# Los Angeles County Benefits and Services Available to its Needy Residence

#### **GENERAL RELIEF**

General Relief (GR) is a County-funded program that provides financial assistance to indigent adults who are ineligible for federal or State programs. An average GR case consists of one person, living alone, with no income or resources.

The GR caseload includes the following employability status classifications:

- Employables are participants with minor restrictions or no medical conditions that would prevent employment. GR employables may receive GR for nine months in a 12-month period, provided they continue to comply with GROW requirements.
- Temporary Unemployables are participants who have one or more medical conditions affecting their ability to work and their condition will last less than 12 months. GR benefits are not time limited for unemployables.
- Permanent Unemployables are participants who have one or more medical conditions affecting their ability to work, may qualify for Supplemental Security Income (SSI), and their condition will last more than 12 months or is terminal. GR benefits are not time limited for unemployables.
- Unemployable Volunteers are assigned to individuals who are unemployable (temporary or permanent), but volunteer to participate in GROW.
- •NSA means Need Special Assistance and is the identification of individuals who need special assistance due to a mental disability.
- •Administratively Unemployable means there are reasons other than physical or mental incapacity which prevents the individual from finding, accepting or continuing existing employment.

The General Relief Opportunities for Work (GROW) program offers employment and training services to employables and is designed to help

GR participants obtain jobs and achieve self-sufficiency. Substance abuse treatment is also available if necessary.

#### <u>GROW</u>

**GROW** program was implemented in February 1999, as approved by the Board of Supervisors under Section 17000.6 of the Welfare and Institutions Code. On August 21, 1998, a law change extended the time limit on eligibility for General Relief (GR) to nine months in any 12 month period and made participation in a welfare-to-work program mandatory for employable GR recipients.

Currently, the GR Program is undergoing a restructure, with the purpose of improving its effectiveness in moving participants into self-sufficiency, mainly by seeking Social Security Income (SSI) or by obtaining employment. GROW Program is taking part in this restructure and new enhancements and customized services are being developed to improve employment preparation and employment opportunities for GROW participants. Recent additions include the Pathways to Success and Computer Application Class components described below.

#### **GROW PROGRAM OVERVIEW**

The goal of GROW is to transition GROW participants into the labor market. Participation is mandatory for all employable GR recipients. Unemployable participants may volunteer to participate. The first GROW activity consists of a brief Orientation during which participants learn basic information regarding GROW, its components and its requirements. Orientation is provided by GROW contracted providers with a short presentation made by a Case Manager to emphasize benefits of participation in the program.

A. Employment Needs evaluation (EVA) - Prior to enrollment in GROW, and as part of the GR application process, all employable applicants are screened to gather information regarding their education and job skills, as well as any potential barriers to employment that may affect their participation in the program. This information is recorded into the GROW computer system and later on utilized by the case manager to determine the GROW activities that are appropriate for each individual. Voluntary participants need to be assessed by a medical provider or a certified mental health Clinician to determine whether any limitations and/or reasonable accommodations are necessary for participation. Accommodations that are not reasonable cannot be provided. Therefore, participants in need of major accommodations cannot be enrolled in GROW.

- B. <u>Orientation (ORN)</u> Consists of a brief presentation which provides participants with an overview of the program and its services. Beginning on August 3, 2000, attending Orientation became a condition of GR eligibility. During Orientation participants learn about the program and take part in a literacy assessment.
- C. Case Manager Appointments (CMA) GROW participants throughout their participation in the program, receive Case Manager Appointments to discuss their progress and to determine the next activity to which they would be assigned, based on each individual's background and circumstances. A Job Skills Assessment is completed during the first Case Manager appointment to gather information regarding the participantâ€<sup>™</sup>s skills, work history, education, etc. This information is used as the basis for participation in GROW, and helps create the participant profile.
- D. <u>Early Job Search (EJS)</u> This is a voluntary component offered to any interested participants who are willing to participate in intensive job searching activities while they wait for their case to be approved. Transportation is issued for traveling to and from job interviews as needed.
- E. <u>Job Readiness Training (JRT)</u> A three-week activity consisting of a one-week job skills workshop and two weeks of directed and intense job search activities designed to help participants acquire the skills needed to find and obtain employment.
- F. Job Readiness Training for Youth (JRY) A customized three-week activity consisting of a one-week job skills workshop and two weeks of directed and intense job search activities designed specifically for Transition Age Youth participants, ages 18-24 years old, to help them acquire the skills needed to find and obtain employment.
- G. Pathways to Success (PTS) A four-week job readiness and job

search activity designed to provide GROW Transition Age Youth participants, ages 18 to 24 years old, with pre-employment and life skills training and support.

