

Making a difference

2014



Social Services Agency
Employment and Benefit Services
Annual Report

Employment and Benefit Services

Employment Services

CalWORKs
Employment Services

Refugee
Employment Services

Vocational Services

Benefit Services

Medi-Cal

CalFresh

CalWORKs Cash Aid

General Assistance

Foster Care Eligibility

Message from the Director

Hidden beneath a veil of perceived economic advantage and seemingly endless supply of opportunity, it's hard to envision that approximately 24% of California's residents are living in poverty. Imagine that one out of every four people you encounter today is struggling to meet their most basic needs, like paying rent, keeping the lights on, putting food on the table or even seeing a doctor. This harsh reality was brought to light in a nationwide analysis by the U.S. Census Bureau's Supplemental Poverty Measure, which ranked California as having the highest poverty rate in the nation.

Santa Clara County Social Services Agency has been at the forefront of adopting and implementing new State initiatives that directly address the essentials to reducing poverty. Employment and Benefit Services has spent the past year rolling out a wave of new programs and services that could have the greatest impact on the lives of our residents in the past several decades. Through strategic planning and targeted action, we've been able to increase access to good jobs, nutritious food, education, quality child care, affordable housing and basic health care for low income families. Working tirelessly, we've accomplished some major achievements, including:

- ◇ Implementing Federal Health Care Reforms at the local level, which expand Medi-Cal Benefits to 47% more residents of the County,
- ◇ Doubling the size of our Subsidized Employment Program to increase quality work opportunities for families in our CalWORKs program,
- ◇ Introducing Family Stabilization Services, which helps families facing acute housing crises stave off homelessness and resolve life crippling circumstances,
- ◇ Renewing our focus on General Assistance to improve employment rates, further assisting individuals on their way to self-sufficiency.

Employment and Benefit Services has been able to reach these milestones through the delivery of numerous safety-net benefit programs, which include: Medi-Cal, CalFresh (formerly known as the Food Stamp Program), CalWORKs, Employment Services, General Assistance and Foster Care Eligibility.

I invite you into our world for a glimpse at how Employment and Benefit Services is truly making a difference, through people, service and performance. For our readers, we've arranged the articles of our Annual Report by virtue of the size of each program and included a myriad of benefit information and stories of new initiatives coming to fruition, detailed accounts of our clients experiencing life changing assistance and a spotlight on the dedication of our hard-working staff.

Denise Boland

Director of Employment and Benefit Services

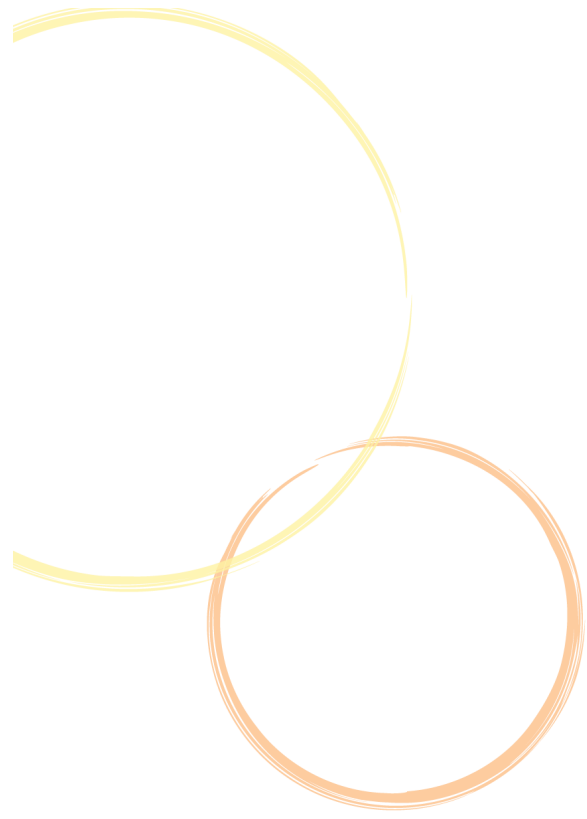


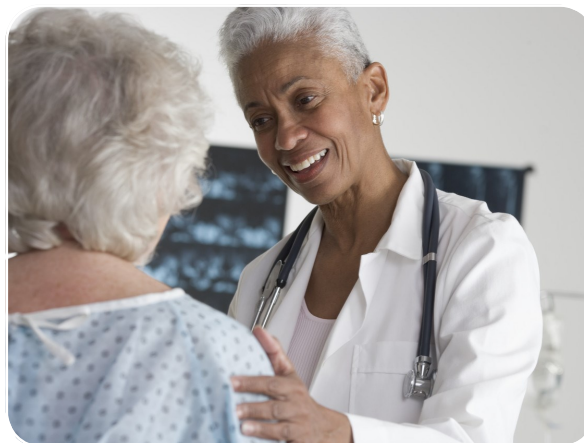
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Medi-Cal

The Affordable Care Act (ACA), also known as Health Care Reform (HCR), was designed to provide quality and affordable health care for all citizens, allowing individuals and families control over their health care choices. Overnight, almost three million uninsured Californians were required to have health care coverage. An estimated 1.4 million of these newly-insured were expected to qualify for Medi-Cal (California's Medicaid program).



ACA expanded Medi-Cal to include all individuals between the ages of 19-64 whose income falls below 138% of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL). An additional 1.2 million would be eligible to receive subsidies under Covered California, the new insurance exchange.

Covered California

California was the first state in the nation to enact legislation creating a health care benefit exchange under the provisions of ACA. Covered California offers an online marketplace for health care coverage, with fact sheets and comparison charts that make it easier for consumers to select coverage that is right for them. State-wide call centers were also created to help consumers select coverage.

The new Health Exchange required that counties establish local call centers to accept “warm transfers” from Covered California within an average of 30 seconds. Call centers were also expected to be open extended periods, Monday through Friday, from 8:00am to 7:00pm and Saturdays from 8:00am to 6:00pm.

Covered California's first open enrollment period began on October 1, 2013 and lasted six months, through March 31, 2014. Consumers may continue to apply for new coverage if they have a life changing event, such as the birth of a child or marriage, while Medi-Cal enrollment remains open year round. *(To find out more about the health care exchange, please visit www.coveredca.com or see Community Resources Item A for more information on Covered California.)*

HCR Call Center

In anticipation of this historic transition, the Board of Supervisors authorized the hiring of 50 additional Eligibility Workers. These workers would form the first Health Care Reform Call Center, whose primary function was to handle transfer calls from Covered California. Workers in these units perform an interactive interview with clients to determine eligibility and facilitate plan enrollment for exchange health plans, federal subsidies and Medi-Cal.

Health Care Reform Initiative

To prepare for this change, the Social Services Agency launched a Health Care Reform Initiative. Volunteers were sought from all areas of the agency to serve on various workgroups. The ultimate success of this effort required an unprecedented amount of communication and collaboration.

After months of planning and collaboration, on October 1, 2013, the Employment and Benefit Services HCR Call Center opened to pre-enroll residents and share information about new health insurance options. County staff have met the challenges inherent in any initial start-up, dealing with new computer systems and a litany of unknowns, but this highly motivated team exceeded the state's target for answering these calls, **answering in an average time of six seconds!**

Call SCC at (408) 758-3800

Due to long wait times at the Covered California Call Center and to address the needs of local residents, Social Services created a new local call center, Call SCC. The SCC Call Center has been able to answer health care questions and take applications over the phone, granting clients one more avenue by which they are able to access services.

"Many single individuals who were not eligible for Medi-Cal previously or families who couldn't get coverage due to a pre-existing condition have expressed their overwhelming gratitude for Health Care Reform. It feels good to know that we are helping people who genuinely need it."

-Elizabeth Garay and Angela Manzanero, EWIII

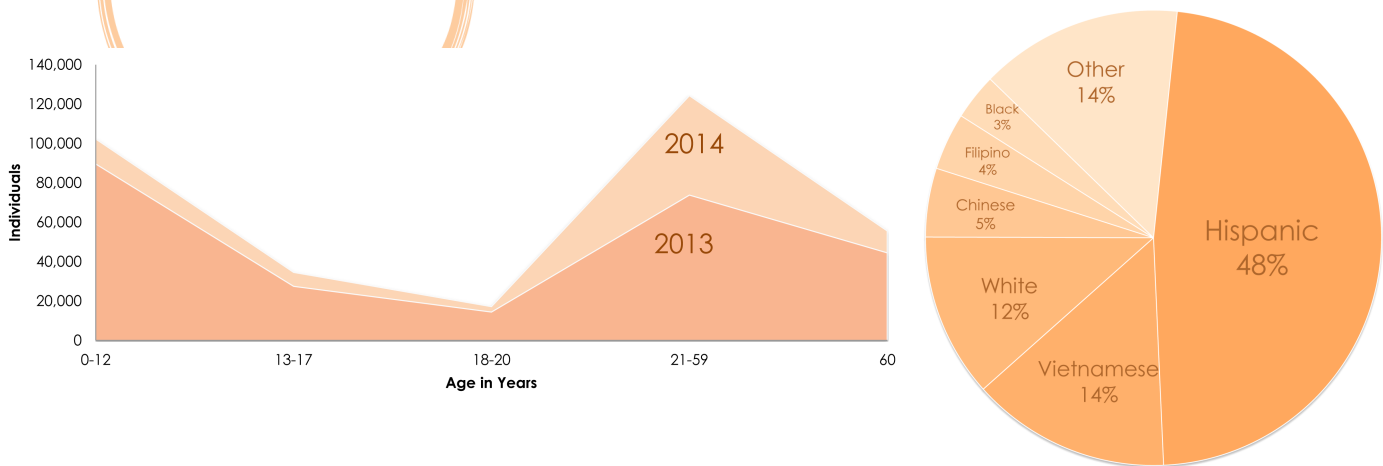


Now We Can Say

YES

Application Statistics and Demographics

These sweeping changes have dramatically increased the demand for Medi-Cal services and the number of cases has surged by 47%. Since the end of the open enrollment period, Medi-Cal caseloads have continued to grow. As shown in the charts below, the number of adults on Medi-Cal has risen substantially and the ethnic composition directly reflects Santa Clara County's diverse population.



Enrollment Strategies

California's initial Health Care Reform launch was compromised due to software glitches with the new state computer system, CalHEERS. The system was not ready as planned and unable to transmit pending applications to counties until late February. Many essential features of the system remain inoperable to the present day.

CalHEERS issues created a statewide backlog of about 900,000 pending applications. Locally, Santa Clara received **32,000 applications on February 18, 2014**. Since then, the county continues to receive approximately 3,000 new external referrals each month.

Social Services staff developed a strategic action plan to eliminate this backlog and it's anticipated that this coordinated effort will be completed well before the next open enrollment period, slated to begin on November 15, 2014. For those caught in this backlog, the state will authorize payment of any medical expenses back to the date of initial application.

Looking Forward

"We are proud of what California has achieved, but recognize this is only the beginning of a long road of expanding affordable coverage to all Californians."

-Covered California Executive Director Peter Lee

Bringing health insurance and health care to so many in this short time frame was an achievement that will be remembered for years to come. SSA Executive Management is extremely proud of the efforts put forth by staff who worked tirelessly to manage growing caseloads while striving to learn a changing program all while providing excellent services to our residents.

The Social Services Agency remains committed to ensuring that all adults and children living within the County's boundaries receive the medical care they need to remain healthy. The next open enrollment period will begin on November 15, 2014. With the lessons learned from this implementation year, Santa Clara County will be ready to continue its tradition of excellence, enabling our residents to receive these important benefits.



