



county of Santa Cruz

HUMAN RESOURCES AGENCY

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October 15, 1998

AGENDA: October 27, 1998

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
County of Santa Cruz
701 Ocean Street
Santa Cruz, California

CALWORKS IMPLEMENTATION REPORT

Dear Members of the Board:

On April 21, 1998, your Board received the first implementation report on the CalWORKs program. The purpose of this letter is to present the attached summary report on implementation of CalWORKs from January through September 1998.

IT IS THEREFORE RECOMMENDED that your Board accept and file this report.

Very truly yours,

CECILIA ESPINOLA
Administrator

CE/GG:gg/cwreport.doc

Attachment

RECOMMENDED:

Susan A. Mauriello
County Administrative Officer



CalWORKs

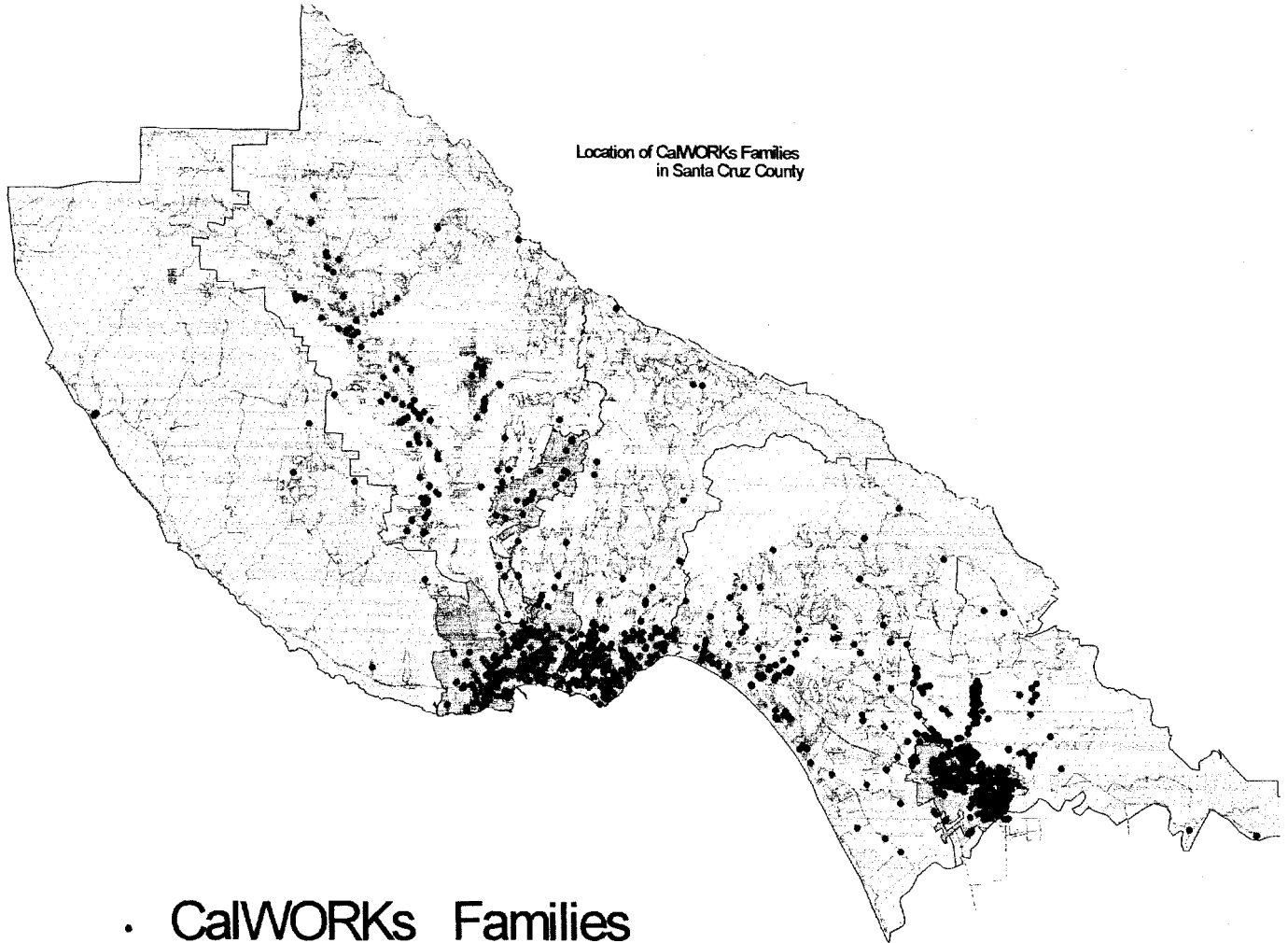
Implementation

Report

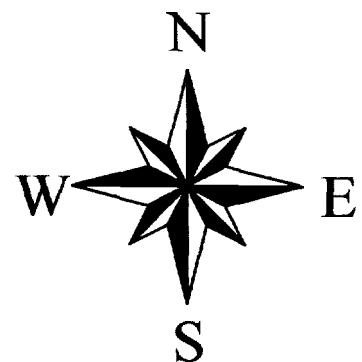
**Human Resources Agency
County of Santa Cruz**

**Cecilia Espinola, Administrator
October 1998**

CalWORKs Families in Santa Cruz County



- CalWORKs Families
- Streets
- Cities
- Unincorporated Area



CalWORKs Implementation Report

Executive Summary

On January 1, 1998, the California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids (CalWORKs) program began implementation. It eliminated Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) and Greater Avenues to Independence (GAIN) and represented a significant policy shift from previous welfare-to-work efforts on the state level. These changes were made in response to welfare reform on the federal level. CalWORKs enhances employment and supportive services for parents on aid, mandates participation in work or work-related activities, changes some conditions of eligibility, and imposes new requirements.

This CalWORKs Implementation Report covers implementation activities within the Human Resources Agency and in partnership with the community, as well as recent changes in state law and organizational structure to accommodate the community-based goals for welfare reform.