- H. <u>Vocational Assessment (VOC)</u> Upon recommendation made by the Employment Development Team (EDT) participants are referred to this optional component. A professional Vocational Assessor develops an agreed-upon employment plan for participants who remain unemployed after participation in any other components. Upon completion, they may be assigned to Intensive Case Management, Short-Term Training or Education/Training.
- I. <u>Intensive Case Management (ICM)</u> This component consists of intensive job searching activities under the guidance of the Job Developer and/or Case Manager. ICM services are provided as follows:
  - a. During any down-time of a week or more, in-between components.
  - b. Concurrently with any other activities which combined add up to 20 hours per week.
  - c. Once all other required components have been completed and until time limits expire.
- J. <u>Short Term Training (STT)</u> Participants receive referrals to training programs that can be completed within sixty days. There is no requirement for Vocational Assessment in order to participate in this component. There are a couple of customized short-term trainings for GROW participants which include: Office Occupations, Security Guard, and Computer Application Class (details are shown below).
- K. <u>Education/Training (EDU)</u> Under the recommendation of the Employment Development Team (EDT), the GROW Case Manager or the Vocational Assessor, participants are referred to education/training programs to fulfill their employment goals Participants are referred to local/community schools and training programs.
- L. <u>Self-Initiated Program (SIP)</u> Attendance at education or training programs may be approved in lieu of JRT if the participant was enrolled prior to Orientation and:
  - The program involves a minimum of 20 hours activity per week,

- \* Is likely to lead to employment in a demand occupation, and
- \* Can be completed within the remaining time on aid.
- M. <u>Career Opportunities Resources & Employment (CORE)</u> A four week component designed to increase the participant's job readiness and career motivation by reducing potential barriers to employment. CORE specifically targets participants who are chronically homeless, those who have completed a substance abuse treatment, those who have previously been in GROW, and those age 50 and older. Classes are small and utilize an interagency team approach. Staff from Los Angeles County Office of Education conducts classes with collaboration of DPSS case managers who provide support to the participants.
- N. <u>Office Occupations (OPS)</u> A twelve-week course designed for participants who express an interest in working in an office environment. Participants will acquire hands-on experience with computers and use of office-related software programs.
- **O.** <u>Computer Application Class (CAC)</u> This component is a 12-week open-entry/open-exit class for Transitional Age Youth (TAY) participants between the ages of 18-24. It was designed to provide TAY participants with knowledge and understanding of industry-standard software, used by today's employers, and hands-on computer experience needed for entry level positions.
- P. <u>One-Stop/Work Source (OST)</u> This component is available to participants who are returning to GROW after being time-limited off and they have completed JRT, JRY, CORE or PTS in their current enrollment period. Activities include short-term training programs, employment resources, job referrals and job retention services.
- **Q.** <u>Non-Custodial Parent (NCP)</u> Designed to assist participants who have children that are not living with them, this component helps them find employment and meet their child support obligations. Activities include short-term training programs, employment resources, peer support groups, counseling sessions that encourage participants to provide financial and emotional support for their children, job referrals and job retention services.
- R. Youth (YTH) This component is designed to provide services for

participants who are between the ages of 18-24, preparing them to successfully enter the work environment by offering a variety of employment, education and vocational training programs that are geared to their age group.

- **S**. <u>Post-Employment Services (PES)</u> Offers job retention services, continued education development, rapid re-employment and supportive services provided by the Case Manager. Additionally, participants may get assistance with transportation for up to thirty days after securing employment as long as their GR case remains active.
- T. <u>Supportive Services</u> Includes screening for potential substance abuse, domestic violence and mental health needs. Referrals are made at the time of Orientation and during Vocational Assessment. Case Managers may also make referrals at any time a participant expresses the need for such assistance.