Denti-Cal Makes a Comeback

In 2009, adults receiving Medi-Cal lost their basic dental coverage due to major cuts in the California budget. While minor children maintained coverage, hundreds of thousands of adults could no longer see a dentist for preventative care, fillings and other routine dental repair. Clients would often end up in the emergency room for preventable dental problems.

This past July, much of what had been cut has been restored. Although the currently restored benefits are not as comprehensive as in years past, having access to proper dental care is a great relief to our clients. They no longer need to worry about suffering with dental pain and can live healthier lives with the return of Denti-Cal.

CalFresh

Every parent strives to put fresh and healthy foods on the table for their family. Low-income households are no exception, but rent and other costly expenses often make this difficult for families living paycheck to paycheck in Silicon Valley. CalFresh, known at the federal level as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), seeks to improve the health of low-income individuals and families by supplementing their income with benefits to purchase more nutritious food.

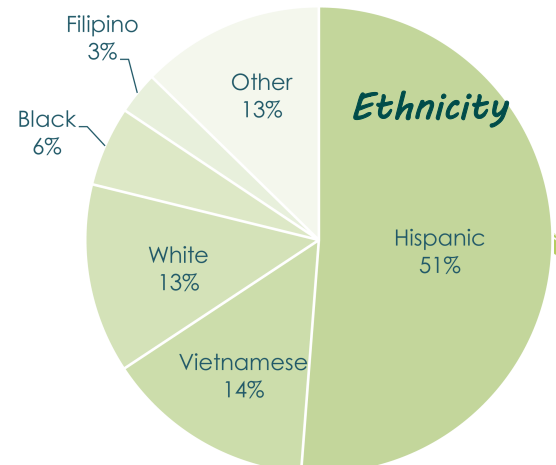
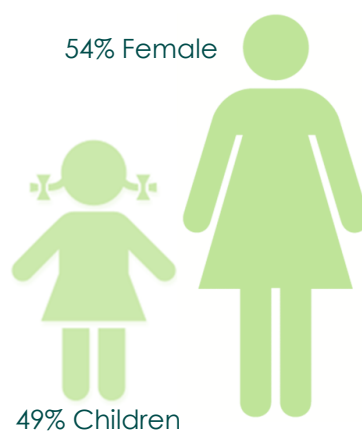
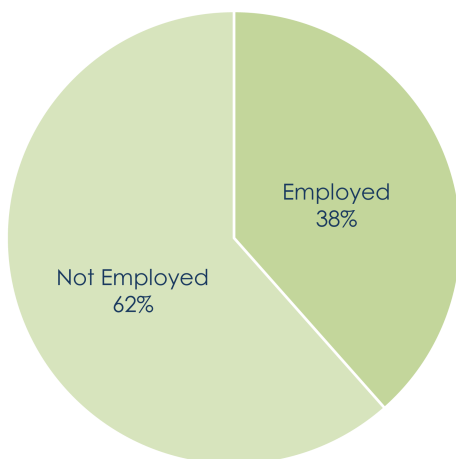


More than Meals

According to the California Poverty Measure, CalFresh has cut the child poverty rate by 4% and has been shown to reduce the likelihood of food insecurity by 30%. In Santa Clara County alone, 114,606 individuals are able to eat healthier because of the CalFresh program.

In Santa Clara County, a family of four with no other income receives up to \$632 per month (an amount determined by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Thrifty Food Plan). Benefits are loaded on an Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) card for clients to purchase food at markets and food stores, as well as seeds and plants to grow food for household use.

The CalFresh Population in Santa Clara County



Working Together and Reaching Out

Santa Clara County has been working hard with community partners to increase local CalFresh participation. Thanks in large part to joint outreach efforts, caseloads reached a total of 55,402 active cases in June 2014, a **9.2% increase** over the FY 2013 average of 50,913. Ongoing partnerships are vital to achieving the common goal of reaching all eligible Santa Clara County residents and increasing CalFresh participation.

Safety Net

The Safety Net Committee, co-chaired between Employment and Benefit Services and Second Harvest Food Bank (SHFB), is comprised of a growing network of non-profits, including Daughters of Charity, Sacred Heart Community Services, St. Vincent de Paul and many others. The shared goal of these agencies is to take an active part in reducing hunger in the region through resources, services and advocacy.

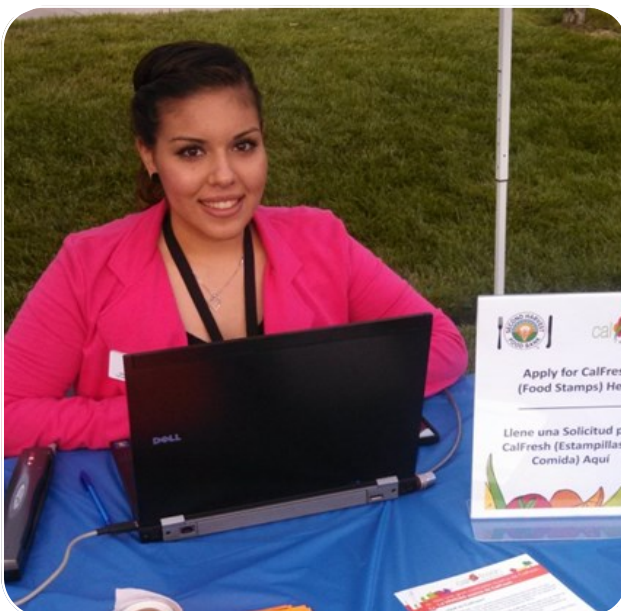
One of the key goals of Safety Net in 2014 is to increase CalFresh access and participation. The SHFB CalFresh Outreach Team regularly hosts events and presentations at over 50 community locations from Gilroy to Palo Alto. At each site, attendees are linked with resources for free food and application assistance for CalFresh benefits. If residents are unable to attend a presentation, they can place a simple phone call to the Food Connection hotline to gain access



Need Food?
¿Necesita comida? Cần thực phẩm?
需要食物嗎? Нуждаются в продуктах питания?
Kailangan ang Pagkain?

1-800-984-3663
www.SHFB.org

The flyer features a colorful border of various fruits and vegetables. It includes the Second Harvest Food Bank logo and the website address.



to food and information. A summary of the Food Connection's impressive work can be viewed on the next page.

CalFresh Outreach

Last year, the SHFB CalFresh Outreach Team distributed over 172,000 informational materials to keep community members informed about local resources and available services. Approximately 4,000 Santa Clara County households were also provided CalFresh application information and assistance.

Food Connection

2014

County residents are able to call Food Connection for CalFresh screening, information and referrals to food programs. These are just some of the highlights of Food Connection's many accomplishments this year.

1-800-984-3663

2,700

homeless clients served

50

locations hosted outreach events

7,000

first-time callers referred

112

elementary schools received "Summer Food Rocks" flyers

40,000

food referrals made

871

seniors served

4,074

households provided with application information

750

applications submitted

Local School Districts

Another partnership that continues to expand is the one between Employment and Benefit Services and local school districts. This year, we established a direct relationship with four school districts (East Side Union, Campbell, Oak Grove and Alum Rock). These schools work with the Social Services Agency to identify students receiving free and reduced lunch; the Social Services Agency then reaches out to the families of students who are not yet receiving CalFresh.

Senior Nutrition

In partnership with the Santa Clara County Senior Nutrition Program, SHFB dedicated a CalFresh Outreach Specialist to concentrate outreach efforts at senior centers and Senior Brown Bag sites. Over the course of the year, SHFB provided CalFresh application assistance to 871 seniors.

The Prescription Pad

SHFB also introduced a new outreach tool for health care providers to give to their low income patients. The Prescription Pad is designed to encourage doctors, nurses and other health professionals to prescribe produce, CalFresh benefits and free food resources to their food insecure patients. This tool aids in the promotion of healthy eating and access to fresh fruits and vegetables.

NUTRITION Rx for: _____		
Call Second Harvest Food Bank Llame al Banco de Comida Second Harvest		1-800-984-3663
Second Harvest Food Bank is your local resource for people who need food and do not know where to start.	El Banco de Comida Second Harvest es su recurso local para personas que necesitan comida y no saben por dónde empezar.	
Trained caring professionals will help you find nutritious food.	Profesionales entrenados y amables le ayudarán a encontrar comida saludable.	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Fruits and Vegetables● Groceries● Hot Meals	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Frutas y verduras● Alimentos● Comidas preparadas	
CALL 1-800-984-3663 Monday-Friday / 8:00am-5:00pm. It's easy, convenient, confidential and free.	LLAME AL 1-800-984-3663 Lunes-Viernes / 8:00am-5:00pm. Es fácil, conveniente, confidencial y gratuito.	
Additional Comments / Comentarios Adicionales:		



Market Match and More

Once residents have access to CalFresh, they have several ways to further stretch their food budget. One such program is Market Match, which encourages participants to eat more fresh, local produce by offering an extra \$5 per visit when clients use at least \$10 of their CalFresh funds at a dozen farmers' markets across the county. Those unable to get to a market may benefit from the SHFB Produce Mobile, which delivers a wide range of fruits and vegetable to 39 community locations. Participants have reported that they and their families are eating healthier because of these innovative programs.

Setting the Standard

While striving to increase participation, county workers are also careful to avoid errors with taxpayer dollars. Santa Clara County has consistently maintained an annual CalFresh payment accuracy rate of 99% for the last five years and was recognized this year by the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the California Department of Social Services for achieving California's highest CalFresh payment accuracy rate for the **third year in a row**.

"If the country as a whole had achieved the same high accuracy rate as Santa Clara County, there would have been a savings to the taxpayers in mis-issued benefits of more than \$2.3 billion nationally. This is a tribute to the County's compassion for feeding the needy while safeguarding Federal tax dollars."

- Dennis Stewart, SNAP Division Director for the Food and Nutrition Services Western Region

What's in Store

The Safety Net committee is strengthening its commitment to increase access to healthy food and minimize hunger in our community. Some initiatives on the horizon include outreach to local college students and text/email reminders for recertification appointments. Strong community partnerships are what make initiatives like these possible. Join the movement and learn more about these on-going efforts at upcoming Safety Net meetings or CalFresh 101 trainings (*see Community Resources Items B and C for meeting dates and details*).



Making Ends Meet

Mr. and Mrs. Patel live in a small apartment in San Jose with their two children. The family's only income is what Mrs. Patel makes at her part-time job, far from enough to support their family. One bright spot of support for the Patels has been CalFresh. The Patels receive close to \$400 per month in CalFresh benefits allowing them to enjoy fresh foods and prepare healthy meals. They also receive fresh produce each month through Second Harvest Food Bank, assisting them in stretching their food dollars.

CalWORKs

Even within today's improving economic climate, many families in Santa Clara County find themselves struggling to scrape together a budget that meets their basic needs. Those with young children are particularly vulnerable, having to cover the added expenses of child care and other necessities. The California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids (CalWORKs) program was created for these families and has consistently provided a pathway to self-sufficiency, making a difference in the lives of families who are most in need.