Highlights

This report highlights initiatives that arose as a result of the work of participants in the Welfare Reform Implementation Planning Group and subsequent task forces. Some of these initiatives are still in developmental stages and/or seeking additional funding sources:

- ◆ Child care provided to CalWORKs participants with young children
- ◆ New transportation services under development
- ◆ Additional resources for substance abuse and mental health treatment
- ◆ Protocols and training on domestic violence developed
- ◆ Comprehensive staff development program implemented
- ◆ Enrollment in welfare-to-work services proceeding as planned
- ◆ Job placement rate above state goals
- ◆ Wage at placement increasing

- ◆ County meeting required work participation rate
- ◆ Caseload declining due to parent employment
- ◆ Family self-sufficiency increasing
- ◆ Important job retention services under development

Program Implementation Overview

The core services outlined in federal and state welfare reform and in the County's CalWORKs Plan have been implemented by the HRA Job Opportunities and Benefits Division, in conjunction with the CareerWorks/JTPA Division and Child Care Program. These include:

- ◆ Work First approach to employment services
- ◆ Work participation requirements
- ◆ Case management and welfare-to-work plans for all CalWORKs participants

- ◆ Child care and transportation services for CalWORKs participants
- ◆ Substance abuse, mental health, and domestic violence services
- ◆ Short-term training for participants co-enrolled in JTPA
- ◆ Emphasis on childhood immunizations and school attendance
- ◆ Integration of child support payment enforcement at CalWORKs sites
- ◆ Collaborative, community-based services with partner agencies
- ◆ 18-24 months of welfare-to-work services
- ◆ Job retention services for participants who become employed
- ◆ Time-limited aid (60 month lifetime limit).

