

## 31. CalWORKs Social Work Services

---

### 31.1 Program Overview

In 1996 during welfare reform, domestic violence protocols were established to ensure CalWORKs recipients who were victims of domestic violence receive advocacy and access to supportive services. In 1999 the CalWORKs Social Work Unit was established to meet the needs of this population, which includes a Domestic Violence (DV) Advocate from Next Door Solutions to Domestic Violence who is co-located with the Social Workers. With the implementation of Family Services, the CalWORKs Social Workers and DV Advocate are now part of the Family Services Unit providing a multi-disciplinary approach to barrier removal services to help foster self-sufficiency. [\[Refer to “Family Services Program,” page 11-1\].](#)

---

### 31.2 Confidentiality and Privacy

Client information can be shared with other county employees and community partners as it relates to client participation in WTW activities. The CalWORKs Social Worker reserves the right to withhold any information that could place client at risk of personal safety. There are two exceptions to release of information; when there is written consent signed by client, and when required by law.

#### 31.2.1 SCD 103

The form “Acknowledgment of Limited Sharing of Information for the Administration of the Cash Aid Program” (SCD 103) is signed by all participants when they first apply for CalWORKs.

#### 31.2.2 SCD 1029

Social Workers also have clients sign an additional release form, “Release Authorization” (SCD 1029) authorizing the social worker to release specific information about their case or requesting another community partner to provide specific information about their case to the CalWORKs Social Worker.

#### 31.2.3 Documents

In addition, a confidential folder within the Integrated Document Management (IDM) system is created for the sole use of the Social Work Unit Caseload (CWSW) for saving confidential case documents. The unit’s IDM folder can only be accessed by the social worker user profile and it cannot be accessed by anyone else within the Social Services Agency.

---

---

## 31.3 Overview of Services

CalWORKs Social Workers provide a variety of multilingual and culturally appropriate services to families who are experiencing personal problems.

Social workers screen and provide social assessments to help clients develop a plan of action that will help provide family stabilization through barrier removal services; provide supportive counseling, and crisis intervention; serve as client advocates & provide outreach, in their homes, when indicated; monitor clients progress and any new developments in their lives; coordinate client services; help families navigate the CalWORKs system; and identify other service needs including linking client to other community resources.

Areas that social workers address include, but are not limited to:

- Crises Intervention
- Client Advocacy
- Domestic Violence
- School Support
- Mental Health
- Physical Disabilities
- Grief and Loss
- Substance Abuse
- Immigration
- Child Maltreatment
- Connect to Legal Resources
- Supplemental Social Security Income (SSI)
- Parenting
- Basic Needs

### 31.3.1 Ancillary Services Authorization

Social Workers can recommend authorization for ancillary payments to assist families with services related to behavioral health and domestic abuse services. [\[Refer to “Ancillary Expenses,” page 28-1\]](#) for additional information.

---

## 31.4 Referrals to CalWORKs Social Work Services

Referrals to CalWORKs Social Workers for social work services, which includes Domestic Violence services, are initiated by SSA staff via the CalWIN Referral Subsystem. [Refer to CalWIN Announcement 85.](#)

Case assignments are based on the following criterion:

- Number of daily case assignments
- CalWORKs Social Worker's district office location nearest to the client
- Client's language needs
- Special interest and/or skill of the social worker
- Special request made by the client, such as gender preference

---

## 31.5 Referral Outcomes

The Social Worker is to document in Case Comments listing efforts made to engage client for services. At a minimum, client needs to have two appointment letters sent.

The Social Worker is to inform the referral party of the referral outcome.

---

## 31.6 Domestic Violence (Domestic Abuse)

The DV Advocate from Next Door Solutions to Domestic Violence works exclusively with victims of domestic violence by assisting client move from a path of crises to stability. As needed, CalWORKs Social Workers provide support when the DV Advocate is not available. Services include:

- Accompanying client to court
- Assisting client navigate the legal system and makes referrals
- Serving as client interpreter
- Conducting DV assessments
- Crises intervention
- Case management
- Linking client to DV community services
- Providing DV trainings and presentations

When the client discloses present or past domestic violence that interferes with day to day activities, the Eligibility Worker (EW) or Employment Counselor (EC) makes a CalWORKs Social Work services referral. Client may be eligible for a Welfare-to-Work (WTW) Domestic Abuse exemption or Domestic Abuse Extender.

