

**County of San Diego, Health and Human Services Agency (HHSA)  
CalWORKs Program Guide Special Notice**

**Increase to Maximum Aid Payment and Income Reporting Threshold Levels  
– October 2021**

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21-11**

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**Effective Date:**

October 1, 2021

**Background:**

The State establishes the Maximum Aid Payment (MAP) levels, which are used to determine CalWORKs grant amounts.

Under Semi-Annual Reporting (SAR) and Annual Reporting/Child-Only (AR/CO) regulations, customers are required to report only certain changes in their income or family circumstances mid-period. One such mandatory mid-period report is when the Assistance Unit's (AU) total earned income, or combined unearned and earned income, exceeds the Income Reporting Threshold (IRT) level. An AU with only unearned income is not required to report when unearned income exceeds the IRT level mid-period.

The IRT level for an AU is the lower of the two following tiers:

1. Tier 1: 55% of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL) for a family of three, plus the amount of income last used to calculate the AU's monthly grant amount
2. Tier 2: 130% of the FPL which is also the level of income at which a household may become financially ineligible for CalFresh

**Purpose:**

To inform staff of a 5.3% MAP increase and the IRT level increase effective October 1, 2021.

**Policy:**

**MAP**

MAP level changes require county-initiated mid-period action for all CalWORKs cases.

**IRT**

Customers must be informed of their IRT level at least once per SAR or AR/CO payment period or whenever the AU's IRT level changes. The IRT level in which the customer was last notified will be used for reporting purposes until the county informs the customer of a change in their IRT level.

**Procedure:**

**MAP**

- Customers are required to be notified of the MAP increase and associated impact to their CalFresh benefits by September 20, 2021, to meet (10-day) timely noticing regulations
- The TEMP 2250 (08/21) State Law Changes the Maximum Aid Payment Levels for Cash Aid Recipients informing notice was issued to all CalWORKs customers via mass mailing on September 4, 2021, informing them of the MAP increase
- The Human Services Specialist (HSS) is to provide the TEMP 2250 to all customers who apply for CalWORKs in August through October 2021, and document in case comments that the notice was provided and explained
- TM44-315L (07/21) Grant Increase/Law Change Notice of Action (NOA) is to be used to notify customers when their grant will increase due to the MAP change

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Senate Bill (SB) 380 Child MAP

Due to the MAP level increases, the Child MAP that determines the amount of child support the child (step/half sibling) must receive monthly to be eligible for exclusion from the AU's MAP determination has also changed. Refer to CPG 44-300.H for additional SB 380 information.

Therefore, the Human Services Specialist (HSS) must review the excluded child's amount of child support to determine if eligibility for exclusion under the policy still exists. To continue to meet the requirement, the excluded child's amount of child support received must still exceed the MAP amount for the child.

The HSS will add the child's needs back into the AU's MAP determination when:

- The child is no longer receiving child support that exceeds the amount of CalWORKs grant that the AU would receive if their needs were included because of the MAP change and
- The change occurred during the AU's SAR 7 data month or redetermination month

**Note:** The customer does not need to initiate the request to add the child.

When the change occurs outside the AU's SAR 7 data month or redetermination month, the HSS will not add the child but will re-evaluate the amount of child support received at the next SAR 7 or redetermination, whichever occurs first. The child's needs will be added at that time if the child support received is still less than the grant they would receive.

As a reminder, the HSS may add a child's needs back into the MAP determination at any time if the customer voluntarily reports mid-period that the monthly child support received for that child has decreased below the child's MAP amount or the child support has stopped.

The SB 380 MAP charts have been updated, to reflect the MAP level increases, and they are available in Eligibility Essentials. They are also attached to this Special Notice as reference.

IRT

The informing notice that provides the IRT limits must be individualized for each AU. The HSS will inform customers of their IRT level at least once per payment period or whenever the AU's IRT changes. Upon approval of an application and any time the AU's IRT level changes during the recertification/payment period, the IRT level must be provided to the customer using SAR 2, AR 2, or AR 2 SAR form as appropriate. The SAR 2, AR 2, or AR 2 SAR forms are generated in CalWIN. The HSS is to review the information in the form and provide the appropriate form to the customer.

