

# County of San Diego, Health and Human Services Agency (HHS) CalWORKs Program Guide

## Good Cause Determination

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### Background

CalWORKs provisions require penalties for those families in which children are not meeting the school attendance requirement unless good cause exists.

### Policy

#### **42-100.G.1 Good Cause – Eligibility Worker Action**

Determine good cause when good cause is apparent or when parent(s)/caretaker relative(s) request it.

Apparent good cause exists when a request is made to provide the school attendance documentation and the school is closed for an extended period of time (i.e. summer break). Refer to [CPG 42-100.G.2 School Not In Session](#) below for additional instructions.

Good cause also exists if parent(s)/caretaker relative(s) is/are ill and unable to have verification completed by the school and no other responsible adult is in the home to have the verification completed. In this situation, determine when the verification can be reasonably submitted and document the new date and the reason for the extension in the case file.

#### **Excess absences**

When evaluating for good cause, determine if the child's **chronic truancy** is related to any of the following:

- Illness
- Hospitalization
- Court appearances
- Mental/physical disability
- Other reasons beyond the control of the child or the parent

Good cause exists for the above situations, as long as the parent(s)/caretaker relative(s) provide the following written verifications:

For	Verification Type
Illness	Doctor statement
Hospitalization	Hospital verification or Doctor statement
Court appearances	Court documents
Mental/physical disability	Psychiatrist/Therapist/Physician/Licensed Social Worker statement
Other reason	Parent's sworn statement

Also work with parent(s)/caretaker relatives(s) to establish good cause when it is clear that the child has underlying issues impacting regular school attendance. Provide examples of appropriate resources to assist the parent/caretaker and allow adequate time for the parent/caretaker to provide appropriate verification of good cause.

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Any verification that contains an expiration date must be followed up to determine future attendance compliance.

Clearly document and narrate all good cause requests, type of verifications provided, and actions taken.

**Note:** In some situations a parent may indicate a child only missed a class or went to school late but the school verification shows as a “full day” absence. In these situations, instruct the parent to provide written verification from the school explaining the child is no longer deemed a chronic truant or meeting at least one of the exception criteria ([CPG 42-100.F.3](#)).

**42-100.G.2 School Not In Session**

Schools might not be in session when the parent(s)/caretaker(s) is attempting to obtain verification from the school, to show that the child is either attending school or meeting at least one of the exception criteria ([CPG 42-100.F.3](#)).

Follow these procedures for times when the school is not in session:

- Accept verification from the previous school semester, showing regular attendance, when the school is closed for an extended period of time (i.e. summer breaks, etc.).
- If aid is being restored, accept a previous verification, if dated within the past semester, or the client's statement if there is no question or conflicting information about the child's attendance.
- Notify the parent(s)/caretaker(s) to provide new school attendance verification when the school re-opens. Create a reminder to follow up with the request when the school re-opens.

**Procedure:**

None.

**Impacts:**

None.

**References:**

[EAS 40-105.5](#)

[ACL 15-22](#)

**Approval for Release:**

June 8, 2015

**Sunset Date:**

This policy will be reviewed for continuance by June 30, 2018.