
SENATE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Senator Sabrina Cervantes, Chair
2025 - 2026 Regular Session

AB 2567 (Celeste Rodriguez) - CalWORKs: immediate assistance

Version: March 26, 2026
Urgency: No
Hearing Date: August 3, 2026

Policy Vote: HUMAN S. 5 - 0
Mandate: Yes
Consultant: Agnes Lee

Bill Summary: AB 2567 would require counties to make a determination of apparent eligibility for CalWORKs immediate assistance and for CalWORKs homeless assistance without requiring, as a prerequisite, that the applicant apply for other income, as specified.

Fiscal Impact:

- The California Department of Social Services (CDSS) estimates the following:
 - Costs for immediate assistance and homeless assistance benefits: For 100 cases, there would be a first-year cost of \$1.4 million and ongoing annual costs of \$1.8 million. For 1,000 cases, there would be a first-year cost of \$9.8 million and ongoing annual costs of \$18.7 million (General Fund).
 - Costs for automation updates: One-time General Fund costs of \$494,500.
- 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 receive education and employment and training services designed to help remove barriers to work and promote self-sufficiency. Counties are responsible for administering the CalWORKs program at the local level.

Eligibility for CalWORKs is based on income level. Counties are required to review a family's potential income (such as unemployment insurance or veterans benefits). A county must require applicants to seek these other sources of income which can factor into a family's CalWORKs eligibility and aid determination.

CalWORKs immediate assistance. At the time of application, the county must determine whether the applicant needs immediate assistance because the applicant does not have sufficient resources to meet their emergency needs, and must determine whether the applicant is apparently eligible for CalWORKs aid. The county must determine that the applicant needs immediate assistance if the family's total available liquid resources, both nonexempt and exempt, are less than \$100 and there is an emergency situation, whether foreseeable or not. Examples of emergency situations include, but are not limited to, lack of housing, lack of food, notice of termination or loss

of utility service, lack of essential clothing (including diapers), and inability to meet essential transportation needs.

CalWORKs Homeless Assistance Program. The CalWORKs Homeless Assistance Program is a program that provides either temporary homeless assistance or permanent homeless assistance to people who are recipients of CalWORKs aid or apparently eligible for aid. For temporary assistance, families can receive between \$85 and \$145 per day to pay for the cost of temporary shelter, like hotel or motel costs. Families can also receive permanent assistance to help a family secure housing or prevent eviction. This assistance can include providing security deposit costs and last month's rent, or providing up to two months of rent arrearages.

Proposed Law: Specific provisions of the bill would:

- Require the county to make a determination of apparent eligibility for CalWORKs immediate assistance and for CalWORKs homeless assistance without requiring, as a prerequisite to making that determination, that the applicant apply for any unconditionally available income the applicant does not currently receive.
- Specify that "unconditionally available income" includes, but is not limited to, unemployment insurance benefits, social security benefits, veterans' benefits, or state disability insurance benefits.

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