

County of Orange Social Services Agency

Family Self-Sufficiency Division

Program/Area: CalWORKs/Welfare-To-Work

Title: Employment Preparation Program – Expanded Subsidized Employment

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Signature on file

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PURPOSE

Assembly Bill (AB) 74 established early engagement strategies to increase the work participation rate among Welfare-To-Work (WTW) participants; among these strategies is the Expanded Subsidized Employment (ESE) Program. In Orange County the ESE program is called Employment Preparation Program (EPP).

The goal of EPP is to provide WTW participants who may have little or no work history with an opportunity to learn soft skills, build workplace confidence and self-esteem through paid employment in a specific field of choice in a public, private non-profit, or private worksite. EPP participants will gain basic employability skills and enhanced experience that will increase their chances to find unsubsidized employment.

**EXPANDED
SUBSIDIZED
EMPLOYMENT
PROGRAM - EPP**

EPP is a post-Assessment WTW activity. Referral to EPP is an available option based on the results and recommendations of a vocational assessment and/or a determination by the Case Manager (CM).

EPP is considered subsidized employment, a core activity, and counted toward work participation hours. The program is administered through a partnership between Orange County Social Services Agency (SSA) and Orange County Community Resources (OCCR).

OCCR is the employer of record and will assume duties and responsibilities for program participants as required. Duties include, but are not limited to, maintaining an employee file for all participants, approving time sheets, processing payroll and ensuring all participants are paid in a timely manner, and providing Workers' Compensation Insurance.

EPP will focus on providing:

- Paid, time-limited employment - Participation is limited to a maximum of one six-month placement. Participants who meet the requirements for an extension can be granted up to two extensions as discussed in the "Time Limits" section.
- A variety of employment options - EPP participants will be placed in public, private non-profit, or private employment sectors:
 - The public/private non-profit program will have a concentration on County public service and infrastructure job sites including Social Services Agency, Health Care Agency, Community Resources, Waste and Recycling, and Parks and Recreation.
 - Private non-profit job sites will include, but not limited to, community based and faith based organizations.
 - The private sector program's job sites include, but are not limited to, clerical, retail, and manufacturing.
- Support and Supervision - The OCCR Job Developers (JD) will communicate with participants at minimum every two weeks, or more as needed, to review progress.

**ELIGIBILITY
CRITERIA**

Participants to be referred to EPP include those who:

- Are WTW-mandatory
- Have not exceeded the CalWORKs 48-month time limit
- Have not found unsubsidized employment sufficient to meet the minimum required hours of WTW participation as specified in [Policy 202 Work Participation Hours and Activities](#)
- Are deemed suitable for the activity by the CM based on the vocational assessment result and/or other factors

TIME LIMITS

Participation in EPP is limited to a maximum of one six-month placement. Participants who meet the requirements for an extension can be granted up to two extensions. Participants may continue in EPP until the end of their placements if the family becomes ineligible for CalWORKs due to the expanded subsidized employment income.

Extension

Toward the end of the initial six month period, the CM will review the situation and determine eligibility for an extension. Up to two three-month extensions may be granted if the participant:

- Has sufficient time remaining on aid to complete the extension period
- 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.

CASE MANAGER RESPONSIBILITIES

The WTW CM will:

- Discuss EPP with the participant as an option for subsidized employment. For a comparison of different subsidized employment programs, refer to worker tool [F063-41-WT42](#), Subsidized Employment Programs Comparison Chart.
- Make appropriate referrals to EPP by completing the [OCCR Employment Preparation Referral Form F063-41-375](#), attach a copy of the vocational assessment report to the e-mail if applicable, and e-mail OCCR at EPP@occr.ocgov.com.
- Collaborate with the Continuing Employment Eligibility Specialists (CEES) and OCCR Job Developer (JD) to ensure participants receive necessary supportive services to participate in the program.
- Schedule participant to the EXPANDED SUBSIDIZED EMPLOYMENT activity in CalWIN.
- Enter EPP and other attendance hours in CalWIN and monitor the participant's attendance and progress in accordance with the [Participation Tracking Resource Guide](#).
- Make appropriate case comments in CalWIN, including supportive needs, in accordance with the [Case Comments Resource Guide](#).
- Develop and sign a new WTW Plan in accordance with [Policy 211 WTW Plan](#).
- Coordinate, collaborate, and communicate with OCCR JD for the participant's attendance and progress.