#### **GROW ENROLLMENT**

Individuals are given information on the GROW program when they apply for GR. On the same day, and at the district office, applicants without documented physical or mental disabilities meet one-on-one with an Employment Specialist (Eligibility Worker) who briefly explains the program. An Employment Needs Evaluation is initiated to gather information concerning the applicant's job skills, educational background, work history, etc. The applicant is then scheduled for an Orientation appointment. Participation is mandatory for employable participants as a condition of receiving GR. Time limits begin on the date of the Orientation appointment.

Participants deemed unemployable due to physical or mental disabilities, as well as old age (60 or older) are not required to participate in GROW. They may request voluntary enrollment. Volunteers are not subject to time limits and may disenroll at any time, without financial penalties.

#### THE GROW PARTICIPANT'S TEAM

A. Case Manager - Provides case management services during the individual's participation in the program. He/she conducts the initial appraisal; works with participants to ensure their service needs are

met; plans the necessary program activities to achieve the individual's employment goals; and provides intensive case management assistance to participants who remain unemployed.

- **B.** Job Developer Works with employers in the local community to identify employment opportunities and match participants with the labor force need. The Job Developer also assists participants in directed job search efforts and reviews their progress.
- **C. Job Coach** Contracted staff, responsible for providing guidance to participants enrolled in the REP component.
- **D. Facilitator** Contracted staff, responsible for facilitating Orientation and JSPC classes and assisting participants during their participation in these components
- E. Employment Development Team (EDT) The individuals listed above are members of this team. Together, they determine the best way to assist the participants with their employment goals based on information gathered in the Participant Employment Profile.

# **CalWORKs**

The California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids (CalWORKs) program is a time-limited program that provides financial assistance to eligible needy families **with** (or expecting) **children** to help pay for housing, food, utilities, clothing, medical care, and other necessary expenses. Generally, families are eligible to receive cash aid and services when:

- The eligible children are deprived of parental support or care due to:
  - Death;
  - Incapacity;
  - Unemployment/underemployment; or
  - $_{\circ}$  Continued absence of one or both parents.
- A needy or non-needy caretaker provides care for foster children.

The program also provides assistance with the following types of services:

#### Homeless Assistance;

DPSS Housing Program offers a number of benefit and services designed to assist CalWORKs families who are homeless or at risk of homelessness to move out of the current housing crisis into affordable permanent housing.

The benefits and services provided under the DPSS Housing Program are listed below:

- Homeless Assistance Program (Temporary and Permanent and including Permanent Arrearages) Fact Sheet
- Moving Assistance Program (MA)
- Emergency Assistance to Prevent Eviction Program (EAPE)
- •4-Month Rental Assistance Program (RA)
- Homeless Case Management (HCM) Program
- <u>Skid Row Assessment Team (SRAT) Fact Sheet</u>
- District Access Team
- <u>Temporary Homeless Assistance Program (THAP)+14 Fact Sheet</u>

These homeless benefit and services are administrated together by Eligibility Workers and Homeless Case Managers in CalWORKs district offices and Homeless Supportive GAIN Services Workers in GAIN regions.

To learn more about any of these benefits and services or to apply, visit the CalWORKs office nearest you. <u>CalWORKs Office Locations</u>.

- <u>Cal-Learn</u>, a teen parent program;
- <u>Welfare-to-Work</u> services by participating in the <u>Greater Avenues for</u> <u>Independence (GAIN)</u> program which provides the following types of assistance:
- Job preparation and work opportunities;
- <u>Child care</u>; and
- <u>Specialized supportive services</u> such as Domestic Violence, treatment for mental health and substance abuse problems, and Family Preservation Program.

Receiving many of the above services enables parents receiving CalWORKs assistance to become self-sufficient.

In order to receive CalWORKs benefits, the following will be taken into consideration for every member of the family when making a determination:

- Citizenship status or immigrant status;
- Age;
- Income;
- Resource;
- Assets; and
- Other factors.

See <u>Quick Facts</u> and <u>Eligibility</u> for more details. In addition, you can also reference the *Other Programs and Services* section for further information.

