

Linkages

**How do we work together
to help families in Humboldt
County meet their needs?**

A decorative graphic at the top of the slide consists of two groups of three circles. The left group has a solid light purple circle on the left, a white circle with a light purple outline in the middle, and a solid light purple circle on the right. The right group has a solid light purple circle on the left, a white circle with a light purple outline in the middle, and a solid light purple circle on the right.

Welcome!

- Introductions
- “Meeting the Linkages Challenge”
short video

What is Linkages?



- Linkages is a coordinated service approach between CWS and CalWORKs/WtW to better serve families.
- Linkages eligibility occurs when a client is actively enrolled in WtW and also has an open case with CWS.
- Brings staff together from CWS and CalWORKs/WtW to share information and coordinate services to better assist families to meet their needs.



Linkages Goal & Purpose

- Goal is to create and maintain a family-centered, integrated service system that supports the “whole family.”
- Purpose is to identify families in common between CWS & CalWORKs/WtW to coordinate and enhance service delivery.
- For clients engaged in both programs, providing cooperative assessment, service planning and case management improves outcomes for at-risk families.
- To ensure engagement and full participation of Linkages families to meet Work Participation Rate.

Linkages Mission



- Strengthen families
- Ensure safety
- Promote self-sufficiency
- Eliminate poverty
- Improve the quality of life in our community

Terms – CWS



- **CWS/CMS:** CWS Case Management System, the CWS computer database
- **ER:** Emergency Response
- **FM/FR:** Family Maintenance (court and non-court) & Family Reunification
- **PP:** Permanency Planning
- **SW:** Social Worker
- **TDM:** Team Decision-Making meeting

What is Child Welfare Services (CWS)?

- CWS receives referrals from mandated and non-mandated reporters who are concerned that a child may have been abused or neglected.
- If a referral meets criteria, an Emergency Response (ER) SW conducts an investigation. If the risk of future maltreatment is high or very high, the referral may be promoted to a case.

What is CWS? (con' t.)



- Cases may be either FR or FM
- FM Services
 - Services provided to the family while the child is in the home
 - Non-court or court-ordered
 - Usually 6 months to 1 year for Non-court FM
 - As long as court ordered for court FM

What is CWS? (con' t.)

- FR Services

- Services provided while the child is placed out of their home
- SW works with the family to resolve the safety concerns that led to removal so that the child(ren) may return home
- Timeline is 6 to 18 months of services, depending on the age of the child(ren)
- Typically followed by court FM after child(ren) go home



Terms – CalWORKs/WtW

- **CalWORKs:** California Work Opportunities & Responsibility to Kids (cash aid)
- **C-IV:** “C-four,” the Eligibility & Welfare to Work computer system
- **EDD:** Employment Development Department
- **ETD:** Employment Training Division
- **ETW:** Employment & Training Worker Works with Welfare to Work participants
- **EW:** Eligibility Worker
Determines ongoing cash aid, CalFresh & Medi-Cal eligibility
- **GR:** General Relief

Terms – CalWORKs/WtW (con' t.)

- **ICW:** Integrated Case Worker
Completes intake interview and determines initial eligibility for cash aid, CalFresh & Medi-Cal and refers to WtW Orientation
- **QR7:** Quarterly Report
- **TANF:** Temporary Assistance to Needy Families
- **VC:** Vocational Counselor
- **WEX:** Work Experience
- **WPR:** Work Participation Rate
- **WtW:** Welfare to Work Employment program associated with CalWORKs.



What is CalWORKs?

- Designed for low- to no-income families to meet their basic needs on a temporary basis

The CalWORKs Umbrella

CalWORKs



Cash Aid (TANF
or welfare) , **CalFresh**,
Medi-Cal

**Welfare to
Work**

Income & Benefits

Employment

Eligibility Requirements



- Applicants must have a child who has “deprivation,” which means an absent or deceased parent; or in a two-parent household, a disabled or unemployed parent
- The family must meet income and property limits
- Children who are applied for must meet certain requirements, such as school attendance and immunizations
- Must meet citizenship requirements

Verifications



- If verifications are not provided by clients to the ICW or EW, this may result in an application denial, a discontinuance, or decrease of benefits.
- The EW/ICW notifies the SW of steps needed to support initial or continued granting of CalWORKs, such as birth certificates, Child Support Services, etc.



Homeless Assistance

- CalWORKs recipients may be eligible for additional assistance if they are homeless
- Up to 16 nights in a place that is in the business of renting (\$65 per night)
- May also be eligible for assistance moving in to a permanent residence, such as deposit, last month's rent (if required) and utility deposits
- Once in a lifetime benefit
- There are several requirements to be eligible for this assistance

Maximum Family Grant Rule (MFG)

- The aid payment to the family will not increase for a newborn if any member of the household got cash aid for the 10 months in a row prior to the birth of the child without at least a 2 month break in aid.



Time on Aid, Safety Net & Renewals

- Adults can only receive 48 months of aid in California. There are certain exceptions.
- Even if parents time-out, children may remain on aid if they and the family are otherwise eligible through “safety net” regulations
- New county policy affords “safety net” parents opportunity to participate in limited work activities
- Clients must attend a renewal meeting to re-determine eligibility.

What is Welfare to Work (WtW)?