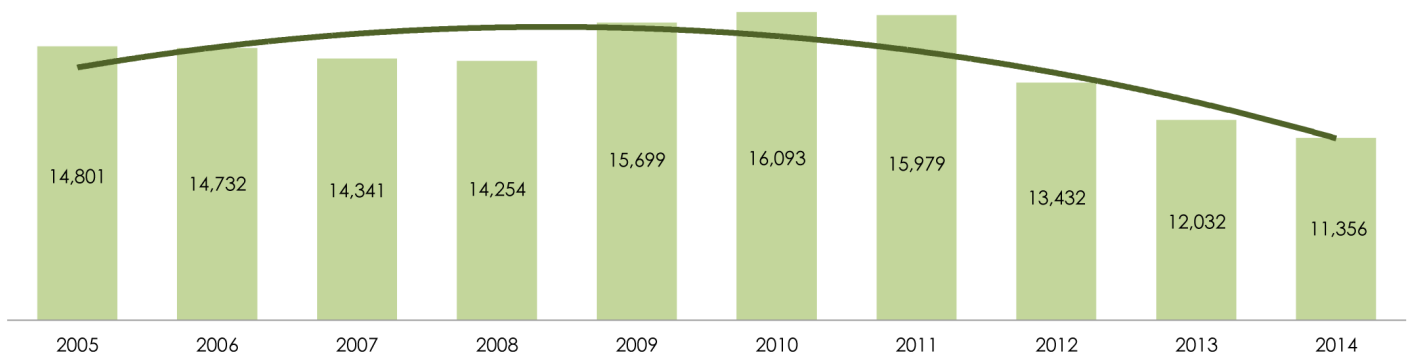


What is CalWORKs?

The CalWORKs program provides a monthly cash grant and access to employment and supportive services to over 26,000 individuals, of which over 78% are minor children in low-income households. While children can remain on aid until age 18, parents receiving CalWORKs are limited to a lifetime total of 48-months and must participate in work related activities while receiving a cash grant.

CalWORKs caseloads have exhibited a steadily decreasing trend, dropping by over 5% last year. The trend, illustrated in the chart below, mirrors participation declines experienced by communities statewide and is due, in part, to the implementation of the 48-month time limit in 2011, imposed as a budget reduction strategy.

Santa Clara County CalWORKs Caseload Trends



CalWORKs Cash Grants and Eligibility

For the first time in years, CalWORKs families received a 5% increase in their monthly cash grant, raising the maximum grant for a family of four to \$800 per month this past March. The most recent state budget also included provisions for another 5% increase effective April 1, 2015.

Each family's case is evaluated and managed by a dedicated unit of Eligibility Workers. Workers share responsibility for continually monitoring each case to ensure that families receive needed benefits and support, meet the financial guidelines of the program, attend semi-annual redetermination appointments and process monthly payments efficiently and accurately. They also assist families in obtaining other basic benefits, like CalFresh and Medi-Cal, then perform the critical role of maintaining ongoing eligibility support for all three programs.

It Takes a Village

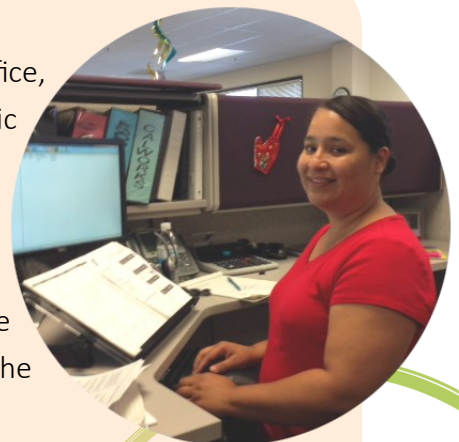
The CalWORKs Program guidelines and regulations can be complex requiring integrated case management efforts between Eligibility Workers who manage client cash grant benefits and Employment Counselors who oversee client work participation activities. Together, the team ensures that clients are able to receive the grants needed to stabilize their families and employment support that will help them build long-term self-sufficiency.

Customer Service at Its Best

Alice Luna is an Eligibility Worker II in our South County office, assisting families and individuals who are receiving public benefits, including CalWORKs.

Alice takes great pride in providing great customer service to clients, patiently listening, understanding the difficulties each individual faces. With a unique ability to relate to clients, she treats each person with respect and ensures they are receiving the correct benefits in a timely manner.

Among her co-workers, Alice is sought out for her experience, conscientiousness and leadership. She is a role model to her colleagues and the level of excellence she brings to everything she does is a huge asset to the entire agency.



CalWORKs Employment Services

Helping Families Help Themselves

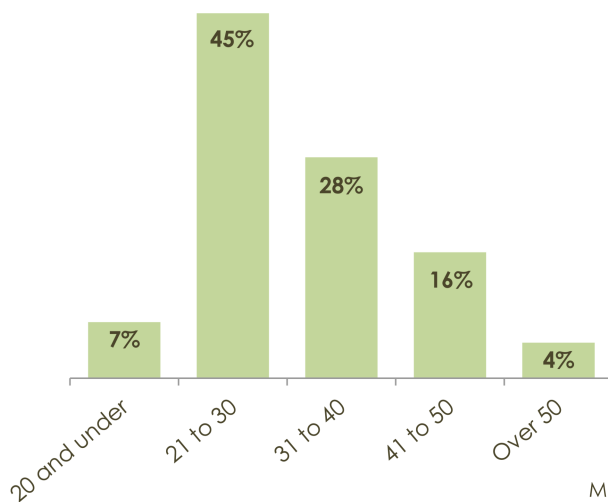
The CalWORKs Employment Services program helps families overcome complex employment barriers by linking them with supportive services and job market opportunities. Working one-on-one with each family, Employment Services provides the stepping stones they need to reach their goals.

Who's Receiving Services?

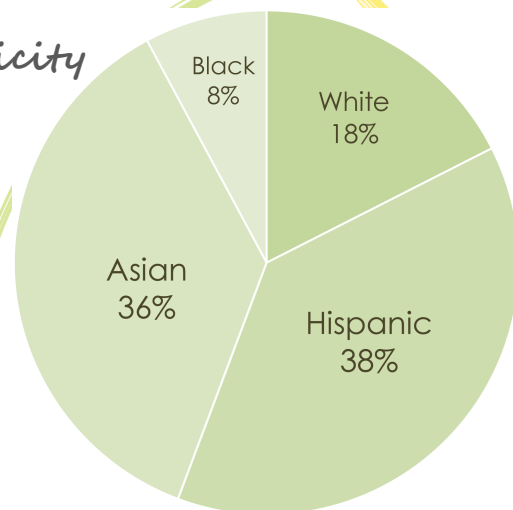
Enrollment in Employment Services is a requirement for all adults who receive cash grants through the CalWORKs benefit program. For Fiscal Year 2013-14, there were 5,764 participants enrolled in Employment Services. The typical Employment Services client tends to be female, age 21-30 with two young children.



Age



Ethnicity



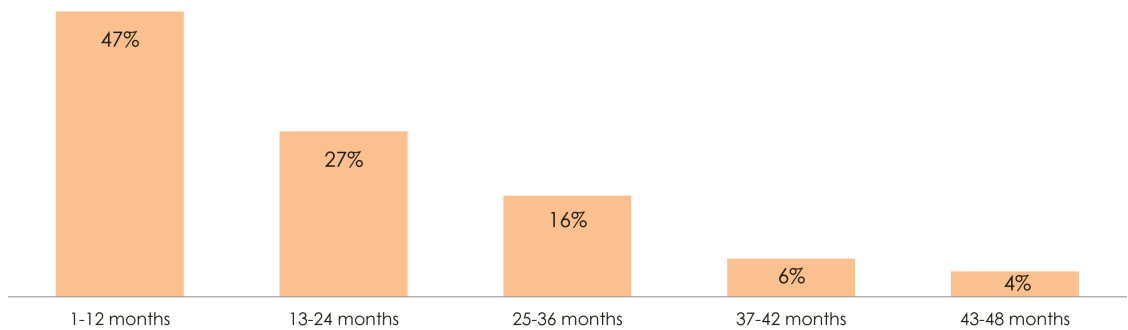
Gender



Each Employment Services participant must complete a requisite number of hours each week based on the number of eligible adults and the ages of the children in each family. Single-parent families must complete between 20 and 30 hours each week and two-parent families must complete a minimum of 35 hours. The average Employment Services family is required to complete an average of 20 work participation hours each week.

Time on Aid

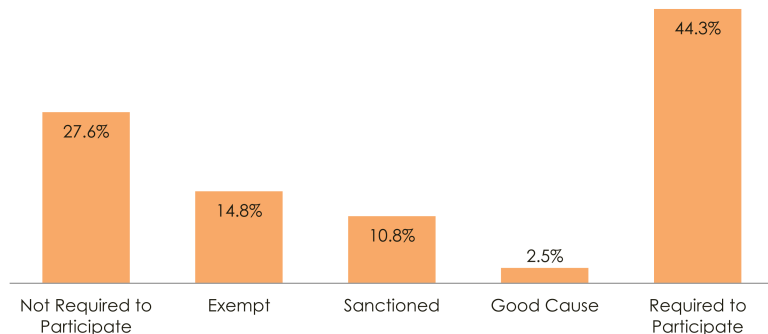
Parents who are enrolled in Employment Services may participate for a lifetime maximum of 48-months. Presently, only 10% of participants are nearing the 48-month time limit while 74% have been on aid for 24-months or less.



Exemptions

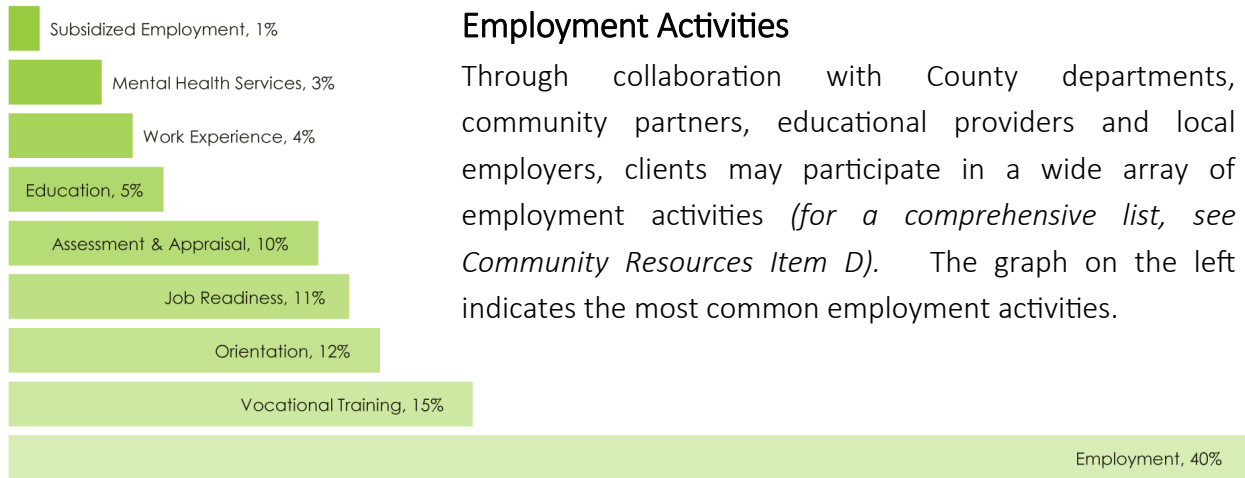
Employment Services focuses much of its efforts on providing meaningful services. Unfortunately, some families experience adverse circumstances or crises that prevent them from effectively participating. For those unable to engage in employment activities, state and federal guidelines provide exemptions that excuse participants from mandated work requirements. California permits 10 exemption categories, although only two of those are federally recognized.

To ensure that all families have access to employment opportunities, parents who qualify for an exemption may opt to participate as an exempt volunteer. These participants are able to work with an Employment Counselor to align supportive services and participate in work based activities. There are currently 368 exempt volunteers actively working with Employment Services.



Putting the Pieces in Place

Once enrolled in Employment Services, clients work closely with a team of Employment Counselors to develop a Welfare to Work employment plan that ensures they meet their work participation requirements while engaging in activities to increase their employability. Each Employment Plan is an optimized guide that maps out the activities best suited for each participant based on their: education level, work history, specialized training, and language or learning needs. On average, Employment Counselors develop 4,000 employment plans throughout the year.