The IRT level in which the customer was last notified will be used for reporting purposes. The new IRT level will be applied as soon as the customer receives the notification of a change in their IRT level. The HSS will not use the new IRT for any AU until the AU has received notification that their IRT has changed, and the new IRT level will not be retroactively applied to the case.

A report of income over the IRT may result in either a mid-period decrease or discontinuance of CalWORKs. Once the family receives income in excess of the IRT and reports it, the HSS must take action to determine if the reported income is reasonably anticipated to continue. If the new reported income will continue but is not at a level not exceeding the AU's Tier 2, the HSS must use the new

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reasonably anticipated income to recalculate the grant amount based on the reported income. If the HSS determines the grant should be decreased, the HSS will decrease the grant at the end of the month in which timely and adequate notice can be provided. If the income reported is reasonably anticipated to continue to exceed the AU's Tier 2 IRT for the remainder of the payment period, the HSS will determine the AU financially ineligible and discontinue the AU at the end of the month in which timely and adequate notice can be provided.

As long as the AU's income does not exceed the Tier 2 IRT (130% of the FPL), the case will stay open, and the AU may remain eligible for supportive services and CalWORKs special needs. This may also allow some CalWORKs cases to remain open with a Zero Basic Grant (ZGB) if the AU's income remains below 130% of the FPL.

**Impacts:**

Refugee Cash Assistance (RCA) and Trafficking and Crime Victims Assistance Programs (TCVAP)

The above instructions also apply to RCA and TCVAP, unless specifically superseded by RCA/TCVAP regulations.

CalFresh

The increase in CalWORKs MAP will likely cause a decrease in CalFresh benefits. Review the impacted cases and take action as needed. CalFresh customers must receive notification of any negative changes to their household's CalFresh benefits no later than September 20, 2021, to meet (10-day) timely noticing regulations.

CalFresh IRT amounts by household size will be released in separate CalFresh Program material.

General Relief

Instructions for General Relief Program will be distributed separately.

Automation

CalWIN has been updated on September 4, 2021, to reflect the new MAP and IRT levels. Additional information and a case exception and online correspondence reports have been issued to staff for appropriate action.

Management Reporting

The reports below require action and can be found on the SharePoint site, under the [MR / Other Reports / CalWORKs Reports / MAP COLA / October 2021](#) folder:

- 2021 CalWORKs MAP COLA Exception Report  
This report lists and describes errors encountered on cases during the batch run process. These cases did not convert successfully during the COLA update process.  
HSS Action Required:
  - Review case and authorize
- 2021 CW MAP COLA Online Correspondence  
This report lists correspondence after the MAP COLA was run that remains in the Print Queue for review.  
HSS Action Required:
  - Review all correspondence that is held in the Print Queue

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- Delete unnecessary correspondence
- Mail out remaining correspondence after completing any manual variables

**Forms and Document Capture**

HSSs are to use the manual TEMP 2250 (08/21) and TM44-315L (07/21) NOA in the Eligibility Forms Library (EFL) if the CalWIN forms are unavailable. A copy of the manual TM44-315L NOA must be submitted for document capture.

HSSs are also to provide the GEN 1365 Notice of Language Services when issuing a manual TEMP 2250 or TM44-315L to non-English speaking customers.

The manual SAR 2, AR 2, or AR 2 SAR forms are available in the EFL. HSSs are to use the manual form if the forms are unavailable in CalWIN. A copy of the manual form must be scanned in CalWIN Electronic Records Management System (CERMS).

**Scratch Budget/Assistance Chart**

The CalWORKs-CalFresh Scratch Budget and CalWORKs Assistance Standards Chart (CPG 44-300.G, 45-200) have been updated with the new MAP and IRT levels for October 2021.

**References:**

All County Letters No. 21-87 and 21-92

**Sunset Date:**

This policy will be reviewed for continuance by October 31, 2022.

**Approval for Release:**

 for:

Rick Wanne, Director  
Self-Sufficiency Services