### 31.6.1 Domestic Abuse Exemption

Only the Domestic Violence Advocate and CalWORKs Social Workers are authorized to provide Domestic Abuse (DA) exemptions to a domestic survivors clients. A client who discloses to a CalWORKs Social Worker or DV Advocate that he/she is a domestic violence survivor may be exempted from WTW participation from one month to up to three months at a time. Some exceptions apply.

[Refer to “Domestic Abuse,” page 30-1] for additional information on exemptions and extenders

### 31.6.2 Domestic Abuse Extender

When the client has reached the end of his or her 48-Month Time on Aid (TOA), and the CalWORKs individual discloses that domestic violence experiences significantly impair ability to work, the DV Advocate or CalWORKs Social Worker can provide a Domestic Abuse Extender on a case by case basis in consultation with the unit supervisor.

[Refer to “Domestic Abuse,” page 30-1] for additional information on extenders and exemptions.

---

## 31.7 Working with Offenders

The courts may order a DV offender to participate in a certified batterers intervention program. WTW participants may also be identified as the offender or batterer. CalWORKs Social Workers can authorize ancillary payments for batterer services, but the funding is limited.

The CalWORKs Social Worker provides case management of DV cases as follows:

- Cross check both the CalWIN system and Case Assignment Listing (Excel spreadsheet) to see if the offender is connected to the victim, or has a past or present CWSW and CWES history.
- The offender and the victim are assigned different social worker, due to conflict of interest, safety issues, confidentiality, and clinical treatment concerns.
- When working with the DV victim/survivor, complete the “CalWORKs Social Work General Screening & Assessment” (SCD 2518). Document the perpetrator’s name and other identifying information, and include description and a photograph, if available. Ask the victim if the offender is known to CalWORKs.

- A needs & safety assessment and development of a service plan is required on all cases; the safety assessment should include some measure of lethality, a copy of any legal documents such as court orders (criminal, family, juvenile, & dependency) & restraining order.
- Coordinate with separate service providers and site locations of the offender from the victim(s) CWES site, treatment services locations, and during interview sites.
- Document the perpetrator's professional providers/contacts.
- Collaborate with the victim's social worker and other professionals involved in the case.
- Inform unit supervisor of any issues or concerns.
- Keep detailed case notes, include safety concerns and safety measures taken.
- Become familiar with Workplace Violence Prevention: Guide for Employees.

### **31.7.1 Financial Assistance for Certified Batters Program**

The CalWORKs Social Worker must assess the need and use the "Ancillary Expenses Estimate, Request and Verification" (SCD 1584) to pre-authorize payment (not to exceed 20% of the class cost) for a court ordered certified batterer's program. To be eligible, the client must be an active CWES participant. [Refer to "Batters Program," page 30-25] for additional information.

### **31.7.2 Confidentiality**

At no time should the worker share information with the offender about the victim's case.

### **31.7.3 Working with Children Exposed to DV**

The child(ren)'s safety is pivotal to child well-being. Child welfare authorities should be consulted as a precaution. The County Counsel's Guidelines for Mandated Reporters and Department of Family and Children Services procedural Handbook 23: Domestic Violence should also be reviewed.

---

## **31.8 School Support**

Social Worker's goal is to assist the client and child to navigate the educational system. The Social Worker may accompany client to the child(ren)'s individualized Education Program (IEP) meeting to provide support and advocacy.

---

## 31.9 Mental Health & Substance Abuse

When a client has an issue with substance abuse and/or mental health, along with other needs, CalWORKs Social Workers provide assistance.

When services needed are related to only mental health & substance abuse, services are provided by the Community Health Alliance Team (CHAT). Direct referrals are provided by SSA Staff via the "CalWORKs Community Health Alliance Support Referral" (SCD 1686) form.