1. CalWORKs Enrollment and Outcomes

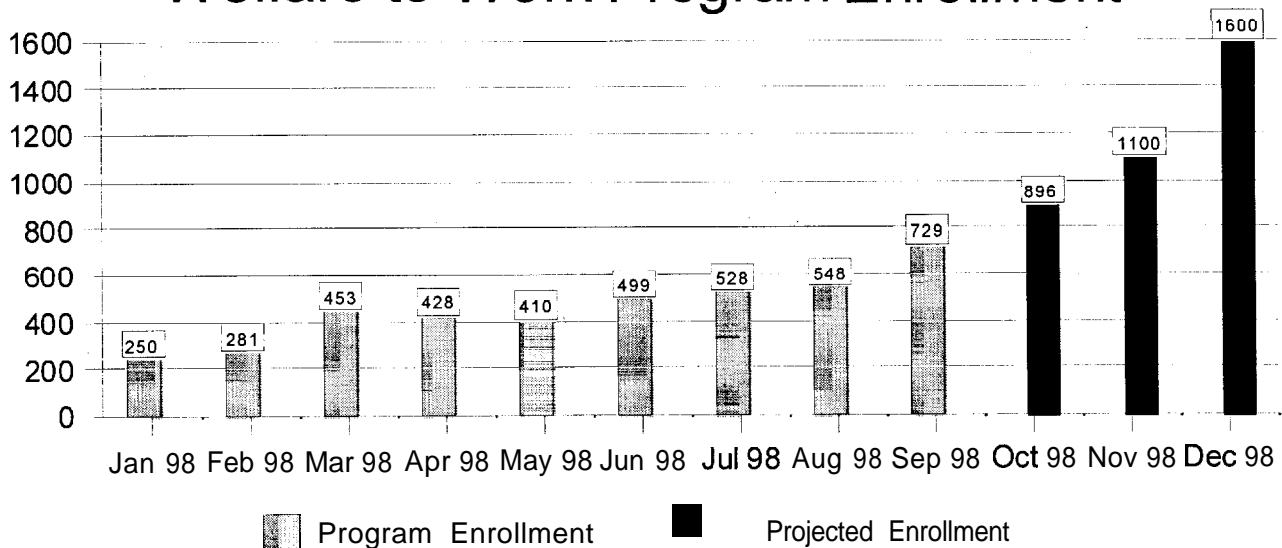
Enrollment

As you will recall, the 18/24 month time

limits on welfare-to-work activities, established by the California Welfare-to-Work Act of 1997, commence when a participant in the CalWORKs program is enrolled in the Welfare-to-Work component of CalWORKs services and signs a Welfare-to-Work Plan. All aid recipients who were receiving aid at the end of December 1997 must be enrolled in the CalWORKs Welfare-to-Work program by December 31, 1998.

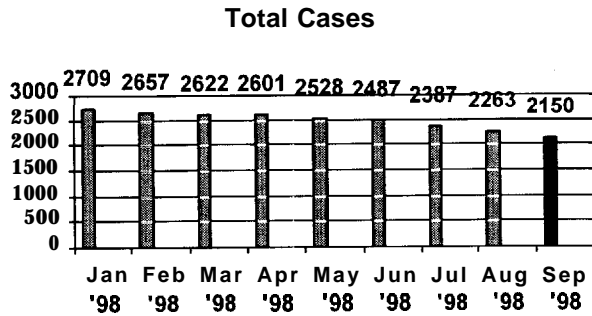
- ◆ By the end of September 1998, 52% of existing CalWORKs recipients had been enrolled in welfare-to-work activities. It is estimated that 70% will be enrolled by the end of October.
- ◆ All new CalWORKs applicants now enroll in Welfare-to-Work at the time aid is approved, and begin their job search, unless exempt due to the age of an infant for whom they have primary caretaking responsibility or other reasons.
- ◆ Currently, approximately 7% of CalWORKs cash aid recipients are exempted from welfare-to-work requirements due to the age of their infant.