Employment Activities

Through collaboration with County departments, community partners, educational providers and local employers, clients may participate in a wide array of employment activities (*for a comprehensive list, see Community Resources Item D*). The graph on the left indicates the most common employment activities.

Continuous Support

Employment Counselors continuously meet with their clients to monitor attendance and ensure that they're receiving the supportive services that they need to overcome barriers and successfully participate in the program. Having access to these services is often times the key in addressing important client needs that may otherwise go unmet, like having reliable transportation, access to child care, substance abuse counseling or domestic violence services.

Equally important, Employment Counselors ensure that clients are meeting their work participation hours and helping the County maintain Compliance with the mandated Work Participation Rate.

Making a Difference, One Client at a Time

Martha Nicolau is one of our hardest working Employment Counselors and it's no surprise that she tops the list in monthly Performance Building reports.

According to Martha, the key to her success is built upon close working relationships with her clients and the knowledge that she's providing them access tools that will help them improve their lives. Martha is an expert in her field and she generously assists and mentors new staff. In doing so, she has earned tremendous respect from her peers and supervisors.

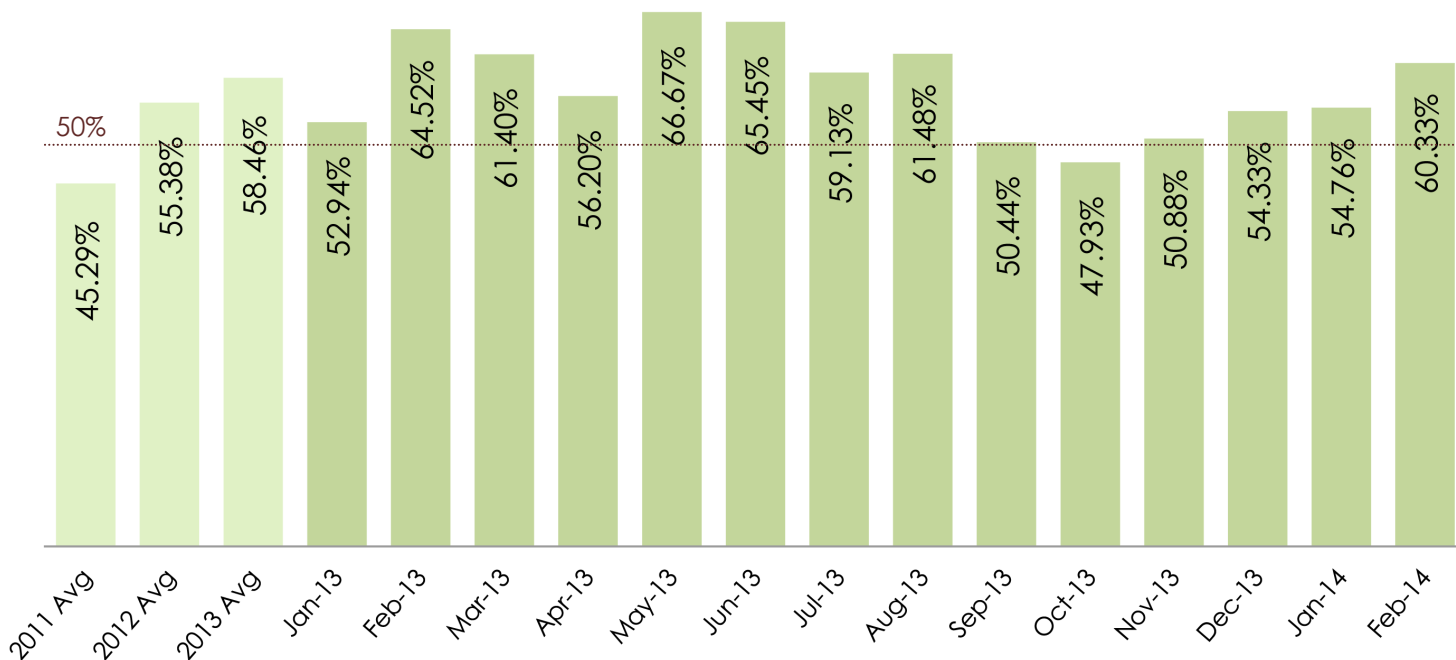


Work Participation Rate

Each month, the State measures the county's Work Participation Rate (WPR), the primary performance indicator for state welfare to work programs nationwide. Santa Clara County continues to excel in its WPR rates, **over the past three fiscal years our annual average has topped the 50% State threshold.** In fact, we are the only Bay Area county that is able to make this claim and our performance ranks higher than nearly every other large county in the State.

Throughout the review month, a specialized unit of Employment Counselors, known as the Rapid Response Team, combine efforts with Eligibility Workers and staff from Social Service Agency's Decision Support and Research department. Together, they identify clients selected for the WPR sample, perform case reviews to examine participation hours and engage them to ensure that their participation hours are met.

This internal collaboration and communication is essential to the success of WPR for Santa Clara County. Over the years, it has been a real team effort at all levels, from line staff to managers, to achieve the kind of success that Santa Clara County has had with their WPR rate.



Stabilization Services

Low income families living in Santa Clara County face far more unique challenges than their counterparts across the nation, the high cost of living leaves these families barely able to pay for their basic needs while still trying to keep a roof over their heads. As housing costs continue to rise, rental market comparisons show that the median rate in San Jose is 11% higher than the California average and 67% higher than the national average. For CalWORKs families, the results can be crippling; many face rising rents and, for those unable to keep up, evictions or homelessness.



With the advent of Family Stabilization Services, the State's new initiative to help families address acute crises, the CalWORKs Advisory recommended that funding be utilized to help families overcome growing housing barriers. After receiving collaborative guidance, Employment Services moved forward and developed the CalWORKs Family Stabilization Services program. The primary goal is to provide families with wrap-around support services that offer short term interventions or resolutions to CalWORKs families who are currently, or at risk of becoming, homeless.

A Multi-Disciplinary Approach

Employment Services staff work closely with families applying for Stabilization Services to help them resolve root causes of their housing crises. Since each family's circumstances are different, these root causes may range from inability to afford a spike in rent, fleeing domestic violence, substance abuse issues or unfit living conditions.

To ensure that families receive proper support, Employment Services created a multi-disciplinary team, composed of Employment Counselors, Social Workers, Mental Health Advocates and Financial Counselors.



Working closely with an Employment Counselor, each participant develops a Family Service Plan that is designed to meet their specific needs and may include receiving specialized services from a member of the team. Each service plan establishes short term goals, sets timelines and aligns families with financial counseling, crisis intervention, housing advocacy, and mental health services. Participation in Stabilization Services activities temporarily suspends each client's 24-month Time Clock for a period of up to six-months allowing them an opportunity to focus on resolving their housing situation before engaging in an employment activity.

Secure Home Stable Families

To stabilize housing conditions, Family Stabilization Services offers financial support to help families get back on their feet. Housing assistance amounts may be up to \$2,500 per month, for up to two months (\$5,000 total). Working with an Employment Counselor, families are able to analyze their housing options and utilize grant funding to help pay for their current month's rent, back rent, moving costs, rental deposits or temporary housing. Funding is directed toward the housing option that make the most effective long-term use of the grant.

In its inaugural year, participants have shown great interest and appreciation for CalWORKs Family Stabilization Services. In its first 8-months of operation, the program has received 132 applications and referrals and 46 were able to stabilize their families and secure suitable housing.

CalWORKs Advisory, Alleviating Housing Costs

Earlier this year, Employment Services engaged CalWORKs Advisory to open discussion on ways to improve upon Family Stabilization Services. Stemming from the discussions was an initiative to authorize a one-time subsidized housing payment of \$500 to all active clients participating in

Employment Services. In June 2014, approximately 4,500 participants received the payment to help alleviate rising rental rates and provide relief to strained budgets.

Perfect Timing

Diana couldn't hold back her tears when she contacted Employment Services to find out if the \$500 check that she received in the mail was real.

At the beginning of the month Diana had some unforeseen expenses which came out of her planned rent money. She knew the rent must be paid on time or she would receive a 3-day notice to vacate. Diana had no idea where to turn or what to do.

Unexpectedly, she received a letter from the Social Services Agency, which included a check, earmarked for housing costs.

Diana was extremely thankful to be receiving this one-time housing payment which allowed her to pay her rent on time and stay in her apartment.

Looking Ahead

With renewed funding for Fiscal Year 2014-15, Employment Services will continue working with the CalWORKs Advisory to shape the program and explore new avenues for Family Stabilization Services. With the price of housing steadily increasing, program benefits will only grow in importance for our families. Having a stable home is a key element to increasing participation and achieving self-sufficiency. Join in the discussion by attending monthly CalWORKs Advisory meetings (*see Community Resources Item E for a list of meeting dates and details*).

Employment Connection

The Employment Connection is a one-stop resource for CalWORKs job seekers looking to transition into the workforce. Employment Counselors at each of three centers (San Jose, Gilroy and Mountain View) specialize in providing clients with professional job search assistance and access to community services to help clients land a new job.

Approximately 200 clients are hosted by the Employment Connection every month, to engage in the rigorous pursuit of employment. 578 participants were placed in full-time and part-time jobs throughout the last fiscal year, an average of 48 each month. New hires worked approximately 31 hours per week at a wage of \$12.74 per hour.

Job Readiness

All clients that enter the Employment Connection receive assistance with resume development, completing applications, interview preparation and instruction on navigating job search websites. These skills are further enhanced by one-on-one coaching and mentoring sessions with an Employment Counselor. Through these sessions, clients and staff build a unique rapport, which help counselors identify job openings that align with each client's work experience, skill sets and employment goals.



The Employment Connection team after another successful job fair!

Finding Support Among Peers

Juggling the responsibilities of looking for a job and raising young children can create a sense of anxiety that can only be understood by others facing similar circumstances. In order to address this issue, Employment Services has partnered with Health Alliance and County Mental Health to form a weekly **Parent Support Group**, facilitated by a mental health professional and offering open discussion and peer support in a safe environment.

One parent said, “I am so grateful to have a safe place to talk with other parents who are experiencing a lot of the same issues that I am. I feel less alone and have gotten great ideas on how to be a better parent to my kids. I also feel more prepared to go back to work, now that I have some strategies to use at home in helping my kids and myself to cope with the changes it will bring.”

Placement

The ultimate goal of each Employment Counselor is for his or her clients to become employed and self-sufficient. In addition to giving clients the tools to effectively search for employment, they also connect job seekers with current openings, developed through the Employment Connection directly or publicly posted positions. They coach clients through each step of the process, from submitting resumes to scheduling interviews to following up with a thank you letter.

Employment Connection has set an ambitious goal of placing 785 clients in subsidized and unsubsidized positions in the coming year. With the ECC team working tirelessly to engage and equip participants on their road to success and the growing number of employer partnerships, this goal is certainly achievable.

Job Development

Over the past few years, the Employment Connection has greatly expanded its reach out into the community in order to develop lasting jobs for our clients. Specially trained Job Developers identify and build relationships with local employers who are looking to fill openings in their businesses. The Job Developers use their knowledge of the client population and the needs of the employers in order to identify positions to fill.

Employers have the option of submitting job orders for individual hiring or holding an on-site recruitment at any of the Employment Connection Centers. In planning for these events, Employment Connection staff provide support to employers and assist clients with interview preparation. Each center is equipped with audio-visual equipment and private interview areas to accommodate the individual needs of each employer.

The Employment Connection was successful in serving 54 employers and hosting 49 recruitment events this year. Several employers held multiple recruitments based on their overwhelming satisfaction with the success of these events.