The client must give consent for treatment. [\[Refer to "Health Alliance," page 41-1\]](#) for additional information.

---

## 31.10 CalWORKs SSI Advocacy

Clients who are receiving cash aid but are exempt from participation due to long term medical disability are referred to a Social Worker for further assessment of their qualifications for Supplemental Security Income/State Supplemental Income (SSI/SSP) and assistance with the processing of their application at the Social Security Administration, including application assistance for children. [\[Refer to "CalWORKs SSI Advocacy," page 7-1\]](#) for additional information.

---

## 31.11 Home Visits

Home visits are an integral component of Social Workers to help identify barriers and services needed. This includes assessing living circumstances; observing level of client functioning; and other support to help client in becoming self-sufficient.

CalWORKs Social Workers use their professional judgment in determining when to make a home visit.

Home visits support client engagement, as for example, clients who are in non-compliance or in WTW Sanctioned status. Home visits are provided as needed per situation.

When there are unsafe conditions in the home, the Social Worker may arrange to visit the client at a location, other than the client's home. These are mainly victims of domestic violence.

Staff is always expected to discuss concerns or risk with the unit supervisor prior to the visit.

---

## 31.12 Other Services

This group of clients may be categorized as case consultation services, including, but not limited to undocumented clients, or for special projects such as outreach services for Welfare-to-Work sanctioned or timed out from CalWORKs 48-month Time on Aid (TOA).

---

## 31.13 Presentations and Trainings

CalWORKs Social Workers conduct presentations at CWES Orientations, staff meetings, bureau meetings, new EC Induction trainings, CalWORKs 101, and upon request at community partners.

Twice a year, the CalWORKs Social Workers, highlight their work through special presentations and trainings to the CWES staff. Most notably in March, in recognition of Professional Social Work Month; and during October, which is National Domestic Violence Awareness Month.

The Social Worker coordinates and organizes various events and creates displays throughout CWES district offices to highlight current social issues and services provided by the social work profession.

---

## 31.14 Social Worker Contacts

Upon receipt of referral, the CalWORKs Social Worker:

- Contact client within (3) working days, unless the referring note, or case type warrants immediate intervention.
- Gathers additional information by reviewing CalWIN, IDM documents, and contacts with the referring worker.
- Screens client and assesses needs by completing the SCD 2518.
- After the screening and assessment, develops with the client an “CalWORKs Social Work Action Plan” (SCD 2517) that addresses needs and barriers.
- Builds client relationship, ensures clients engagement, and identifies any new developments that might impact case.
- Enters CalWIN case comments, including case outcomes, and reason for case termination.
- Enters detailed case notes and sensitive case information into the Social Worker IDM folder.

- Completes additional forms as necessary.

---

## 31.15 Ongoing Case Management

The Social Worker makes monthly contacts with client as long as the case is open and active. The Social Worker continues to monitor client developments, and provides services and referrals to the client as needed.

### 31.15.1 Case Closure

Documentation of case outcomes should be timely. The Social Worker terminates case activity when:

- Client's barriers have been addressed and no further social work services are required
- Client requests termination, or
- The Social Worker is unable to contact client after two appointment attempts



**Note:**

Cases should close within 30 days when there has been no client contact.

---

## 31.16 Forms

The following forms are used by the CalWORKs Social Worker

- "Importance Notice About Domestic Abuse" (SCD 830)
- "CalWORKs Social Work General Screening & Assessment" (SCD 2518)
- "CalWORKs Social Work Action Plan" (SCD 2517)
- "CalWORKs Domestic Abuse (DA) Service Plan" (SCD 1555)
- "CalWORKs Domestic Abuse Participation Status" (SCD 1554)
- "Sworn Statement" (SCD 101)
- "Sworn Statement Continuation" (SCD 101A)



- “Release Authorization” (SCD 1029)
- “CalWORKs Community Health Alliance Support Services Referral” (SCD 1686)
- “Appointment notice” (SCD 50)

