
SENATE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Senator Sabrina Cervantes, Chair
2025 - 2026 Regular Session

AB 1746 (Davies) - CalWORKs: childcare request forms

Version: May 18, 2026

Urgency: No

Hearing Date: August 3, 2026

Policy Vote: HUMAN S. 5 - 0

Mandate: Yes

Consultant: Agnes Lee

Bill Summary: AB 1746 would expand requirements on counties to notify an applicant or recipient of CalWORKs benefits regarding the availability of paid child care.

Fiscal Impact:

- The California Department of Social Services estimates one-time costs of \$646,360 and ongoing costs of \$246,409 for automation (General Fund).
- Unknown costs to counties for administration. Costs would be potentially reimbursable by the state, subject to a determination by the Commission on State Mandates.

Background: The CalWORKs program provides temporary cash assistance to help low-income families meet their basic needs, such as rent, clothing, utility bills, food, and other items. In addition to cash assistance, adult CalWORKs recipients are provided education and employment and training services designed to help remove barriers to work and promote self-sufficiency. These services are typically outlined in a welfare-to-work plan. CalWORKs program rules include time limits on eligibility, work requirements, and the provision of supportive services, including subsidized child care. Eligibility for CalWORKs child care is based on a family's total income, size, and need for care. CalWORKs recipients are eligible if they are employed or if they are participating in approved welfare-to-work activities. Counties are responsible for administering the CalWORKs program at the local level.

State law requires an applicant for, or a recipient of, CalWORKs benefits to be informed of the availability of child care services upon enrollment in the CalWORKs program, and at later times when a participant expresses to the county a need for child care. The county must verify if child care is needed to participate in a program activity and, if needed, that child care services are authorized and that the participant has secured appropriate child care prior to requiring a participant to participate in any mandatory activity. Current law requires an applicant for, or a recipient of, CalWORKs benefits to be provided written notice, both at the time of application and when they sign an original or amended welfare-to-work plan, of the availability of paid child care. The applicant or recipient must be asked to sign a copy of the written notice acknowledging that they have been informed of and received the notice.

Current law requires, commencing January 1, 2021, or the date that the Statewide Automated Welfare System (CalSAWS) can perform the necessary automation for implementation, whichever date is later, that the written notice must additionally be

provided to the recipient at the time of orientation, when they are assigned to a program activity, when they report new or increased participation in a program activity, and when they report new earned income or employment.

Proposed Law: Specific provisions of the bill would:

- Require an applicant for, or recipient of, CalWORKs benefits to be verbally informed, in addition to the written notice, of the availability of paid child care.
- Require the notification of the availability of paid child care to additionally be provided at the time of CalWORKs application approval, annual certificate of eligibility, or a semiannual report form, as specified.
- Provide that “written notice” includes a CalWORKs child care request form.
- Require a county, upon receipt of a CalWORKs child care request form and eligibility information, to approve the request for child care or deny the request for child care within 10 calendar days.

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