Welfare to Work Program Enrollment



CalWORKs Caseload Trends

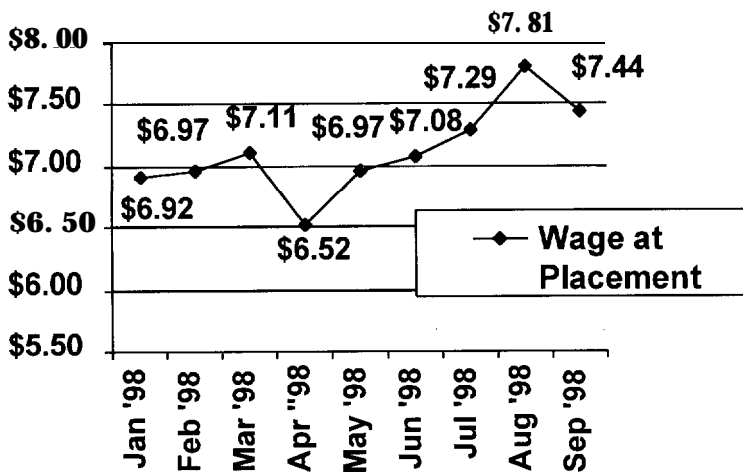
Caseloads in the CalWORKs program have steadily declined since January 1998 for a total case drop of 16.5%.



The most frequent reason parents gave for leaving aid was increased earnings.

Outcomes

The standard workforce preparation measures used in HRA's employment programs include number of job placements, average wage at placement, and work participation rate. The Welfare-to-Work program has placed 73% of participants in jobs. The average entry-level wage is now \$7.44 per hour. Currently, 37.3% of participants are meeting the required work participation rate.



Integration of Family Support and Child Development Resource Center

The Human Resources Agency has renewed its contract with the Child Development Resource Center (CDRC) to provide consumer education on child care and on-site information and referral services to CalWORKs participants at the One-Stop Career Centers. CDRC staff provided child care information and referral services to 128 CalWORKs families with 183 children from April through June 1998, for a total of 209 families with 303 children served from January through June. CDRC staff also participate daily in the CalWORKs orientations in Santa Cruz and Watsonville, providing consumer education about child care.

Age of Children	Jan-Mar '98	Apr-Jun '98	Jul-Sep '98	Totals
1-23 mos	62	49	67	178
2-5 yrs	80	75	105	260
School-age	51	60	105	216
Total	193	184	277	654

The Family Support Division of the District Attorney's Office now has staff stationed in the CalWORKs offices full-time to establish child support orders for single parents who are receiving CalWORKs aid. These staff are integrated into day-to-day operations from the point of application for aid. In addition, the Family Support Division has been active in planning employment services for unemployed or underemployed non-custodial parents of CalWORKs children. Job search workshops for this group will be conducted by the employment Development Department at the One-Stop

Career Center in Capitola. These services were recently funded through the Welfare-to-Work programs administered by JTPA.

Staff Development

CalWORKs staff (including Eligibility Workers, Employment Training Specialists, Social Workers, Analysts and Program Managers) have attended a variety of trainings designed to enhance their skills in providing new welfare-to-work services. The Staff Development Unit has provided training to all staff on CalWORKs regulatory changes and to childcare workers who will support CalWORKs participants with their child care needs, including interviewing skills, case documentation, and workplace skills.

As you know, CalWORKs requires that HRA provide services to assist participants in overcoming employment barriers, such as domestic violence, substance abuse and mental health issues. The following trainings have been conducted to meet this requirement:

- ◆ Women's Crisis Support, Defensa de Mujeres, and the Battered Women's Task Force conducted domestic violence issues training for CalWORKs staff.
- ◆ Janus Recovery Services provided training on substance abuse identification, treatment and relapse.
- ◆ UC Davis provided training on an overview of dual diagnosis (both mental health and substance abuse issues); intervention techniques for substance abusers and their families; and monitoring and evaluating client progress.
- ◆ The Child Development Resource Center provided training on Child Care in Santa Cruz County to assist CalWORKs and childcare staff in working with CalWORKs participants on their child care issues.
- ◆ The Santa Cruz Area Transportation Management Association and the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission/Commute Solutions trained all One-Stop Career Center and CalWORKs staff to act as Trip Planners for CalWORKs participants.
- ◆ Currently, eight new CalWORKs eligibility workers are completing their initial training, and will graduate by the end of October 1998 and begin full-time work in their new units. All of the new CalWORKs regulations and procedures have been incorporated into the initial training curriculum.

