuse.

While AB 557 does expand eligibility for HA for CW applicants fleeing domestic abuse, it does not change the basic CW eligibility rules for these applicants. For example, while the income and assets that belongs to the abuser are disregarded for the purpose of ETHA benefits, workers must still determine whether income and assets to the alleged abuser are unavailable to the applicant and whether they should be considered separate property based on CW regulations. Refer to [Policy 100-C1 Property](#) for additional information.

EXPANDED TEMPORARY HOMELESS ASSISTANCE PAYMENT

When the CW applicant is fleeing domestic abuse, he/she shall receive a lump sum equal to 16 days of temporary HA benefits on the day of his/her application. AB 557 applicants shall receive another payment for 16 additional days immediately following the initial 16-day period, equaling a total of 32 consecutive days of ETHA benefits.

- If the case is approved before issuing the second 16 days the ETHA will stop and the recipient will then be evaluated for once-a-year THA. Recipients who are receiving THA are not exempt from providing proof of their search of permanent housing. Refer to [Policy 100-H2 Homeless Assistance](#) for additional information.
- The applicant must verify that the money received for the ETHA program was spent on shelter after issuing the first 16 days directly to the applicant. If the applicant does not show verification that the money was spent on shelter, the second issuance of 16 days may be issued by two-party check. Refer to the [Two - Party Check Issuance Resource Guide](#) for step-by-step instructions on how to update the split payment screens in Cal WIN.
- **Note:** When issuing a two-party check, counties must take health and safety concerns of the applicant into consideration.
- Issue timely and adequate Notices of Actions
- Enter CalWIN special indicator: **AB557 Case**.
- Enter Case Comments
- Utilize Non System Determination Issuance (NSDI) form [F063-15-300](#) to issue the 16 consecutive days of ETHA payments.
- CalWIN functionality does not allow processing NSDI if the 16-day payment period overlaps into the second month, therefore two separate payments might be required.

Example: The initial ETHA payment period is from 7/25/2018-8/9/2018, two NSDIs will be required. One for the period of 7/25/2018-7/31/2018 and another one from 8/1/2018-8/9/2018 for a total of 16-days.

Note: Do not issue for more than 16 calendar days. Adjust payments as needed to allow for Social Services Agency (SSA) office closures, holidays and weekends.

NOTICES OF ACTION

The following Cal WIN NOAs will be utilized until the state issues new NOAs for AB 557:

- [M44-211B](#) - AB557 Expanded THA Approval
- [M44-211D](#) - AB557 HA Denial

**EXAMPLES OF
EXPANDED
TEMPORARY
HOMELESS
ASSISTANCE
REQUESTS**

Example 1: On February 15, a mother applies for CW and HA and states she is fleeing domestic abuse. She provides a SSN for herself and her two children. She tells the IEES that she left her children at her husband's house, but plans to get them as soon as she has somewhere to take them. She has a joint bank account with her husband, but is afraid to access the money. She signs a sworn statement that she is fleeing domestic abuse. The IEES determines her "apparently" eligible for CW and immediately issues 16 days of ETHA. On March 2, she comes back to the office, shows the IEES her motel receipts and is given another lump sum payment for 16 additional days of ETHA. (The 32 days have to be consecutive, if she had not come in for the second payment until March 4, she would only have been issued payment for 14 days.) On March 15, the IEES determines that the income and assets of her abuser are not available to meet her family's needs, so her CW application is approved. Once she is a CW recipient, if still homeless, she is potentially eligible for regular once-a-year THA and HA based on the domestic abuse exception, as well as additional housing supports through the [Housing Support Program \(HSP\)](#). The IEES is to offer domestic abuse counseling and services to the participant and make a referral, as appropriate.

Example 2: On February 15, a mother who is fleeing her abuser applies for CW and HA. She signs a sworn statement that she is fleeing her abuser and is given 16 days of ETHA that day. On March 1, her CW application is approved so the second 16 days of expanded HA is not issued. However, she is issued the prorated February grant, her full March grant, and, if still homeless is potentially eligible for regular THA/PHA beginning March 3, as well as HA based on a domestic abuse exception. She is reminded that she now needs to show the IEES proof of her daily permanent housing search or request good cause. The IEES is also encouraged to make a referral to HSP as appropriate, and offer domestic abuse counseling and services to the participant.

Example 3: On February 15, a mother applies for CW and HA and signs a sworn statement that she is fleeing domestic abuse. On February 15 she receives her first 16 days of ETHA payments. On March 1, the county denies her CW application because she reports that she got a job that puts her over the CW income limit. As she is no longer an apparently eligible applicant, she is not eligible for the second 16 days of HA; however, the IEES should ensure she is connected to all other available resources in the community (e.g., [Domestic Abuse Services Safety Plan Brochure](#), Family Resource Centers, etc.). Additionally, since she was eligible for the first 16 days of AB 557 benefits when she received them,

they will not be considered an overpayment.

Example 4: On March 1, a mother applies for CW and HA and signs a sworn statement that she is fleeing domestic abuse. On March 1 she receives her first 16 days of ETHA payments. On March 5, she moves back in with her abuser. She leaves her abuser and comes back to the county office on March 23, at which time she is eligible for her last 10 days of ETHA. Despite the household movement during this time, as long as she was eligible at the time that she received the benefits, no overpayment will be assessed.

**CALWIN
ENTRIES**

- [Issue a Non-System Determined Issuance \(NSDI\)](#)
- [Two - Party Check Issuance Resource Guide](#)
- [Case Comments](#)
- [BENDS 49386 Expanded Temporary Homeless Assistance \(ETHA\) AB 557 Payment](#)

REFERENCE

MPP 40-129.534(b); MPP 42-205.3; MPP42-213.11; MPP 44-211.5; AB 557; ACL 18-34; ACL 18-78.

ATTACHMENTS

- Homeless Assistance Application ([CW42](#))
- Statement of Homelessness [F0912-30-144](#)
- Non-System Determination Issuance [NSDI Form F063-15-300](#)
- [Initial Application for CalFresh, Cash Aid and/or Medi-Cal/Health Care Programs \(SAWS1\)](#)
- [Application for CalFresh, Cash Aid, and/or Medi-Cal/Health Care Programs \(SAWS2 PLUS\)](#)