A letter from Nancy Vitug, San Jose District Recruiter at **Allied Barton Security Services**:

We've partnered with the Employment Connection Center for about five years now and it's been awesome working with the team. The Employment Counselors have fully prepared each CalWORKs participant we've hired; ensuring that the client has a suitable resume, has practiced for the interview and has a professional appearance. All of the candidates were pre-screened and polished.

The best part about working with the Employment Connection Center is their EC Works subsidized employment program. In our first year of participating as a subsidized employer we've hired seven CalWORKs job seekers and the three month subsidy has gone a long way in helping the company offset the cost of training our new hires!

Last but not least, our partnership with the Employment Connection allows me to do my job and give back to the community. It is such an honor to provide stable jobs and give people the opportunity to grow and have a career.



One of many recruitments held at the Employment Connection each month.

New Construction

This past April, the Employment Connection on Senter Road underwent a substantial technology overhaul, replacing aging client computers and printers and incorporating individual PCs in two brand new Job Club classrooms. Having quick access to the internet and a full suite of Microsoft Office programs at clients' fingertips allows Job Club facilitators to offer a more robust experience for all participants.



Wireless internet access has been installed in the Employment Connection as well, giving employers more flexibility when participating in recruitments and job fairs. Now employers are able to connect to their businesses remotely while conducting interviews and making on-the-spot hiring decisions. Wifi will soon be installed in North and South County Employment Connections as well.

Job Fairs

The Employment Connection hosts a variety of job fairs and recruitments in order to connect local employers to our qualified job seeker population. In July of this year, over 800 participants and members of the public took advantage of the opportunity to meet with 46 separate employers, who had gathered for the largest job fair that has ever taken place in our San Jose location. One participant excitedly reported, "I'm so glad we had this job fair and the chance to use all the skills we learned about in Job Club. It really has paid off: I got two job offers and can't wait to start working again!"



Additional Programs

Employment Connection offers more than just direct employment to clients. Occasionally, clients with limited work experience or education may benefit more from the Work Experience program, which offers unpaid opportunities with local non-profits or County worksites. These six month assignments give clients skills and experience to enhance their resumes and serve as a foray back into the work force.

Another program is the CalWORKs Unclassified program, designed for clients who are qualified for entry-level positions with the County of Santa Clara. These clients work closely with a specialized Employment Counselor, who will help them prepare their application, practice for their interview and study for their exam. This program is a win-win for clients and the County, which is able to fill openings in over 20 classifications in multiple departments.

Linda's Journey to Success

Linda Johns has been the primary caretaker of her young granddaughter for the past six years. In 2009, she found herself without a job, laid off after 30 years of steady employment. When her unemployment benefits ran out, it seemed as though she was out of options until she turned to CalWORKs for help. She was referred to Employment Services in 2012, based on her positive attitude and solid work history, her Employment Counselor recommended her for a Work Experience position at the Assistance Application Center.

Linda was learning new technology, helping clients and moving forward. When an opportunity for an unclassified Office Specialist position opened up in the newly created Intake Call Center, her supervisor recommended she apply. Linda was invited to interview and was hired! She excelled at her new assignments and quickly became the point person for questions from the rest of the team.

Linda worked hard, going above and beyond in everything she did, which led to her becoming a permanent employee in August 2013. She says, "My life is so much better now, thanks to the CalWORKs program. I am so happy and grateful for all the help I've received from everyone along the way!"



Veronica's Success Story

Being punctual and always having a positive attitude, Veronica proved to be a great candidate for EC Works. After creating her resume with the help of her Employment Counselor and practicing her interview skills, she was thoroughly prepared for an intensive job search. By the third week, Veronica had secured a full time position with EC Works Employer, Essenergy.



Veronica landed a full-time job as an Administrative Assistant, earning \$17.00 per hour. Way to go, Veronica!

Employment Connection Works

In October 2013, the Employment Connection introduced its latest endeavor, a new subsidized employment program, fittingly named Employment Connection Works (EC Works).

The EC Works program is a collaboration between the Employment Connection and local employers to deliver a program that is providing results beneficial to both employers and clients. Employers who opt to hire CalWORKs participants receive a minimum wage reimbursement to help offset the cost of hiring and training a new employee. Clients in the program are offered a wide range of job opportunities designed to help them develop the skills and experience needed to kick-start their career and retain employment on a long-term basis. After three short months, each subsidized position is expected to transition into a permanent, unsubsidized job.

In its inaugural year, the Employment Connection created new job opportunities for clients in a wide variety of professions, including: office support, retail, healthcare, food service and home care industries. Positions ranged from entry-level to skilled professional and over 75% of the hires made were for full-time jobs with an average wage of \$11.37 per hour.

The Best is Still to Come

The Employment Connection is currently working on developing targeted employment opportunities for clients. One emerging program is a short-term Industrial Culinary training partnership with OTI at DeAnza College. Employment Connection is also exploring options to develop paid work experience positions within the County and local non-profit agencies. It is certainly an exciting time; as the program matures, the number of employment options for clients continue to reach new heights.



Vital Partnerships

Providing our clients with full wrap-around support wouldn't be possible without a dedicated team of community partners and service providers that enable us to extend our service capacity well beyond our limits. This year, Employment Services was able to join forces to bestow deserving families with a little incentive to keep them heading in the right direction. Outlined in the following pages are just a few of the services that were offered through our partners.

Adult Education and Community College

Limited educational background is perhaps the greatest barrier facing Employment Services families today. Not surprisingly, it's also the single area of improvement that will have the greatest impact in increasing a participant's employment opportunities and long-term earning potential. Recognizing this, Employment Services has maintained a longstanding partnership with Santa Clara County's Adult Education Districts and local Community Colleges to provide participants with a wide array of educational programs that also satisfy CalWORKs work participation requirements.

This spring, Employment Services set aside funding to provide a boost to students who are excelling in their courses. Based on grades, academic accomplishments and classroom leadership skills, top achievers were selected to receive a new laptop and software to help them continue their educational pursuits. For most, the new laptop is their first computer ever and receiving it left them overcome with emotion and gratitude.

Employment Services was able to distribute 150 laptops to Adult Education and Community College students and recent graduates. With their new laptops, they'll be prepared to tackle school assignments or access the vast number on jobs posted online.



First Impressions Are Everything

To help provide our participants with a confidence boosting wardrobe for interviews and employment, we have forged a new partnership with Dress for Success San Jose, a recent entry into the Bay Area's non-profit network. Dress for Success comes with a long history of helping disadvantaged women achieve economic independence through their home office in New York and affiliates throughout the world.



Each participant who is referred to the program will receive a fitting with a highly trained personal shopper who will select professional attire and interview appropriate accessories to compliment the new outfit. Additionally, those who land a new job may return for a second fitting.

With professional clothing, Dress for Success is ushering Employment Services participants out into the job market empowered, with style and a boost in confidence that will ease their transition back into the workforce.

You only get one chance to make a first impression; Dress for Success is making sure it's a good one.

Family Transportation Services

Transportation is often a forgotten element of finding a job but few will ever forget the first cardinal rule of acing a big interview: show up on time! Employment Services is helping families meet that expectation and overcome general transportation barriers by partnering with Outreach & Escort Inc. to deliver the CalWORKs Family Transportation Services Program. Through the partnership, participants enrolled in Employment Services have access to vehicle repair through the JumpStart Program; a shared ride to an interview or employment activity through the Guaranteed Ride Home Program or a healthier means of commuting by receiving a bicycle in the Bike to Work program.

Through a special collaboration with Outreach & Escort this year, Employment Services was able to add a short-term program to help ensure that Employment Services parents are able to safely transport their children. The Child Car Seat program provided a limited number of convertible child safety seats, a car seat that transforms from an infant sized car seat into to a toddler sized booster seat. The versatility of the car seat allows it to grow with a child, giving families with small children one less expense to cover as they get older.



In just under three months, a total of 123 applications for the program were received and **177 car seats were provided to children of Employment Services families**. The program proved to be a huge success as clients began providing positive feedback the instant they strapped their children into their new car seat.

Connecting Clients

Having access to phone services is an invaluable tool when searching for employment. Today, Budget Mobile is helping low income families stay connected through the California LifeLine Program.



Through the program, eligible clients are able to receive a free mobile phone with 1000 minutes per month and unlimited text capabilities.

Budget Mobile has partnered with the Social Services Agency and is now serving clients in the main lobby of Employment Services to promote their program to both Employment Services participants and other CalWORKs clients. (See *Community Resources Item F* for more information).



Refugee Employment Services

Each year, political turmoil and civil unrest cause refugees from around the world to flee their native countries. Seeking stability and hope of a better life, many of these families make their way to the United States and resettle in Santa Clara County.



The number of new refugees arriving in Santa Clara County has been deeply impacted over the years as the State Department dramatically shifted its reception and placement policies following the events of 9/11 and subsequent geo-political conflicts. Reflecting the dwindling trend this year, we've experienced a **52% reduction** in new arrivals since last year, with only 143 refugees resettling in Santa Clara County. The majority hail from Iran, Iraq, and Afghanistan; with smaller populations from Eritrea, Ethiopia, Cambodia, and the Republic of Congo.

Starting Anew

Even though opportunities abound in the Silicon Valley, most new arrivals find themselves facing near insurmountable barriers to finding and retaining a job. While the magnitude of circumstances vary by individual, the most common obstacles include: limited formal education, post-traumatic stress, limited English skills and a lack of transferable work experience.

Recognizing the unique needs of the refugee population, the Social Services Agency eases the resettlement process by offering temporary financial assistance, medical benefits and employment support through the Refugee Employment Services Program. To help deliver services that meet the diverse linguistic and cultural needs of our refugee population, Employment Services maintains longstanding partnerships with local agencies, including Jewish Family Services and International Rescue Committee.

82

total job placements

\$12.46

average hourly starting wage

27

jobs with medical benefits

Refugee Service Providers have eight months to help refugee job seekers learn the nuances of their new culture and locate a suitable job. The process begins by developing a plan that outlines a strategy to obtain work. Each plan has elements for developing vocational skills, English training, job search and legal information to help refugees clarify right-to-work issues and documentation.

Through the past fiscal year, Refugee Service Providers successfully placed 82 clients into employment, earning an average hourly wage of \$12.46. Even more exciting, 27 of those found jobs with employers that offered a full medical benefits package. Subsequent to finding a job, each refugee client received job

retention services, including mentorship, links to other community services and help negotiating work schedules that allow them to continue their English language studies.

Uncertainty for Refugee Resettlement Program

At this point in time, funding for the program is facing some uncertainty as the Office of Refugee Resettlement may be forced to redirect future budget allocations toward other programs. This would have a devastating impact to much needed services that the local refugee population depend on to establish themselves in America.