2. Welfare-to-Work Programs

Welfare-to-Work Pilot Program

The Welfare-to-Work Pilot integrated the services of GAIN (and then CalWORKs) with those of JTPA and Employment Development Department (EDD) to place welfare recipients who were long-term unemployed in jobs. One of seven such programs statewide, the Santa Cruz County pilot program was extremely successful. A total of 344 participants were enrolled, and 72.4% of those enrolled were placed in unsubsidized employment, with a wage at placement of \$6.70.

Packard Building Self-Sufficient Families Project

From April 1997 through June 1998, HRA operated the *Building Self-Sufficient Families* project with funding from the Packard Foundation. This project:

- ◆ Provided mobile job search services throughout the county
- ◆ Tripled the number of job search workshops

- ◆ Increased employer involvement in the Welfare-to-Work workshops, and
- ◆ Developed a program of Life Skills classes for CalWORKs participants.

Class topics included: money management, decision making, communication & teamwork, stress management, using personal strengths, networking, assertiveness, goal setting, and celebrating success. These classes continue to be offered in conjunction with the CalWORKs workshops in the One-Stop Career Centers. A total of 150 Life Skills sessions were offered.

Employment Readiness Demonstration Project (ERDP)

Goodwill Industries/Shoreline Occupational Services is collaborating with HRA and Monterey County to deliver services through the California Department of Social Services' Employment Readiness Demonstration Project (ERDP). Santa Cruz was one of seven counties selected to participate in ERDP, which will identify and provide specialized employment and training services to CalWORKs participants with multiple barriers to employment—the hardest to employ. Currently, the state is negotiating contracts with the participating counties and anticipates a January 1, 1999 start date for ERDP.

As the state contracted vendor, Goodwill will provide the following services:

- ◆ Work experience
- ◆ Supportive services
- ◆ Employment with supports
- ◆ Vocational skills training
- ◆ Unsubsidized employment with supports, and
- ◆ Post-employment services.

Welfare-to-Work 85% Formula Funds

In August 1998, HRA received \$872,717 in the form of an 85% formula grant to serve hard-to-employ CalWORKs recipients and non-custodial parents. The focus of these services will be on participants who have serious barriers to employment or job retention, including mental health and substance abuse issues, poor work histories, low basic skills, and limited English language abilities. In addition, employment services will be provided to non-custodial parents of children who are receiving CalWORKs benefits. Services will include:

- ◆ Supervised job search and motivational workshops
- ◆ Intensive case management
- ◆ Job placement services

These services will begin in January 1999, and will be closely coordinated with the 15% discretionary grant described below, which serves the same target population. The same range of services will be provided to the non-custodial parents of CalWORKs children at the One-Stop Center in Capitola.

Governor's Discretionary 15% Welfare-to-Work Funds

In addition to the formula grant, HRA has received a Governor's Discretionary 15% Welfare-to-Work grant of \$785,280 for a job retention services program to serve CalWORKs participants who find work. Services to be provided under this grant will include:

- ◆ Employee Assistance Program—CalWORKs participants who find work will be registered free of cost in an Employee Assistance Program, similar to that offered for County employees. This program will provide a 24-hour crisis jobkeeper hotline, and free sessions of personal counseling, tax services, legal

services, and emergency child care information.