# HOW TO APPLY FOR CALWORKS

Needy families may apply for assistance online or by coming in to one of our local <u>DPSS Office locations</u>. However, the easiest and quickest way to apply for CalWORKs is online at

https://www.dpssbenefits.lacounty.gov/ybn/SignInPage.html or by selecting the icon below:



When applying, you can ask for immediate help if your family has little or no cash and needs emergency housing, food, utilities, clothing, or medical care.

# **APPLICATION PROCESS**

The DPSS office will set up a mandatory face-to-face interview with a CalWORKs Eligibility Worker. During the interview, the CalWORKs Eligibility Worker will:

- Obtain the necessary facts and verify the applicant's eligibility to the program;
- Advise and explain the rules and responsibilities to the applicants; and
- Have the participant complete the required application and forms **and** provide proof of income and property, citizenship status, age, social security number, residence, shelter costs, work or school status and other information for each family member.

\*New Applications\*: Families who are applying for benefits could schedule an appointment online by accessing the Your Benefits Now website at https://www.dpssbenefits.lacounty.gov/ybn/Index.html. Families could access some of the CalWORKs rules by clicking on the following links:

#### Welfare-to-Work

Persons applying for assistance on or after April 1, 1998 are eligible to receive GAIN services after signing a WTW plan. WTW activities include employment, job search, assessment, education and training, community service, substance abuse treatment, mental health services and domestic violence counseling.

LA GAIN provides employment-related services to CalWORKs recipients to help them find employment, stay employed, and move on to higher paying jobs, which will ultimately lead them to self-sufficiency and independence. WtW activities must be a minimum of 20 or 30 hours per week for single parents, depending on the age of the children. Two parent families must participate 35 hours per week. Persons who meet the following conditions are exempt from work requirements:

- An individual under 16 years of age.
- An individual 16, 17, or 18 years of age attending an elementary, secondary, or vocational school full-time.
- Parent or caretaker age 60 and older.
- Participant who is disabled or has a medical excuse.
- Individual caring for ill or incapacitated household member.
- Parent or caretaker of a child 12 months of age and under.
- Pregnant woman whose condition prevents her ability to participate in WtW activities.

- Individual is a full-time volunteer in the Volunteers In Service To America (VISTA) Program.
- Parent or caretaker of a child 6 months of age and under.
- Non-parent relative caring for a child who is a dependent or ward of the court or at risk of being placed in foster care.
- A custodial parent who is 19 years of age or under and is a Cal-Learn participant.
- Caretaker relative who is not the parent and is not aided.
- Parent or caretaker who is personally providing care to a child from birth to 23 months. This individual may be exempt only once for this criteria.
- Individuals with a Domestic Violence Waiver.

# **SANCTIONS**

When participants fail to meet the Welfare-to-Work requirements, they will face penalties and/or possible sanctions. Financial sanctions can be imposed if a participant fails or refuses to comply with a CalWORKs requirement, to agree to a welfare-to-work plan, show proof of satisfactory progress in an agreed upon activity, or quit or refuse a job without a good reason for doing so. If efforts at conciliation are unsuccessful, one or both parents can excluded from the assistance budget for a specified time.

- A sanction continues until the participant participates.
- Exempt individuals who volunteer are not subject to financial sanctions, but are excluded from participating until they agree to participate.
- Participants may cure their sanction by contacting the GAIN office.

**Fingerprinting**: All adult family members must be fingerprinted and photo imaged. However, some family members may qualify for an exemption. Ask your Eligibility Worker if you qualify for an exemption. Please note that the fingerprinting and photo imaging information is not shared outside the agency.

**MEDICAL COVERAGE**: In most cases, each member of the family getting CalWORKs will also qualify for Medi-Cal which will pay for most medical costs. The County will explain this benefit to the applicant.

