



Applications

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California

Applications

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Filing and Processing Applications

All persons have a right to file an application for cash assistance.

Right provided for in regulation

The same application for cash assistance is used throughout the state.

The statewide application is a joint application for:

Food Stamps
Medicaid
State medical assistance

State policy sets standards of timeliness for processing applications:

Applications must be acted upon within 45 days.

The agency is required to issue a written decision on applications.

Pre-Application Requirements

The state does not impose requirements that must be met before a family can submit an application for cash assistance.

Pending Application Requirements

The state does not impose requirements (other than verification of information concerning eligibility) that a family must meet in order for its cash assistance application to be processed and approved.

Personal Responsibility Contracts

Applicants and recipients are not required to sign a personal responsibility contract.

Employability Plans

Applicants must sign an employability plan, i.e. a plan that covers only work requirements for the individual, after eligibility is determined.

The point at which an individual develops an employability plan is decided at county discretion

The following people must sign an employability plan:

Individuals required to participate in welfare-to-work activities

The following applicants and recipients are exempt from developing and/or signing an employability plan:

- Individual exempt from work requirements
- Individual with a child under age seven months
- Disabled caretaker
- Non-parent caretaker not receiving assistance
- State statute exempts the parent or other relative who has primary responsibility for personally providing care to a child six months of age or under. However, on a case-by-case basis, using county criteria, a county may reduce the age to 12 weeks or increase it to 12 months.

Employability plans include a state or county agreement to provide services, and the services are listed.

A sanction is imposed if an applicant or recipient refuses to sign an employability plan. The sanction is the same as the sanction for non-compliance with work requirements.

Formal Diversion Programs

The state operates a formal diversion program.

Current cash assistance recipients may not participate in the diversion program.

There is no maximum diversion payment that may be provided.

The size of the diversion payment is calculated as follows:
Case-by-case based on need, no maximum

The income and asset limits used to determine diversion program eligibility are the same as those applied to applicants for ongoing cash assistance.

Eligibility for a cash diversion payment is decided based upon:
County discretion; county must consider likelihood of applicant avoiding the need for extended assistance beyond diversion period, and may consider employment history, employment prospects, housing needs, and child care.

A family that receives a diversion payment:
Must chose to pay back the diversion payment or to have the number of months of aid corresponding to the amount of the diversion payment count against their 60-month time limit

If a family receives cash assistance during the period of ineligibility, the diversion cash payment is recouped as follows:
Diversion payment is either recouped over time, or the diversion period counts against the 60 month time limit.

A diversion payment counts as one month of time-limited assistance if a family later receives ongoing cash assistance.

When a family receives a diversion payment, its child support rights are not assigned to the state.

Families that receive diversion payments are eligible to receive:

Child care services:
Same availability as if family were CalWORKS recipient

Emergency Assistance

The state provides emergency assistance to families that are receiving TANF cash assistance as follows:

- Eviction prevention
- Short-term rental assistance
- Prevent utility shutoff or restore service
- Emergency housing assistance
- Temporary shelter for homeless families
- Assistance for eviction prevention, short-term rental assistance, and/or prevention of utility shutoff or restore service is provided as "immediate need" payments and are advances on regular assistance payments at application, not additional payments.

The state does not provide emergency assistance to families that are eligible for but not receiving TANF cash assistance.

The state does not provide emergency assistance to families that are not eligible for TANF cash assistance.

Note: Information on exemptions from work requirements and sanctions for noncompliance with work requirements will be available in the Work and Sanction Provisions sections later this year.