- ◆ **Work-Related Emergency Payment Funds**—This component will provide emergency payments for work-related emergencies, such as housing, child care or transportation emergencies, when such payments are necessary for the participant to accept or retain work.
- ◆ **Substance Abuse Relapse Prevention Services**—CalWORKs participants who have substance abuse issues and who relapse after becoming employed will receive immediate relapse services.
- ◆ **Mental Health Relapse Prevention Services**—CalWORKs participants who have mental health issues and who relapse after becoming employed will receive immediate relapse services, including the services of a case manager and part-time psychiatrist
- ◆ **Immediate Non-Medical Substance Abuse Treatment Services**—CalWORKs parents who are working or seeking work will have immediate non-medical treatment services available to them so that they may continue working.
- ◆ **Connections Shuttle Services**—CalWORKs parents and their children will have access to a flexible countywide shuttle service for safe transportation to work and work-related activities, child care and recreation programs, and home.
- ◆ **Neighbors Helping Neighbors Campaign**—A major publicity campaign will be conducted to recruit local drivers to provide CalWORKs participants with rides to job search workshops, job interviews, work and work-related activities.
- ◆ **Subsidized Vanpool Program**—CalWORKs participants who

are interested in vanpooling will have organizational and financial assistance to start and fill vanpools as they find work.

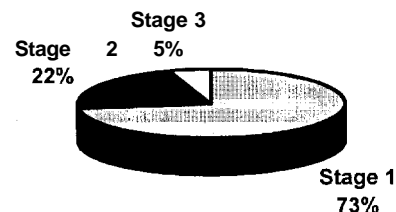
- ◆ **Employment Services for Non-Custodial Parents**—Employment services will be provided to non-custodial parents of CalWORKs children, including job search workshops, so that they may find and retain work, and contribute to the care of their children.
- ◆ **Job Creation/Paid Work Experience Positions**—Jobs will be created for CalWORKs participants as shuttle drivers, shuttle dispatcher/schedulers, and typist clerks.

3. Supportive Services

Child Care

From January through September 1998, 613 children were enrolled in Stages 1-3 of CalWORKs child care through the HRA Child Care Program. Stage 1 child care is for

**Children Enrolled in CalWORKs
Child Care**



parents entering welfare-to-work services, but who are not yet stable in work or work activities: 449 children were enrolled in Stage 1. Stage 2 is for parents who are working, but still on aid: 132 children were enrolled in Stage 2. Stage 3 is for families transitioning

off aid, but still receiving child care subsidies due to low income: 32 children were enrolled in Stage 3.

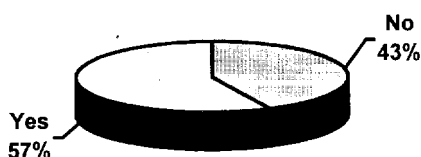
Thus far, families have not been exempted from CalWORKs participation for inability to find child care services in the county. There has been an increase in parents choosing to use care providers who are exempt from licensure. HRA is working closely with the Local Child Care Planning Council to increase the supply of licensed family day care homes and child care centers through encouraging development of new facilities in areas where they are needed.

Transportation

The Transportation Task Force of the Coalition for Workforce preparation focused its efforts on developing feasible alternatives to transport CalWORKs parents to work and their children to child care and recreational activities safely.

Although focus groups indicated that transportation is one of the top two barriers perceived by CalWORKs parents to entering

Car Ownership in CalWORKs Families



or reentering the labor market, second only to child care, it quickly became clear that more sophisticated data was needed to accurately plan transportation for welfare-to-work participants and their children. A comprehensive transportation survey was developed by HRA and the Santa Cruz Area

Transportation Management Association and administered in May 1998 to applicants for and recipients of CalWORKs, Food Stamps, General Assistance, and Medi-Cal. Results are being analyzed by the Transportation Task Force and used for planning purposes.