- CHILD CARE Families that receive CalWORKs may also be eligible for child care services, such as help paying child care costs. The County will explain to the family what services are available.
- <u>CalFRESH PROGRAM</u> (formerly Food Stamp Program): In most cases, eligible CalWORKs families qualify for food stamps to help meet their food needs. Often, the CalWORKs application is automatically used by the County to assess the family's eligibility to CalFresh benefits.
- <u>CHILD SUPPORT:</u> If the family includes a child aided by CalWORKs whose parent is not living with the caretaker, the County will automatically notify the local Child Support Agency (LCSA). The LCSA will provide all necessary child support services, including establishing paternity, establishing and enforcing a support obligation and collecting support payments. If the child's paternity has not been previously established, the adult caretaker is required to help the local child support agency do so. This may mean participating in an interview and submitting the child to blood testing if the alleged parent, once contacted, refuses to acknowledge paternity

# **OTHER BENEFITS AND SERVICES**

# Cash Assistance Program for Immigrants (CAPI)



Cash Assistance Program for Immigrants (CAPI) provides cash assistance to certain aged, blind, and disabled legal non-citizens ineligible for Supplemental Social Security Income/State Supplemental Payment (SSI/SSP) due to their immigration status. CAPI participants may be eligible for Medi-Cal, In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS), and/or Food Stamps benefits. Although CAPI applications may be filed at any DPSS General Relief office, it is recommended that these applications be filed at the **Wilshire Special (CAPI) District Office**.

#### Policy

The <u>CAPI Policy</u> on this site is available only in Portable Document Format (PDF). In addition to preserving the appearance of the original file, PDF allows anyone to view the file using Adobe's free Acrobat Reader software.

## **Refugee Employment Program (REP)**



The Refugee Employment Program (REP) is a program designed to provide employment and training services for eligible refugees and asylees residing in the United States (U.S.) up to five (5) years from date of entry in the U.S. or from the date asylum is granted.

The REP Program provides outreach, case management and placement services to refugees. The program also assists refugees in adjusting and adapting to the American Workplace, learn English, and ultimately achieve self-sufficiency to end their dependence on public assistance. Services under this program are currently available to refugees/asylees who are aided through CalWORKs, General Relief or RCA cash programs.

#### In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS)



The In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS) Program helps pay for services provided to low-income elderly, blind or disabled individuals, including children, so that they can remain safely in their own home. IHSS is considered an alternative to out-of-home care, such as nursing homes or board and care facilities.

Some of the services that can be authorized through IHSS include: housecleaning, meal preparation, laundry, grocery shopping, personal care services (such as bowel and bladder care, bathing, grooming and paramedical services), accompaniment to medical appointments, and protective supervision for the mentally impaired.

The Fiscal Year (FY) 2012-13 State Budget established the Coordinated Care Initiative (CCI) in eight demonstration counties, including Los Angeles, to coordinate care for Medi-Cal and Medicare dual eligibles.

In Los Angeles County, dual eligibles will have medical, behavioral health, long-term services and supports (LTSS), such as nursing facility care, IHSS, Multi-purpose Senior Services Program (MSSP), and Communitybased Adult Services (CBAS), coordinated through one of the five Stateselected local health plans: Care 1st, CareMore, L.A. Care, Molina and Health Net.

#### **CCI includes two parts:**

- Mandatory enrollment into Medi-Cal Managed Care of all current Medi-Cal beneficiaries, in order to receive their long-term care benefits, including In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS).
- Optional enrollment of Medicare beneficiaries, who also receive Medi-Cal benefits (dual eligibles), into Managed Care for all their Medicare benefits. This part of CCI is named Cal MediConnect. Dual eligibles may choose to stay in traditional Medicare (fee for service) and enroll in Managed Care for only their Medi-Cal benefits.

#### For more information on CCI, please go to CalDuals.org

Cal MediConnect Fact Sheet

Voluntary Enrollment Form

#### Cal MediConnect Notices:

- Most beneficiaries will receive notices regarding CCI and their managed care options 90, 60, and 30 days prior to their coverage date.
- Beneficiaries in Medi-Cal managed care that are NOT eligible for Cal Medi-Connect will receive one notice prior to the change in their

benefits package as managed long-term services and supports (MLTSS) is added to their existing plan.

#### **Important Notice for Immigrants**

#### You can view and print out this page in the following languages:

If you do not have software capable of viewing and printing in this format, you need to download the Adobe Acrobat Reader software. It is free to download. <u>Click Here</u> to begin downloading.