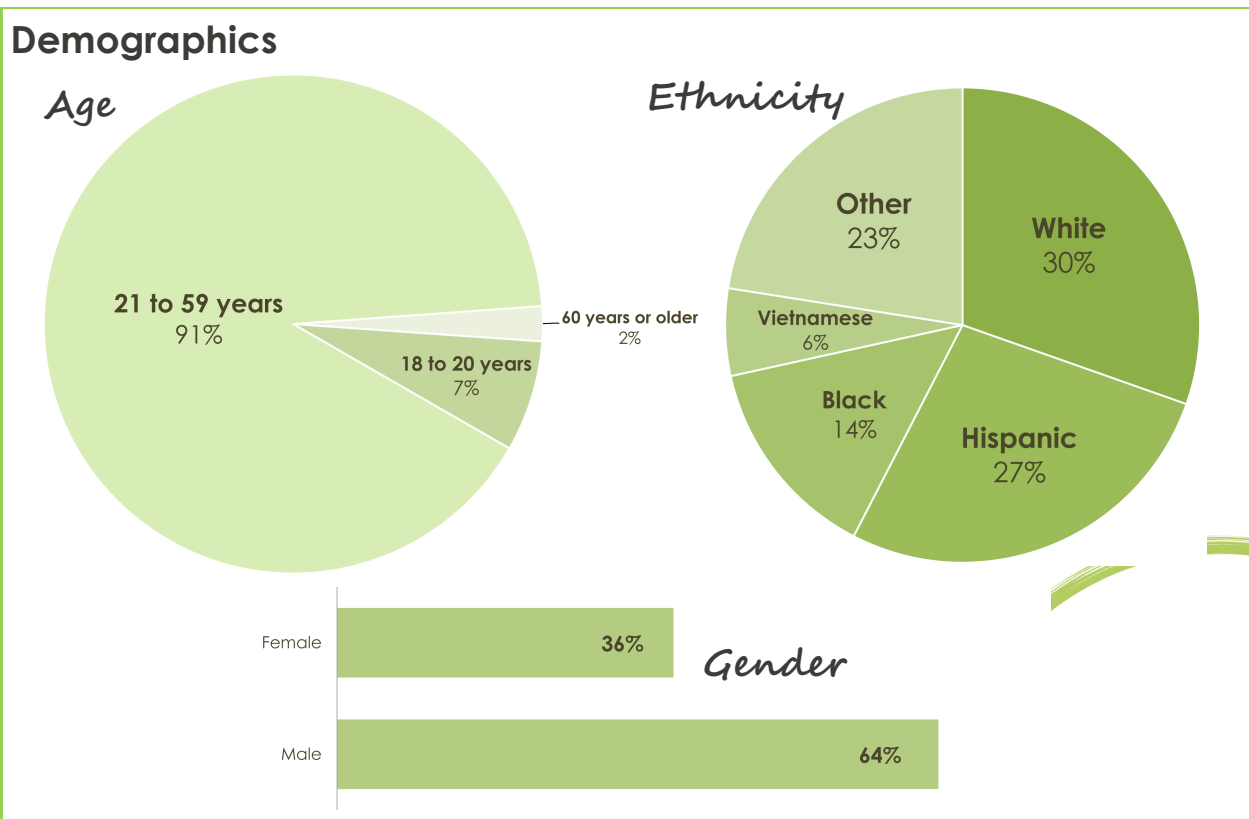
Additionally, redirecting funding would greatly curtail the number of refugees allowed to resettle throughout the U.S., many of which have already been granted refugee status and are in the pipeline to arrive in the next few months. The largest population of impacted new arrivals are Iraqi and Afghani refugees who are fleeing the Middle East after their safety has been compromised for assisting U.S. Military efforts abroad.

The Social Services Agency is closely monitoring the situation and participating in statewide discussions that may affect future funding. As the situation unfolds, more information will be available at the Refugee Forum and we invite you to attend these monthly meetings (*see Community Resources Item G for dates and times*).

General Assistance

General Assistance (GA) is a county-funded program providing a safety net of last resort for indigent adult residents of Santa Clara County. GA serves 4,600 adults without dependents through various programs, including: Supplemental Security Income (SSI) Advocacy, which assists aged and disabled individuals in obtaining SSI assistance; Vocational Services for employable clients; Re-entry Services for those recently released from incarceration; and the Cash Assistance Program for Immigrants (CAPI), providing a cash grant to qualified aged and disabled immigrants.

On January 1, 2014, GA cash assistance was converted from a loan to recoverable grant, thus allowing the GA Bureau to seek long-term solutions for this most vulnerable population. Today, both employable and unemployable clients receive temporary financial relief at an average of \$190 per month. GA staff also work with other County agencies and organizations in order to provide additional vital resources to clients, while they strive to either locate employment or secure approval for a disability program.



Affordable Care Act

Due to the Affordable Care Act allowing 19 to 64 year-olds to qualify for Medi-Cal, the number of GA recipients receiving Medi-Cal has more than doubled to 72% and continues to grow as existing and incoming clients are encouraged to apply.

Re-Entry Services

With the implementation of the 2011 Public Safety Realignment, the Social Services Agency joined several agencies in a county-wide effort to provide robust services through the Re-entry Resource Center (RRC), giving inmates access to a full menu of services for post-release support. Together, the Social Services Agency, Mental Health, Probation, Custody Health and the Department of Alcohol and Drug Services formed the Re-Entry Multi-Agency Project.

This collaboration opens the door to former offenders to find support and resources for healthcare, nutrition, housing, drug and alcohol recovery and employment. Re-entry clients are able to participate in peer mentoring groups and access counseling services on-site.

The Social Services Agency has staff stationed in the RRC to provide timely and efficient services to exiting parolees. These staff provide assistance in applying for cash assistance, CalFresh and Medi-Cal programs, processing a total of 1,560 applications as of June 2014. The wrap-around support is intended to assist newly released inmates to re-enter society and rebuild their lives in a healthy and positive way.

SSI Advocacy

When a GA client is unable to work due to a long term or permanent disability, he or she is referred to the SSI Advocacy program, which utilizes Social Workers to guide medically disabled clients through the complex Social Security application process. The SSI Advocacy program assists GA and Health and Hospital System (HHS) clients in achieving stability by obtaining Supplemental Security Income (SSI) or Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) claim approvals. SSI provides a permanent funding stream for these clients, affording them long-term housing and care.





The SSI Advocacy Unit is staffed with nine Social Workers, with three out-stationed at the Valley Homeless Health Program and the Mental Health Department's Central Wellness and Benefits Center. Together, the SSI Advocacy unit achieved a total of 211 approved claims this year.

The SSI application and appeal process can be long and cumbersome, often taking up to 18 months. By February of this year, the department was faced with a backlog of 300 pending applications. In order to address this growing issue, SSA partnered with three local law firms, giving clients yet another avenue through which to complete the application process.

Finding Safety and Stability

After five years of homelessness, Jim found the advocate he needed in SSA Social Worker, **Jeanette Shamalta**.

Together, Jeanette guided Jim through the SSI application process and finding stable housing. Jim says, "I love my new apartment and am so grateful to my Social Worker, Jeanette, and the SSI Advocacy team for helping me keep my job and find a home where I feel safe."



CAPI

Aged, blind and disabled immigrants and refugees who do not qualify for the Supplemental Security Income/State Supplementary Payment (SSI/SSP) Program can receive cash assistance through the Cash Assistance Program for Immigrants (CAPI) of up to \$867.40 per month. The 779 clients currently receiving CAPI assistance are also encouraged to apply for citizenship in order to qualify for SSI/SSP and may continue receiving CAPI while waiting for the approval of their SSI/SSP benefits even after becoming naturalized citizens.

Vocational Services

In today's labor market, breaks in employment can pose a tremendous challenge. Homelessness and limited skills compound a job seeker's ability to find his or her next job. Through the Vocational Services (VS) program, over 2,000 employable GA clients receive a renewed sense of hope and support.

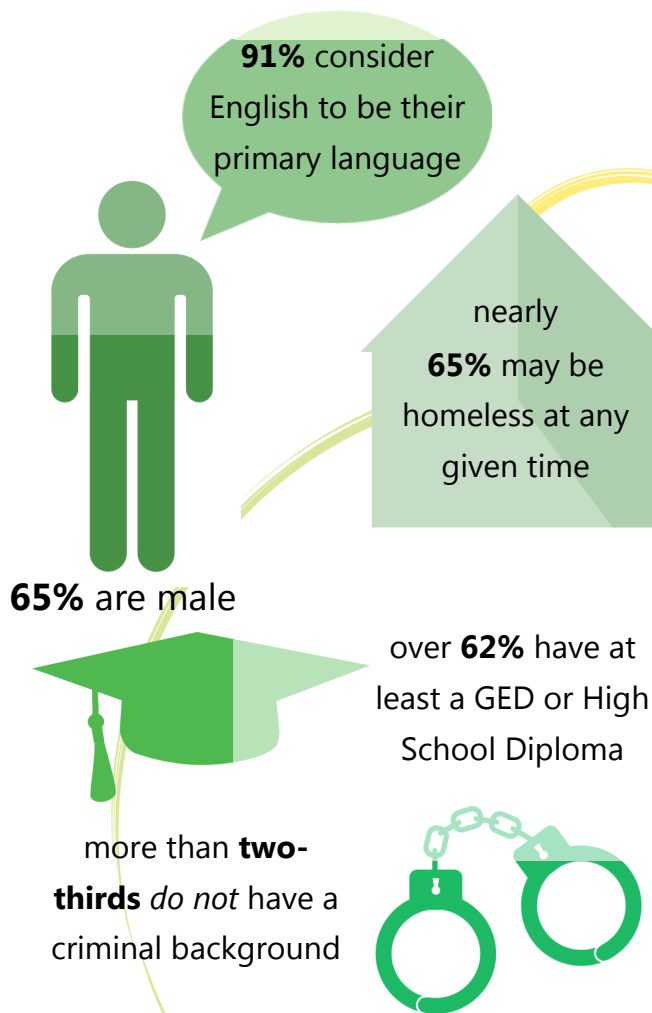
In this last year, VS staff updated its business model to refocus its job search efforts to increase its ability to prepare clients in obtaining gainful employment.

Getting a Fresh Start

Central to the VS program is the Career Center, where clients are given the opportunity to attend employment readiness workshops, get hands on work experience and find job search resources and referrals to education and training services. VS clients are able to access assistance from Employment Counselors (ECs) and receive a transportation allowance to assist them in getting to their various assignments and job interviews.

Clients begin by meeting with an EC to review their work, medical and criminal history, educational background and other employment barriers. Together, they develop a viable plan to re-enter the world of work and self-sufficiency.

VS Population at a Glance



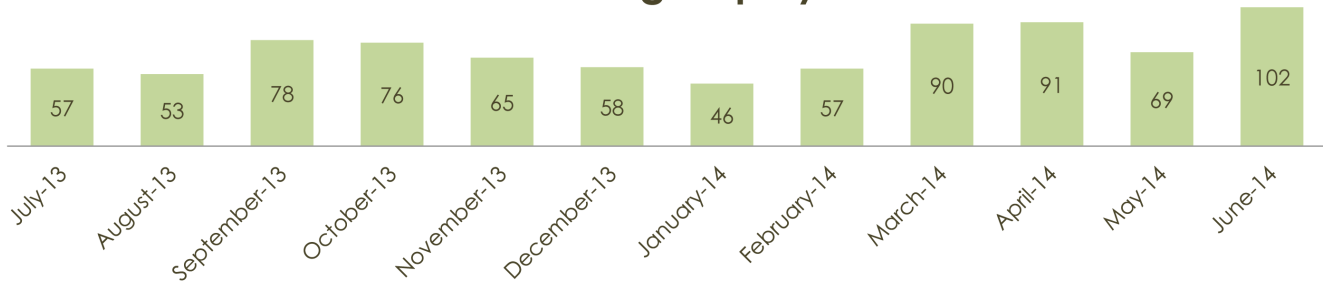
One Client's Story of Success

When Sharon first arrived at the Vocational Services Career Center in the General Assistance office, she was feeling down and dejected in her job search. At 55 years old, with no car and without a high school diploma or GED, it was difficult to stay positive. After working closely with her Employment Counselor, **Bruce Lam**, she regained her confidence and saw her future begin to take shape. After a few ups and downs, Sharon applied and was hired for her dream job as a Medical Records Clerk, earning \$28 per hour.



"It feels so good to be back to work. Being at the career center with other people in the same situation helped me to realize anything is possible. The counselors are friendly, knowledgeable and happily help with anything you need."