The task force emphasized development of alternative transportation resources which could be flexible and responsive to the needs of single parents who must work. The Transportation Commission, Santa Cruz Area Transportation Management Association, and Metropolitan Transit District collaborated to develop and present a training curriculum and resource notebook for Trip Planners—front-line staff who assist participants in workforce preparation programs to access and use public transportation effectively

The Transportation Task Force continues to implement transportation alternatives which will benefit CalWORKs families, including:

- ◆ The new Connections Shuttle program, to begin in 1999
- ◆ A vehicle repair program
- ◆ A free bike program
- ◆ Work experience in the transportation industry
- ◆ A subsidized vanpool program
- ◆ A publicity campaign to attract car-pool drivers to help transport CalWORKs families, and
- ◆ Other enhancements to the transportation services currently available.

Mental Health Services

The Mental Health Task Force included a number of service providers from the community, as identified in the CalWORKs Plan. That task force focused on two issues: capacity building, and job retention relapse prevention services. This task force recently

combined with the substance abuse task force (see below) to maximize efficiency in planning services for hard-to-employ CalWORKs participants with multiple barriers to employment. Employment-focused mental health services will be provided by Community Connection through an amendment to their County Mental Health contract. These services include:

- ◆ Employment support
- ◆ Individual counseling, and
- ◆ Support group sessions.

Substance Abuse Services

The Substance Abuse Task Force included the service providers from the community which were identified in the CalWORKs Plan. That task force focused on several issues, including how to provide services to parents without separating them from their children, capacity building, non-medical treatment services, culturally relevant services, and job retention relapse prevention services.

Domestic Violence Services

The Domestic Violence Task Force worked with the HRA Administrator and staff to develop appropriate training for case-managing staff, and to develop domestic violence protocols. In addition, members of the task force have been instrumental in determining state protocols for providing CalWORKs employment services to battered women without endangering them or their children.

CalWORKs Social Work Services

A key component in helping CalWORKs participants remove barriers to employment is the provision of mental health, substance abuse, and domestic violence services. Four CalWORKs social workers and a social work supervisor have been hired to assist eligibility

staff in making appropriate referrals for specialized services. The social workers connect CalWORKs participants to appropriate professional assessment of potential substance abuse, mental health and domestic violence issues. They provide case management to CalWORKs participants to ensure that these problems are resolved to the extent that the participant can obtain and retain employment.

4. Community Partnership Initiatives

Public Information Campaign

The Information Campaign Group formed prior to the start of CalWORKs implementation to inform HRA and community agency staff and welfare recipients about the new requirements and provisions of CalWORKs. The group, consisting of representatives of community welfare advocacy and service organizations and HRA staff, published monthly CalWORKs bulletins for six months, which were distributed to community programs that contract with the County, all CalWORKs aid recipients, and all HRA staff. Topics included:

- ◆ The new requirements of CalWORKs program for aid recipients
- ◆ Child care services to be provided under CalWORKs
- ◆ Frequently asked questions about CalWORKs
- ◆ Money management information
- ◆ New transportation services under CalWORKs
- ◆ Infant exemptions to welfare-to-work participation, and
- ◆ Earned Income Tax Credit information.

Additional bulletins are being developed as needed. In addition, group meetings function as a clearinghouse for new information, and for answering questions which are coming to community agencies from CalWORKs participants. This fall, the group is planning a campaign to inform CalWORKs participants about the Earned Income Tax Credits and other new services.

Non-Custodial Parents

The Welfare Reform Implementation Planning Group identified recovery of child support and employment services for non-custodial parents as an idea worth pursuing to increase family income during its planning sessions in March and April 1997. Those services have now been funded by the Welfare-to-Work 85% Formula Grant and the 15% Discretionary grant. Services will be coordinated with Family Support, the Family Court, and the Employment Development Department, and will include job search workshops, structured job search, income reporting, and child support payments.

Individual Development Accounts

The legislation which established the CalWORKs program allows aid recipients to save up to \$5,000 in special accounts called Individual Development Accounts (IDAs) for specific purposes: to start a business, to finance an education, or to purchase a home. Accounts may be in the name of a child or adult. Most IDA programs offer a matching amount for the dollars saved by the participant, typically 2:1, utilizing grant funds. Currently, the Santa Cruz Community Credit Union is involved in the development of an IDA program, and working closely with HRA to ensure that the program will meet the needs of CalWORKs families.