- Mandatory employment program for cash aid recipients
- Goals include helping job seekers become more employable, find and keep employment and achieve self-sufficiency
- WtW clients are assigned an ETW

Exemptions

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- Adult recipients of CalWORKs are mandatory participants of WtW unless one of the following applies:
 - SSI/SSP recipient
 - Non-Needy Caretaker
 - Disabled (mental/physical)
 - Young child exemptions
 - CalWORKs timed-out
 - Aged 60 or older
 - Care of a disabled household member

Work Participation Rate (WPR)

- Clients must meet monthly hour requirements:
 - 139 hours for one-parent households
 - 152 for two-parent households
- Federal law requires states to meet specific WPR or face a penalty by losing part of their TANF allocation.
- The goal is full client participation so that WPR is met.



WtW Activities & Services

- The ETW determines what work activities and services are appropriate to ensure full participation.
- Services to increase employability
 - Job search services
 - Vocational assessments
 - Vocational training & educational opportunities
 - Short-term & long-term subsidized employment
 - Short-term subsidized & short-term unpaid work activities for “safety net” parents

WtW Activities & Services (con' t.)

- Services to address barriers
 - Behavioral health services
 - Learning disability screening & evaluation
- Supportive services
 - Transportation
 - Child care
 - Work & training expenses
- Referrals to community resources
- Cal-Learn program changes

WtW Sanctions



- Non-participation may result in financial sanction – a reduction in the CalWORKs amount.
- If a client fails or refuses to participate in assigned activities, the ETW initiates a sanction. They notify the ICW or EW, who takes that individual off the Cash Aid grant for the family.

WtW Sanctions (con' t.)



- The ETW/ICW notifies the SW of the steps that are needed to cure the sanction. ETW & SW should work together to assist participant in preventing and/or curing a WtW Sanction.
- Even if there is a sanction in place, continue to treat the case as Linkages until determined it is no longer a Linkages case.

Linkages



- Linkages eligibility occurs when a client is enrolled in WtW and also has an open case with CWS.
- The ETW and SW collaborate closely to ensure that program requirements and family needs are met through coordination of the WtW and CWS case plans.
- ETW & SW must involve EW in Linkages cases to ensure any and all benefits are granted accurately.



The Linkages Process

1. Clients are identified

- A client can be identified as Linkages in Eligibility, WtW or CWS.
- If you have a case you think might be Linkages, talk to the EW, ETW or SW!

2. Cases are flagged

A flag is entered into C-IV and a Special Project code is put into CMS.

The Linkages Process (con' t.)

3. SW calls ETW

The CWS Social Worker calls the ETW to exchange program information and set up a coordinated case planning meeting.

The ETW provides a copy of the client's WtW case plan to the SW. The SW will provide a copy of CWS case plan that is in effect, if available.



The Linkages Process (con' t.)

4. Coordinated Case Planning

The meeting happens and the coordinated case plan is completed.

5. Ongoing Communication

Must occur at least monthly between the SW, ETW and EW for the duration of the Linkages status.

Coordinated Case Planning

- The SW contacts the ETW to set up a coordinated case planning meeting with the client.
- The SW brings the Coordinated Case Plan form to the meeting.
- Information from both programs is discussed.
- The Coordinated Case Plan is completed.

Coordinated Case Planning (con' t.)



- Copies of the Coordinated Case Plan go to the parents, SW, ETW and EW.
- The CMS case plan should include a Service Objective (Other) that states, “Parent will comply with their CalWORKs/Welfare to Work case plan.”
- The SW and ETW also send each other copies of the program case plans.

Coordinated Case Planning (con' t.)



- Each case plan will be monitored for progress and compliance. All workers will notify one another of any non-compliance issues.
- Coordinated case planning meetings should happen every time there is a case plan update.



Where Linkages Happens

- Coordinated case planning for initial case plans
- TDMs
- Client appointments with the ETW
- Annual renewals with the EW
- Case plan updates
- Time studies
- Anywhere else that is appropriate!

Team Decision-Making (TDM)



- Goal is to involve birth families and community members, along with substitute care providers, service providers and agency staff, in all placement decisions.
- A TDM is held for all decisions involving child removal, change of placement, and exit from placement.
- The SW should always ask the family if they would like to have the ETW and/or EW invited to the TDM.

Ongoing Linkages Work



- The ETW will contact the SW when a client is scheduled for a WtW appointment.
- The ETW, EW and SW will have at least one monthly contact with each other.
- Involve EW as needed.

Linkages Ends



- SW, ETW and/or EW will communicate with each other if any of the following occur:
 - All adults time out
 - Someone becomes a drug felon, fleeing felon, or status change
 - Terminate FM or FR services
 - Case closure
 - FM changes to FR services
 - FR changes to PP services



AB 429

- AB 429 allows CalWORKs services to continue to parents in CWS FR cases, even though cash aid and Medi-Cal stop when children are removed.
- Parents get transitional CalFresh (food stamps) for five months and can apply for medical coverage.
- SW to keep the ETW and EW updated on the CWS status of these cases



Intended Linkages Outcomes

- Lower risk of re-entry to care than non-Linkages families
- Lower rate of subsequent substantiated allegations
- Higher percentage of WtW sanctions resolved and lower percentage of WtW sanctions imposed
- Increased WPR for Linkages families

Time Studies

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- Follow your unit's time study directions.



Questions?

- Thank you for being here and for all of your work with Linkages families!