Extension

If an extension is justified, the CM will:

- Complete the OCCR Employment Preparation Referral Form F063-41-375, selecting the appropriate extension and justification, providing additional information regarding the justification as appropriate
- E-mail the completed form to OCCR at EPP@occr.ocgov.com
- Document the justification in CalWIN Case Comments

**OCCR JOB
DEVELOPER
RESPONSIBILITIES**

The OCCR Job Developer will:

- Receive the referral for EPP and/or vocational assessment report via email
 - Meet one-on-one with participants to evaluate their skills
 - Match participants' skillsets with potential worksite assignments
- Collaborate with the CM to determine appropriate job assignment for the participant
- Offer workplace and employment readiness workshops to ensure that participants are ready to begin a successful subsidized employment program
 - Address barriers to participation and review employer expectations and hiring practices, which include job interviews
 - Introduce the participant to the employer and schedule a job interview
 - Monitor the participant's attendance and progress directly with the worksite supervisor
 - Work with the employer to conduct participant evaluations
 - Communicate with the participant to discuss progress and action steps at the minimum once every two weeks, or more as needed
 - Report problems, achievements, attendance, or other inquiries about participant's assignments with participant and employer to the CM within five (5) business days of each occurrence.
 - Contact the CM within 48 hours via email/phone if a participant misses an appointment, a day at the job assignment (including the first day), or has attendance/cooperation issues.
 - Report attendance and progress to SSA staff using the [OCCR Performance/Attendance/Employment Report F063-41-380](#) by the tenth (10th) calendar day of the following month.
- OCCR JDs will utilize an employer database to develop subsidized employment opportunities and continue to develop new subsidized employment opportunities in employment sectors that offer participants a clear career ladder, an opportunity for continued unsubsidized employment and an opportunity for advancement.

**TREATMENT OF
INCOME**

Income received from participation in EPP is counted as regular earned income.

If a CalWORKs family is discontinued from aid due to income and reapplies within three calendar months of the EPP placement ending, the family shall be considered current recipients for the purposes of CalWORKs eligibility income and work requirements. However, if the family applies for CalWORKs after this three-month period has passed, they shall be considered applicants for the purposes of CalWORKs eligibility requirements.

Refer to [Policy 100-B2 Treatment of Income](#) for additional information.
Note:

For cases that are discontinued due to the expanded subsidized employment income and the participants choose to continue in the EPP until the end of their placements, the CM will notify the OCCR JD to send the Attendance Report to the assigned Program Manager (PM). The PM will keep track of these cases for statistical reports.

**WORKER'S
COMPENSATION**

OCCR will ensure that all participants in EPP are covered by Worker's Compensation Insurance as determined by the California Department of Social Services (CDSS).

**SUPPORTIVE
SERVICES**

EPP participants are eligible to receive all supportive services necessary to participate in the program.

**CASE COMMENTS
& CALWIN
ENTRIES**

CalWIN Case Comments must be updated to reflect information regarding EPP and related supportive services. The CalWIN Data Collection and Employment Services subsystems must be updated to reflect EPP activity. The CalWIN activity code for EPP is "Expanded Subsidized Employment".

ATTACHMENTS

1. [OCCR Employment Preparation Referral Form F063-41-375](#)
2. [OCCR Performance/Attendance/Employment Report F063-41-380](#)
3. [Participation Tracking Resource Guide](#)
4. [Case Comments Resource Guide](#)
5. [Policy 100-B2 Treatment of Income](#)
6. [Policy 202 Work Participation Hours and Activities](#)
7. [Policy 211 WTW Plan](#)
8. [Subsidized Employment Programs Comparison Chart F063-41-WT42](#)

REFERENCES

1. ACL 13-81 CalWORKs Expanded Subsidized Employment Program Implementation Guidelines
2. Assembly Bill (AB) 74, Chapter 21, Statutes of 2013
3. Welfare and Institutions Code (WIC) Sections 11322.63 and 11322.64