Cabrillo College Fast Track to Work

Cabrillo College became an active partner in welfare reform following the planning meetings in 1997, and formed its own Welfare Reform Planning Task Force. The Task Force worked with HRA to develop strategies to assist Cabrillo students in completing their education within the time frames and requirements of the new CalWORKs program. Out of this process arose the Fast Track to Work program, which provides supportive services such as child care and transportation, academic counseling, and curriculum modifications to serve the CalWORKs population. Curriculum development has focused on career paths which students can enter after 12- 18 months of instruction, in occupations where local job growth is projected, and which have the potential to generate self-sufficiency wages over time. The program will also serve others who wish to accelerate their vocational education and enter the labor market quickly.

Child Care Facilities Development

The Local Child Care Planning Council, a subgroup of the Children's Network, recently issued its Master Plan for the next five years, and is actively working to implement child care facilities development and develop public and private resources to enhance child care. HRA participates actively on the council, members of which have been a part of welfare reform planning since 1997.

Family Loan Program

Following a model developed in San Mateo County, the Community Foundation is working with HRA to develop a low-interest loan program for low-income families, to be implemented in 1999.

Medi-Cal and Healthy Families Outreach

The state enacted the Healthy Families managed health care program to serve the children on poor working parents. Recently, the Human Resources Agency received a grant from the Packard Foundation for Medi-Cal and Healthy Families outreach, which will assist low-income families in securing medical and dental services.

Non-Traditional Careers Program

In coordination with HRA and local trade union apprenticeship programs, the Community Action Board (CAB) has developed a program design for a non-traditional careers program. CAB has submitted grant proposals to the Department of Labor and the Packard Foundation and is awaiting word regarding funding of this project.

Community Service

Although the CalWORKs legislation mandates work in exchange for a benefits check after the participants has engaged in 18-24 months of job search and is not yet employed, no CalWORKs participants have reached this point yet. However, HRA is researching the legal issues and alternative models for such program in preparation for implementing the community service component.

Citizenship Expansion Task Force

Federal welfare reform effected legal immigrants to California who would otherwise have been eligible for Food Stamps, Medicare and other federal benefits due to their low income or disability. The Citizenship Expansion Task Force worked with immigrants to assist them in completing their citizenship applications. Additional

services included disability waivers for elderly and disabled residents, legal assistance, naturalization workshops, public benefits counseling and other services designed to assist legal immigrants. From January-December 1997, citizenship-related services were provided to 1,262. Santa Cruz County residents. From January-June 1998, citizenship services were provided to an additional 631 Santa Cruz county residents, for a total of 1,893 immigrants served. Naturalization applications were filed for 580 people in 1997. Services focused on immigrants who were legal residents prior to enactment of federal welfare. These services are provided at no cost to the County by a collaborative of community groups through grants from the Soros and Packard Foundations and the Emma Lazarus Fund to the Greater Santa Cruz County Community Foundation.

5. Other Program Changes

Child Care Eligibility

The CalWORKs legislation mandated the provision of child care services for CalWORKs children through age 10, but at the same time made provision of services to children aged 11 or 12 optional. Recently approved legislation extends the eligibility for CalWORKs child care through age 12, which is consistent with other child development programs run by the California Department of Education.

Supplemental Security Income Program for Legal Immigrants

The state in its 1997/98 legislative session established a state-run Social Security Income (SSI) program for disabled/elderly legal immigrants who cannot be served by existing federal SSI services.

6. HRA Reorganization

Integration of Services

Currently, the HRA CalWORKs staff are working closely with the CareerWorks/JTPA and Child Care staff to develop integrated services for CalWORKs participants. In the process, HRA is reorganizing its division structure to more easily administer an integrated program. The result will be the formation of an Employment Services Division including all CalWORKs, JTPA and Child Care staff. It is anticipated that better service to the public through the One-Stop Career Centers will result.