New U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) guidelines permit immigrants and their children to use certain non-cash benefits and special purpose cash benefits without affecting their immigration status including:

- Medi-Cal (Unless you use these services to pay for long-term care i.e., longterm nursing home care)
- CalFresh
- Healthy Families
- Emergency Medical
  Assistance
- WIC (Women, Infants and Children)
- Job Training Programs
- Foster Care and Adoption
  Assistance
- Non-Cash benefits funded under CalWORKs
- Emergency Disaster Relief
- Testing & Treatment of
  Communicable Diseases

- One time emergency payments
  under CalWORKs
- Prenatal Care
- County Health Programs
- Immunizations
- Nutrition Programs
- Housing Assistance
- Energy Assistance
- Educational Assistance
- Child Care Services
- Transportation Vouchers

Some of the above programs may provide cash benefits. The purpose of such benefits is not for income maintenance but rather to avoid the need for on-going cash assistance for income maintenance; therefore, they are not subject to public charge consideration.

Use of these benefits will not be considered a Public Charge by USCIS:

USCIS will not deny your legal admission to the U.S. USCIS will not deny your application for legal permanent residency. USCIS will not ask you to repay public benefits you received.

For More Information Call:

Coalition for Humane Immigrant Rights of Los Angeles (CHIRLA) Neighborhood Legal Services Health Consumer Center

888-624-4752 (Spanish and Russian)

800-896-3203 (Spanish, Armenian, Cambodian, Arabic and French)

Chinatown Service Center	<b>213-808-1700</b> (Cantonese and Mandarin)
South Asian Network	<b>562-403-0488</b> (South Asian Languages)
Thai Community Development Center	323-468-2555
WRAP Agency	<b>310-337-1550</b> (Cambodian, Japanese, Laotian, Tagalog, Vietnamese)
Korean Resource Center	323-937-3718
The Salvadoran Association of Los Angeles (ASOSAL)	213-483-1244

#### **Restaurant Meals**

# Our Goal is to provide a variety of nutritious meal choices to the homeless, disabled and elderly CalFresh individuals.

The CalFresh Restaurant Meals Program allows homeless, disabled, and elderly (age 60 and over) individuals and his/her spouse (husband, wife, common-law Husband, common-law wife) receiving CalFresh benefits to use their Golden State Advantage (EBT) cards to purchase meals from participating restaurants.



On July 25, 2005, the Department of Public Social Services (DPSS) implemented the new Restaurant Meals Program throughout Los Angeles County. This program offers great benefits to eligible individuals since the homeless do not have a place to store and cook food, while the elderly and disabled may have difficulty preparing meals for themselves.

For many elderly, disabled and homeless individuals, CalFresh is of limited assistance as they are unable to store or prepare food safely themselves. This is why California has chosen a federal option that allows these recipients to purchase prepared food through the Restaurant Meals

Program (RMP). The RMP allows elderly, disabled and homeless CalFresh recipients to purchase hot, prepared meals with their EBT cards at approved restaurants. For all other CalFresh recipients, federal rules preventing the purchase of prepared food still apply.

On a basic level, many RMP eligible clients do not have the tools, appliances or physical abilities necessary to prepare their own meals. The disabled, elderly or homeless CalFresh recipient who eats at a RMP certified restaurant will be nourished by an affordable meal in a food-safe environment and benefit from eating in a public place that welcomes their presence, as opposed to in isolation or on the streets looking over their shoulder. The RMP program is truly an anti-hunger program.

# **PARTICIPATING RESTAURANTS:**

Note: There is long list of participating restaurants, too long to add here.

## **Community Outreach**



# **Departmental Community Outreach**

The Los Angeles County Department of Public Social Services (DPSS) provides community outreach services for Medi-Cal and CalFresh. DPSS deploys Eligibility Workers throughout Los Angeles County at sites such as hospitals, clinics, schools, and community agencies to offer an alternate platform for the community to access health insurance and nutrition assistance services. In addition, DPSS has partnered with sister Departments, such as Department of Children Family Services, Probation, Sheriff, Health Services, Public Health and Mental Health to link mutual consumers with Medi-Cal and CalFresh services. DPSS Eligibility Workers provide on-site Medi-Cal and CalFresh assessments to consumers in local neighborhoods and communities.

To request for community outreach services at your event, please contact Minerva De La Cruz, Community Outreach Coordinator, at (626) 569-2905.



Outreach Set-up

**Outreach Staff** 

**Outreach Mobile** 

Links

http://dpss.lacounty.gov/dpss/hcm/default.cfm

http://www.ladpss.org/