Clients Entering Employment



To obtain a current work background, many clients are assigned to part time Work Projects. Volunteering at many of our local non-profit organizations or with local municipalities, clients participate in a variety of work assignments, from clerical to ground maintenance to stockroom assistance. Work projects not only provide needed work experience but help clients gain confidence that is especially beneficial for those with a short or interrupted employment history.

While the financial assistance provided by General Assistance provides a lifeline to clients, Vocational Services has the ability to lift them from poverty to a new life. Staff is committed to assisting these clients in successfully making this transition. As the VS program expands and enhances its services, more clients are becoming employed. The new business model appears to possess a winning formula, leading to an all-time high of 102 employed clients in the month of June 2014. The chart above details the on-going progress and efforts of this remarkable unit.

Moving Forward

In the coming year, we expect to see a growing number of GA clients receiving Medi-Cal through the Affordable Care Act, as well as continued success through the SSI Lawyer Project. GA has offered a way for these needy individuals to find their way to self-sufficiency and security, whether it is through lasting employment for our VS clients or a steady income through SSI or CAPI for disabled and elderly individuals.

Foster Care Eligibility

The Foster Care Eligibility (FCE) Bureau works with the Department of Family and Children's Services (DFCS) to help address the needs of children who have been placed with relatives, foster homes or group homes, or are under the supervision of the Probation Department.



This bureau works behind the scenes, processing monthly payments for over 1,300 Foster Care youth to meet their placement costs, which can range from several hundred to several thousand dollars per month, with an average monthly payment of \$2,027. Payments are also made to eligible young adults (age 18 to 24) to ensure a successful transition out of the Foster Care program, maintaining a safety net of support as they become independent adults in a secure and supervised living environment.

Above and beyond these basic programs, these specialized workers also administer payments for a number of other programs:

- Adoption Assistance Program (AAP)
- Kinship Guardianship Assistance Payment Program (KinGAP)
- Wraparound Program
- Former Foster Care Children (FFCC) Medi-Cal
- Transitional Housing Placement Plus Foster Care (THP+FC)
- Supervised Independent Living Placement (SILP)

This past year, new non-minor dependent regulations have allowed young adults to continue receiving payments up to their 21st birthday through SILP and FFCC Medi-Cal has been extended up to age 26. Currently, 143 young adults are benefiting from the services provided under the SILP program and are enrolled in local academic institutions including Stanford University, University of California, Berkeley, and San Jose State University.

Though FCE is the smallest bureau within DEBS, the payments made by the Eligibility Workers for these programs have a huge impact in the lives of the foster youth who depend on these services on their pathway to independent adulthood, providing support and stability each step of the way.

Accessing Services

Accessing benefits in Santa Clara County has never been easier. Employment and Benefit Services has received an extensive makeover over the last several years that has streamlined the application process and increased access to program guidelines and eligibility information. By modernizing the way we do business, accessing the Medi-Cal, CalFresh, CalWORKs, and General Assistance programs has grown increasingly efficient, convenient and user friendly.

My Benefits CalWIN

Since 2011, clients in Santa Clara County have been able to use My Benefits CalWIN (www.mybenefitscalwin.org), a website for active and prospective clients to conveniently view information regarding public benefits online. The site features an easy-to-use interface that allows users to read about program guidelines, perform an eligibility pre-screening to see what benefits they may be eligible for, and submit a benefit application. Active clients may utilize the website to view their case status and turn in their periodic reports. The website is allowing clients to answer common questions and keep up to date with their case without having to call in or stand in line at a benefit office.

For a virtual tour of My Benefits CalWIN, Employment Services has created an instructional video that navigates the website and its features. Community agencies may request a copy of the video via email by contacting esi@ssa.sccgov.org.

Going Mobile

The CalWIN Mobile Application is the most recent communications development made available to clients and applicants. The CalWIN App compliments the My Benefits CalWIN website, granting clients instant, on-the-go access to their benefits on their smartphones. The app is free to download and available for both iOS and Android devices. The introduction of this application allows Santa Clara County and CalWORKs clients to keep up with the fast-paced high tech world of Silicon Valley.



Employment Services has also been reaching our ever growing population of smartphone users via text message. Staff have been able to notify clients of appointments, remind clients of documents that they need to turn in and promote events, like employer recruitments and job fairs. Texting has become an effective way of communicating with today's younger client population and we expect to be implementing text capability to our Benefits staff this year.

Visiting Our Offices

Employment and Benefit Services has 13 conveniently located offices throughout the County, each providing specialized support to clients for each of our benefit programs. (*See Community Resources Item H for a complete listing of our Employment and Benefit offices.*)

Community Resources

Those working with low income families are strongly encouraged to get involved and learn more about our programs, explore our resources and actively participate in the Safety Net Community or CalWORKs Advisory. Together, we can combat the effects of poverty and make a difference in the lives of our clients by promoting awareness of Employment and Benefit Services programs and increasing access that leads directly to economic self-sufficiency. The following pages contain additional information about community meetings, resources and services mentioned in the Annual Report.

- A. Covered California
- B. Safety Net Meeting Calendar
- C. CalFresh 101
- D. Menu of Employment Services and Activities
- E. CalWORKs Advisory Meeting Schedule
- F. Budget Mobile Lifeline Program
- G. Refugee Forum Schedule
- H. Employment and Benefit Offices
- I. CalWORKs 101
- J. CalWORKs Resource Guide



COVERED CALIFORNIA

2014 Sliding Scale Benefits | SINGLE PERSON

Silver Plan (Eligible for Federal Subsidy)

Annual Income	\$15,856 – \$17,235	\$17,235 – \$22,980	\$22,980 – \$28,725	\$28,725 – \$45,960
Consumer Portion of Monthly Premium for Silver Plans (Balance paid by Federal subsidy)	\$19 – \$57	\$57 – \$121	\$121 – \$193	\$193 – \$364
Copays In the Yellow Sections are Not Subject to ANY Deductible and Count Toward the Annual Out-of-Pocket Maximum				
Deductible (if any)	No Deductible	\$500	\$1,500 Medical Deductible	\$2,000 Medical Deductible
Preventative Care Copay	No Cost	No Cost	No Cost	No Cost – 1 Annual Visit
Primary Care Visit Copay	\$3	\$15	\$40	\$45
Specialty Care Visit Copay	\$5	\$20	\$50	\$65
Urgent Care Visit Copay	\$6	\$30	\$80	\$90
Lab Testing Copay	\$3	\$15	\$40	\$45
X-Ray Copay	\$5	\$20	\$50	\$65
Generic Medication Copay	\$3	\$5	\$20	\$25
Emergency Room Copay	\$25	\$75	\$250	\$250
High cost and infrequent services like Hospital Care and Outpatient Surgery	10%	15%	20% of your plan's negotiated rate	20% of your plan's negotiated rate
Brand medications may be subject to Annual Drug Deductible before you pay the Copay	No Deductible	\$50 then pay the copay amount	\$250 then pay the copay amount	\$250 then pay the copay amount
Preferred brand Copay after Drug Deductible	\$5	\$15	\$30	\$50
MAXIMUM OUT-OF-POCKET FOR ONE	\$2,250	\$2,250	\$5,200	\$6,350
MAXIMUM OUT-OF-POCKET FOR FAMILY	\$4,500	\$4,500	\$10,400	\$12,700



Safety Net Meeting 2015 Calendar



SAFETY NET MEETING INFORMATION

The Safety Net Committee is co-chaired by Santa Clara County Social Services Agency and Second Harvest Food Bank. It is comprised of Community Based Organizations (CBO's) that come together in partnership to educate, access, strategize, develop and implement service recommendations to strengthen food and other services provided to those in need throughout Santa Clara County.

Safety Net meetings are held at the Second Harvest Food bank on the **4th Thursday** of each month from 11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. This is a brown bag lunch meeting.

For more information about Safety Net Meetings and/or to request that discussion items be placed on the agenda, please contact Norma at: (408) 755-7736 or Norma.Bejarano@ssa.sccgov.org.

<p>Location</p> <p>Second Harvest Food Bank 750 Curtner Avenue San Jose, CA 95125 (Upstairs, Going Room)</p>
<p>Time</p> <p>11:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.</p>

Meeting Dates
January 22
February 26
March 26
April 23
May 28
June 25
July 23
August 27
September 24
October 22
November (No Meeting)
December (TBD)



You are invited to the CalFresh 101 Training

This training will equip you to assist clients with their CalFresh applications and be part of the efforts in eliminating hunger in the community.

- Overview Of The CalFresh Program
- Ways To Apply for CalFresh
- Documentation Needed
- CalFresh Application Process
- Semi-Annual Reporting and Recertification Process
- Tour of the Application Center

Date	Time	Location
October 22, 2014	9am to 12pm	1919 Senter Road, San Jose (Loyola Room)
January 14, 2015	9am to 12pm	1877 Senter Road, San Jose (Stanford Room)
April 15, 2015	9am to 12pm	1877 Senter Road, San Jose (Stanford Room)

REGISTRATION INFORMATION

Email: calfresh101@ssa.sccgov.org

Please send in questions about CalFresh prior to the training.



Mission of Santa Clara County Social Services Agency

"A culturally sensitive and socially responsible public agency providing high quality professional, financial, and protective services for residents of Santa Clara County."

Menu of Employment Services

Participants in Employment Services develop an employment plan that includes a wide variety of specialized activities and services that are designed to increase their employability; these include:

- ◇ Ancillary Support (Books, Tools, Uniforms)
- ◇ Basic Education/GED Classes/English as a Second Language (ESL)
- ◇ Behavioral Health Screening and Services
- ◇ Bike to Work (Bicycle, Helmet, Safety Lights)
- ◇ CalFresh Nutritional Education
- ◇ Cal-Learn (Teen Parent/Adolescent Family Life Program)
- ◇ Child Care
- ◇ Community College/University Degree
- ◇ Community Service
- ◇ Distance Learning iPod/Tablet Lending Library
- ◇ Domestic Abuse Services
- ◇ Dress for Success
- ◇ Drug, Alcohol, Mental Health Services
- ◇ Guaranteed Ride Home Program
- ◇ Incentive Gift Certificates
- ◇ Job Club/Networking
- ◇ Job Search
- ◇ JumpStart Automotive Repair
- ◇ Parent Support Group/Workshop
- ◇ Record Expungement Services (Legal)
- ◇ Produce Mobile at Senter Road Campus
- ◇ Second Harvest Food Bank Programs
- ◇ Subsidized Employment
- ◇ Sessions to Enhance Professional Skills (STEPS)
- ◇ CalWORKs SSI (Referral Program for SSI Application Assistance)
- ◇ Transit
- ◇ Transportation Services (Bus Passes, Mileage Reimbursements)
- ◇ Transitional Subsidized Employment
- ◇ Vocational Assessment
- ◇ Vocational ESL
- ◇ Work Experience



CalWORKs Advisory 2015 Meeting Calendar

DATE	TIME	LOCATION
January 7	11:30 – 1:30	Social Services Agency 1879 Senter Road–Orientation Room
February 4	11:30 – 1:30	Social Services Agency 1879 Senter Road–Orientation Room
March 4	11:30 – 1:30	Social Services Agency 1879 Senter Road–Orientation Room
April 1	11:30 – 1:30	Social Services Agency 1879 Senter Road–Orientation Room
May 6	11:30 – 1:30	Social Services Agency 1879 Senter Road–Orientation Room
June 3	11:30 – 1:30	Social Services Agency 1879 Senter Road–Orientation Room
July	* NO MEETING THIS MONTH *	
August 5	11:30 – 1:30	Social Services Agency 1879 Senter Road–Orientation Room
September 2	11:30 – 1:30	Social Services Agency 1879 Senter Road–Orientation Room
October 7	11:30 – 1:30	Social Services Agency 1879 Senter Road–Orientation Room
November 4	11:30 – 1:30	Social Services Agency 1879 Senter Road–Orientation Room
December	→NO MEETING THIS MONTH – CLIENT ACHIEVMENT AWARDS	

For future meeting location contact Anita A. Casillas @ 408-755-7732
or email: Anita.Casillas@ssa.sccgov.org



CALIFORNIA LIFELINE PROGRAM FACT SHEET

Budget Mobile provides mobile phone service to eligible low income households within California. Budget Mobile California LifeLine service is supported by the California LifeLine Program, which ensures that all Americans have access to reliable telephone service. All subscribers must meet California LifeLine Program eligibility requirements. Budget Mobile California LifeLine service is limited to one benefit per household, consisting of either wireline or wireless service, and cannot be combined with any other California LifeLine offering. Budget Mobile, based in Bossier City, LA., is part of Budget PrePay.

