

July 6, 2010

CalWORKs Program Guide
Special Notice
10-03 ADDENDUM A

FOOD STAMP PROGRAM GUIDE
Special Notice
10-04 ADDENDUM A

Subject **CalWORKs AND FOOD STAMP PROGRAMS QUARTERLY REPORTING AND PROSPECTIVE BUDGETING (QR/PB) QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS (Q&A's) SPECIAL NOTICE 10-03/10-04**

Reference All County Letter ACL 10-10, 09-41 and 09-41 Errata.

Purpose The purpose of this ADDENDUM to the joint CalWORKs and Food Stamp Program Special Notice 10-03/10-04 is to revise the answer to question # 2 regarding "Good Cause" and provide additional clarification to answer # 6 regarding "How to Treat a Decrease of Income."

The revision and clarification was provided by the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) to more fully explain the past responses.

Background San Diego County issued joint CalWORKs/Food Stamp Special Notice 10-03/10-04, Quarterly Reporting and Prospective Budgeting (QR/PB) Questions and Answers on January 28, 2010 based on All County Letter (ACL) 09-41.

In order to ensure that staff does not refer to the original answers, the answers to Question # 2 and Question # 6 from Special Notice 10-03 for CalWORKs and 10-04 for Food Stamps in the on-line Program Guide Manuals have been cancelled (by strikeout) and hyperlinks have been added connecting to the revised answers in this Special Notice.

Table of Content

Question #	
2	"Good Cause" for a Late QR 7
6	Income Decrease Reported During the Submit Month

What constitutes "good cause" for failing to submit a timely QR 7? When can the HSS determine "good cause" for failing to submit a timely QR 7 by the extended filing date?

Answer: Per [FSPG 63-274.5](#) and [CPG 44-250.C](#), "good cause" for submitting a late QR 7 will be determined when the recipient cannot reasonably be expected to fulfill his or her reporting responsibilities due to factors outside of his or her control. "Good cause" exists only in the following situations:

- The recipient is suffering from a mental or physical disability which prevents timely and complete reporting; or
- The recipient's failure to submit a timely and complete report is directly attributable to a county error; or
- The HSS finds other extenuating circumstances.

When a recipient requests restoration of aid during the first month after being discontinued for a late QR 7, the HSS is required to review whether the recipient had "good cause" for late submission of their QR 7. If the HSS finds "good cause," the discontinuance will be rescinded.

CalWORKs

After a full calendar month has passed after the discontinuance, a "good cause" exemption will only be reviewed if requested by the CalWORKs recipient. [MPP §40-181.231].

The burden to prove "good cause" for not submitting a complete and timely QR 7 is on the recipient, but the HSS has the discretion to decide if each specific situation meets the above criteria for "good cause."

In addition, in CalWORKs only, the HSS may choose at any time to independently determine "good cause" even if the recipient does not request it in the following situations:

- When the HSS becomes aware of a domestic violence situation;
- When the recipient is suffering from a mental or physical condition which prevents timely and complete reporting;
- If the HSS becomes aware of a county error such as when mail is returned as undeliverable and the HSS finds the client reported a new address that was not used for the mailing; or
- When the HSS finds other extenuating circumstances.

NOTE: CPG 44-250.C will be updated shortly to include this information.

Continued on next page

Question 2
"Good Cause"
for a Late QR 7
(Continued)

FOOD STAMPS

In the FSP, a good cause exemption may only be requested in the month following the discontinuance. The household must reapply for benefits after a full calendar month has passed as explained in [FSPG 63-274.5](#).

After a full month has passed following a case discontinuance, "good cause" for failing to submit a QR 7 may be claimed only in CalWORKs program, not in the FSP.

[FSP regulation MPP 63-508.644 states: "Once a full calendar month has passed since the QR 7 discontinuance date, the household may not claim "good cause" and must reapply for benefits.]

Question 6
Income Decrease
Reported During
the Submit
Month

How would the HSS treat a decrease of income reported in the Submit Month (the month the QR 7 is due)?

Answer: Per [CPG 44-250.D](#), [FSPG 63-275.1](#) and [FSPG 63-283](#), if the household reports on the QR 7 or by other means a decrease of income in the Submit Month, the HSS must treat the decreased income as a voluntary mid-quarter report and adjust/supplement benefits for the month the decrease takes place if verified timely (see Q&A #5 in the original [CPG SN 10-03/ FSPG SN 10-04](#)). If the income decrease is expected to continue into the next quarter, the decreased income reported on the QR 7 will also be used to determine the next Payment Quarter's cash aid and food stamp benefit amount.

Example 1: During the Jan/Feb/Mar quarter, a recipient submits a timely and accurate February QR 7 on March 4th stating that her actual income for the month of March will be lower than the current budgeted income. She also reports that the decrease in income will continue through the upcoming Payment Quarter and provides written verification of her decreased income on March 7th.

The HSS will re-compute March's benefits and make any necessary supplemental payments to the AU/HH. In addition, the HSS will use this new reasonably anticipated income to compute the upcoming Payment Quarter if the decrease in income is anticipated to continue.

Example 2: Using the same scenario above, the recipient reports an income decrease for the upcoming Payment Quarter, but didn't report a decrease of income for the current month.

- If later in the month, on March 25th, the recipient reports a decrease in income for March and provides timely verification (on April 2nd), the HSS will re-determine March's cash aid and food stamp benefits and issue supplemental benefits.
- If the recipient does not provide verification until April 10th (more than 10 days after the report date) the new report date will be the date the verification is received and in this case, March benefits will not be supplemented.

NOTE: As explained in [FSPG 63-283.9](#), when supplementing the CalWORKs grant, the food stamp budget will include the original CalWORKs grant plus the additional CalWORKs supplement.

Continued on next page

Question 6
Income Decrease
Reported During
the Submit
Month
(Continued)

Example 3: Using the same scenario above, if the recipient reports on her March QR 7 (and verifies timely) that her February (data month) income has decreased and that the decrease in income will continue through the upcoming Payment Quarter, the HSS will increase benefits for the upcoming Payment Quarter and supplement March benefits. However, the recipient is not eligible to receive a February supplement because the decrease in income was not reported in February.

Clarification:

The answer in example 2 has been expanded to clarify that:

- Benefits will be supplemented for the month the decrease in income occurs or is reported, whichever is later, if the verification is provided timely, and
- If the verification is provided more than 10 days after the report date, the date the verification is received will be considered the new report date.

The third example has been added to explain that benefits will not be supplemented for a month prior to the report of a decrease in income.

FSPG [63- 275](#) and [63-283](#); [CPG 44-250.D](#) and [44-250.F](#)

[MPP §44-316.31 and 63-509(a)(2)]

Quality
Assurance (QA)
Impact

Quality Assurance (QA) will cite an error if the policies regarding QR regulations are not followed or are followed incorrectly.

Manager
Approval



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