

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

<b>Eligibility for Disaster Victims and Evacuees of California Major Wildfires from Calaveras and Lake Counties</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Page</b>
	<b>15-10</b>	<b>1 of 3</b>

**Issue Date:**

November 12, 2015

**Effective Date:**

Upon Receipt

**Background:**

The danger and damage caused by the major wildfires have made it necessary for some families to be evacuated from the areas where they live.

Due to the circumstances of the evacuees' departures and the devastation that occurred in their home counties, it is anticipated that some evacuees will apply for CalWORKs in disaster counties or another county, due to disaster-related relocation.

**Purpose:**

Inform eligibility workers of CalWORKs regulations and policy when processing applications or documents received from wildfire victims and evacuees from the federally designated disaster and/or State declared emergency, areas in Calaveras and Lake Counties. The victims and evacuees may be eligible to several waivers of CalWORKs rules.

**Policy:**

Many evacuees will lack documentation of various items such as identity, age, social security number, value of property/resources, income, and may be unable to obtain such verification within standard application processing time periods.

If the applicant and eligibility worker make a good-faith effort to obtain verification of the evacuee's identity, time on aid, and linking and non-linking conditions of CalWORKs eligibility and are unable to make contact with the evacuee's financial institutions or other entity/institution, the eligibility worker shall accept the evacuee's statements, signed under penalty of perjury.

Disaster relief payments and assistance from Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), American Red Cross relief, and Disaster CalFresh will be excluded as countable income and resources for the CalWORKs Program.

**Procedure:**

Eligibility workers are encouraged to explore Immediate Needs and Diversion eligibility for the wildfire evacuees. Diversion payments are designed to deal with a specific crisis situation or item of need, and may be appropriate for displaced families.

When a CalWORKs application is received by an individual or family displaced by the wildfires, the eligibility worker shall do the following:

- Create the application in CalWIN
- Enter "Disaster CalWORKs" case special indicator
- Determine that the evacuee was living in a County designated as a declared federal and/or State emergency zone as a result of the wildfires during the period that the wildfires occurred

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	<b>15-10</b>	<b>2 of 3</b>

- Ask the evacuee if anyone in his/her family is currently receiving CalWORKs in Calaveras or Lake County
- Process the application and complete the eligibility determination process

**Wildfire victims and evacuees may be eligible to several waivers of existing CalWORKs rules. The following CalWORKs rules may be waived:**

- **Residence:** A written statement is acceptable to establish his/her intention to maintain or establish residence in California and in the county of application for the foreseeable future. If the case is approved in San Diego County, San Diego County must initiate an inter-county transfer (ICT) to the home disaster county.

CalWORKs evacuee recipients can maintain a home in a county other than the county where they are physically residing if they intend to return to that home within 4 months.

- **Income:** Reasonably anticipated income is defined as income expected to be available to or received by an applicant/recipient during the Semi-Annual Reporting (SAR) Payment Period. It is expected that some evacuees, due to the disaster, will no longer have income that can be anticipated income.
- **Property/Resources:** Many evacuees will not be able to access, occupy, or sell their property at the time of application. The county shall take into consideration the applicant's ability and circumstances in meeting the property provisions and shall make a good faith effort to assist the applicant to obtain needed verification, or accept a statement signed under penalty of perjury.
- **Deprivation:** Some families may have been temporarily separated during the evacuation, but anticipate being reunited in the near future. If an evacuee family member expects to reunite with the applicant family within one calendar month, consider that member to be temporarily absent from his/her family.
- **Homeless Assistance:** Many evacuees may be homeless, and should be informed of their option to apply for temporary and permanent housing assistance. Applicant families who have already received homeless assistance are entitled to an exception to the once-in-a-lifetime limit.
- **Welfare-to-Work:** Many families are in a state of crisis and will not be able to participate in welfare-to-work (WTW) activities. To ensure these families receive assistance, counties should make a WTW good cause exemption determination. This could be completed at the eligibility determination so that families are not needlessly required to attend a WTW orientation and appraisal. In addition, counties should determine if an applicant or recipient needs CalWORKs barrier removal services, such as mental health services, Housing Support Program (HSP) or temporary homeless assistance, and should provide the services or refer the recipient to these services as expeditiously as possible.

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**Number**  
**15-10**

**Page**  
**3 of 3**

**Impact/s:**

Automation

Enter "Disaster CalWORKs" case special indicator for those applications that meet the above criteria.

Forms and Document Capture

All verifications, manual forms and notices must be imaged as appropriate

Other Programs Affected

CalFresh: Process requests for CalFresh using current CalFresh regulations. Sworn statements can be accepted if verifications are unable to be received to meet processing timeframes.

Quality Control

Quality Control will cite the appropriate error when these regulations are not applied.

Management Reporting

None

**References:**

[ACIN I-85-15](#)

**Sunset Date:**

This policy will be reviewed for continuance on or by November 30, 2018

**Approval for Release:**



Rick Wanne, Director  
Eligibility Operations