ELIGIBILITY

California residents are eligible to receive Budget Mobile California LifeLine service if they have a household income up to 150 percent of the federal poverty level or participate in one of the following government assistance programs:

- Medicaid/Medi-Cal
- Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
- Women, Infants & Children Program (WIC)
- Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP)
- Federal Public Housing Assistance or Section 8
- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)
- CAL-Fresh
- National School Lunch Program (NSL)
- Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)
- Tribal TANF
- Bureau of Indian Affairs General Assistance
- Head Start Income Eligible (Tribal Only)
- Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations

BUDGET MOBILE LIFELINE SERVICE

Eligible customers receive a free mobile phone with 1,000 minutes and unlimited texting every month with our California Connect Plan. Phone features include voicemail, call waiting, caller ID, access to 911 service and nationwide coverage.



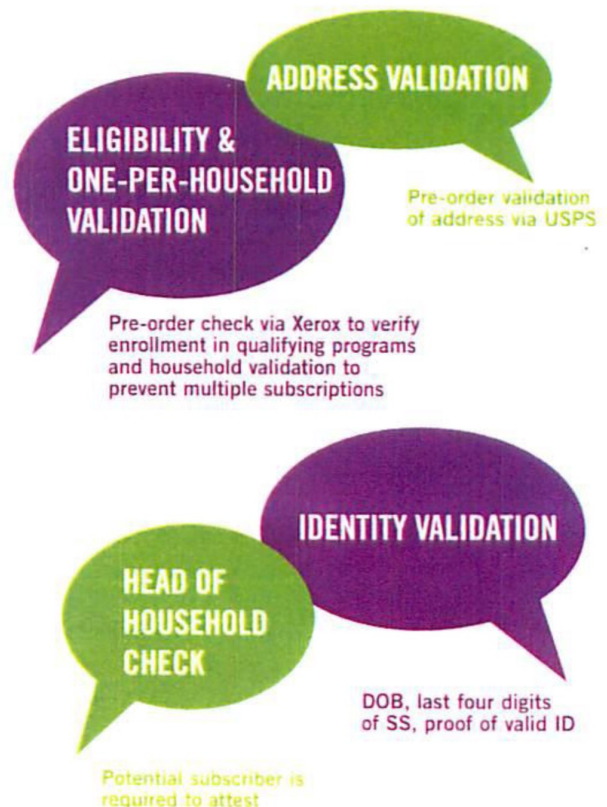
ABOUT THE LIFELINE PROGRAM

Budget Mobile is supported by the California LifeLine Program, which was established in accordance with the Moore Universal Telephone Service Act passed in 1983. The California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) created the California LifeLine Program, which provided discounted basic landline telephone service to qualified California residents. In 2014, the CPUC approved the expansion of the California LifeLine Program to include wireless telephone service. No tax money is used to fund California LifeLine, which is funded by the Universal Service Fund that all telephone companies are required to pay into. Federal rules prohibit consumers from participating in more than one California LifeLine Program at the same time.

RESPONSIBLE OPERATIONS

Budget Mobile is committed to preserving the integrity of the California LifeLine Program. We have developed a thorough system to prevent fraud, which includes multiple checks to verify eligibility for service for each potential customer. Our staff undertakes extensive training to ensure company policy is upheld.

FRAUD PREVENTION:



Stephaniemarcy171@yahoo.com
Stephanie Marcynyszyn (951)312-9255

This Budget PrePay, Inc. d/b/a Budget Mobile offering is a California LifeLine-supported service. Only eligible consumers may enroll in the program and proof of eligibility documentation is necessary for enrollment. The program is limited to one benefit per household, consisting of either wireline or wireless service. California LifeLine service is non-transferable. California LifeLine is a government benefit program, and consumers who willfully make false statements in order to obtain the benefit can be punished by fine or imprisonment or can be barred from the program. Coverage limitations such as weather, signal strength, and service outages may affect wireless mobile phone service, quality, or access to E-911 and/or 911 in the event of an emergency. By removing your wireless cell phone from a residence that does not have other phone services, residents may not have a way to make 911 calls during an emergency. Free phones may take up to 10 business days for delivery once order is received. Brand and style of phone will vary and are at the discretion of Budget Mobile California LifeLine.



FREE CELL PHONE



Starting July 28, 2014

BUDGET MOBILE LIFELINE IS OFFERING A FREE CELL PHONE WITH MONTHLY SERVICE

If you are receiving CalWORKs, CalFresh, Medi-Cal or General Assistance, you may be eligible to receive a free cell phone and monthly service.

The Public Utilities Commission (PUC) has extended contracts to various cell phone vendors to provide LifeLine cell phones to low income families. Budget Mobile is one of these vendors that is offering free cell phones through the PUC. As a courtesy to our clients, Social Services Agency (SSA) agreed to allow the Budget Mobile representative to provide services on-site.

HOW TO APPLY

Eligible and interested clients can apply for this free cell phone and service at the CalWORKs Employment Services (CWES) office main lobby located at 1879 Senter Road, San Jose, CA 95112 between the hours of 8:00 am – 4:00 pm, Monday through Friday.

Go to 1879 Senter Road and bring the following verifications to the Budget Mobile representative:

- Your photo ID (such as a driver's license/ID from DMV, or a school ID) and
- Proof of low income status, such as your EBT card or Medi-Cal card.

BUDGET MOBILE SERVICE PLAN

- 1,000 talk minutes, unlimited text, voice mail and caller ID. (Does not include data.)
- Service charge of \$0.05 per minute for going over monthly minute allotment.
- Only one free phone is allowed per household.
- If you have an existing California LifeLine at home, it can be transferred to your Budget Mobile cell phone.

IF YOU ARE APPROVED

- Approval confirmation and the cell phone will be mailed to your home.
- For any other questions or concerns, such as billing or for returning the phone, you must contact Budget Mobile directly at 888-777-4007.

If you are unable to apply in person, you may call **877-651-4694** to obtain additional sign-up locations in Santa Clara County.

Budget Mobile LifeLine is not sponsored or endorsed by the County of Santa Clara. The county is only providing space to assist interested and eligible individuals to learn about this free service.



P.O. Box 28621 ♦ San Jose ♦ CA 95159-8621

Chair: Mylene Madrid
Vice-Chair: Reza Odabae
Treasurer: Zoya Lazer
Secretary: Sandra Ezat

2011 MEMBERS

American Red Cross
Asian Americans for Community
Involvement
Asian Law Alliance
Catholic Charities
Community Ministries
International
Eastern European Service
Agency
Gardner Family Care
Corporation
Immigrant Resettlement &
Cultural Center
International Rescue Committee
Jewish Family Services of
Silicon Valley
Refugee Transitions
San Jose Presbytery
Santa Clara County Office of
Human Relations
Santa Clara County Social
Services Agency
Santa Clara County Family
Health Plan
Santa Clara Valley Health &
Hospital System
SIREN
Vietnamese Voluntary
Foundation, Inc.
World Relief
and Individuals

Refugee & Immigrant Forum 2015 Calendar

January 21, 2015	July 15, 2015
February 18, 2015	August 19, 2015
March 18, 2015	September 16, 2015
April 15, 2015	October 21, 2015
May 20, 2015	November 18, 2015
June 17, 2015	December 16, 2015

Meeting locations are rotated among member agencies. For meeting locations call Mylene Madrid at 408-792-5619.

The Mission Statement: "Refugee & Immigrant Forum facilitates the successful integration of refugees and immigrants into local communities through collaboration, resource sharing and fostering community awareness."

Employment and Benefit Offices

Office Name	Address	Phone	Services Provided
Assistance Application Center	1867 Senter Road San Jose, CA 95112	(408) 758-3800	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health Coverage • Food Assistance • Financial Assistance
Continuing Benefit Services	1870 Senter Road San Jose, CA 95112	(408) 758-4100	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health Coverage • Food Assistance • Financial Assistance
North County Office	1330 W. Middlefield Road Mountain View, CA 94043	(408) 278-2400 (650) 988-6200	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health Coverage • Food Assistance • Financial Assistance • Employment Services
South County Office	379 Tomkins Court Gilroy, CA 95020	(408) 758-3300	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health Coverage • Food Assistance • Financial Assistance • Employment Services
General Assistance	1919 Senter Road San Jose, CA 95112	(408) 796-8900	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health Coverage • Food Assistance • General Assistance • Cash Assistance Program for Immigrants (CAPI) • Vocational Services
CalWORKs Employment Services	1879 Senter Road San Jose, CA 95112 1330 W. Middlefield Road Mountain View, CA 94043 379 Tomkins Court Gilroy, CA 95020	(408) 758-3500 (408) 278-2402 (650) 988-6200 (408) 758-3300	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employment Services

Making a Difference Through People, Service and Performance!



CalWORKs 101

2015 Workshop Schedule

DAY	DATE	TIME
Friday	February 27, 2015	1:30 – 4:30 PM
	April 24, 2015	
	June 26, 2015	
	August 28, 2015	
	October 23, 2015	

No Registrations Workshop Day

This workshop will provide an informative overview of Department of Benefits and Employment Services (DEBS) and associated programs. Presentations on the following programs are on the agenda: Social Work Unit, Expungement Program, Health Alliance, Employment Connection and Cal-Learn Program. Questions are encouraged! We appreciate your promptness!

REGISTRATION INFORMATION

Contact Person: Anita Casillas
Phone: 408-755-7730
Email: ESI@ssa.sccgov.org

WORKSHOP LOCATION

ORIENTATION ROOM
1879 Senter Road
San Jose, CA 95112

Mission of Santa Clara County Social Services Agency-

“A culturally sensitive and socially responsible public agency providing high quality, professional, financial, and protective services for residents of Santa Clara County.”

CalWORKs Resource Guide 2014

CalWORKs Resource Guide

Santa Clara County

Making a Difference
Through People,
Service and Performance!



August 2014

Information and Resources included:

- Emergency Resources
- MyBenefitsCalWIN Information
- Support Services
- Health Services
- Domestic Violence Resources
- Food Assistance
- Housing Information
- Transportation Information
- Children and Child Care Resources
- Refugees Resources
- Employment / Post-Employment Services
- Education / Training

The CalWORKs Resource Guide is distributed to CalWORKs and former CalWORKs clients, as well as Community Partners and Staff

Find the CalWORKs Resource Guide in the Job Seeker Section of:

www.ecstaffing.com

Contact:
Cecilia Núñez-Massara at
cecilia.nunez-massara@ssa.sccgov.org
(408) 755-7742

“Making a Difference Through People, Service and Performance!”



SANTA CLARA COUNTY
SOCIAL SERVICES AGENCY