

**County of San Diego, Health and Human Services Agency (HHS) Agency (HHS) Agency (HHS)**  
**CalWORKs/CalFresh Program Guide Letter**

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**Issue Date:**

June 10, 2015

**Effective Date:**

June 1, 2015

**Purpose:**

Notify staff of The Approved Relative Caregiver (ARC) Program

**Background:**

State law requires that preferential consideration for placement be given to an approved relative caregiver when a child is removed from the physical custody of a parent. Approved relative caregivers in California must meet health and safety standards that mirror those for licensed foster parents, such as undergoing criminal background and child abuse index checks. The funding associated with that placement depends upon whether the child is eligible to receive federal AFDC-FC (Foster Care).

When a child is ineligible to federal AFDC-FC and is placed with a relative caregiver, the relative may apply for CalWORKs on behalf of the child. AFDC-FC payment is based on per child payment; CalWORKs is based on the size of the family and is a lower rate than the AFDC-FC rate.

To address this disparity, California has enacted the Approved Relative Caregiver (ARC) Program. The ARC Program payments are equal to the basic Foster Care rate for approved relative caregivers with whom a non-federally eligible foster child is placed.

**Policy Change:**

**CalWORKs:**

A non-federally eligible foster child placed with an approved relative caregiver will receive payments equal to the basic foster care rate.

**CalFresh:**

Recipients of the ARC Program may also be eligible for CalFresh benefits. For CalFresh budgeting purposes, monies made available through the ARC Program will be treated in the same manner as foster care payments made to the CalFresh households ([63-223.3](#)).

CalFresh households must be informed of their option to include an ARC-eligible child foster child in the CalFresh household for CalFresh budgeting purposes. ARC-eligible foster children may be considered part of the CalFresh household, with the ARC payment treated as unearned income to the CalFresh household **OR** ARC eligible foster children may be considered boarders and excluded for CalFresh budgeting purposes from the household with the ARC payment excluded from income consideration. ([63-243.2](#))

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**Summary of Changes:**

- Added CPG section [40-183.C](#) to the CalWORKs Program Guide

**Impacts:**

**Automation:**

When the ARC eligible child is in an active CalWORKs case with a needy caretaker or non-needy caretaker and other CalWORKs eligible children, the ARC eligible child will be placed in separate CalWORKs case with an assistance unit (AU) of 1.

**Forms and Document Capture:**

All documents received from Child Welfare Services (CWS) and any NOAs must be imaged.

**Programs Affected:**

None

**Quality Control:**

Quality Control will cite the appropriate error when the regulations cited in this program material have not been followed.

**References:**

[ACIN No. I-42-14](#)

[ACL No. 14-89](#)

[ACL No. 15-20](#)

**Sunset Date:**

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

**Approval for Release:**



Rick Wanne, Director  
Eligibility Operations