

34. Special Needs [EAS 44-211]

34.1 Overview

A special need is a need which is not common to the majority of recipients for certain goods/services and which is necessary for their support. These special needs can be recurring or nonrecurring. The EW is responsible for exploring with each applicant/recipient, any special needs which may be required.

As part of the application or redetermination (RD) process, the EW must carefully review the questions on the appropriate statement of facts which deal specifically with any special needs which the recipient may require. In addition to the application/RD process, the EW should always be alert to situations or changes which might indicate the possibility of a special need. The applicant/recipient should be given a clear explanation of the types of special needs and the procedures for securing payment for these needs. If the client does not provide the required verification, the request for any special need must be denied.

34.1.1 Verification

Before the payment of a special need can be made, verification is required to establish:

- That the appropriate conditions under which the need may be allowed, are met.
- The total cost of the need and payment plan.
- What proportion of the cost should be borne by the recipient, if the need is shared by others in the household.
- The period of time the special need will continue.

In addition to medical verification where applicable, clients must provide receipts indicating the amount paid or owed for a particular expense (e.g., utility bill indicating a spike in use, estimates for any repairs, labor and material, etc.). If the client is unable to obtain proof, the client must be provided examples of the different types of proof that are acceptable and/or assist with obtaining it.

If a release is needed, there are different release of information forms required for different types of information, including but not limited to the following:

- CW 60-Release of Information-Financial Institution
- CW 61-Authorization to Release Medical Information
- CW 2200-last page of the Authorization for Release of Information

If, after all attempts have been made and the county has determined that the client has made a good faith effort to obtain the evidence but was still unsuccessful, a Sworn Statement (SCD 101), shall be considered adequate to verify the existence of a special need, with the exception of a Pregnancy Special Need. The SCD 101 must include all the information required to establish the special need in order to be considered adequate.

34.1.2 Reporting

Mid-period report of a special needs request is treated as voluntary. A CalWORKs recipient may report having a special need at any time during the payment period. Recurring special needs that have been requested mid-period and have been verified and approved, will begin the first of the month in which either the need was reported or the verification substantiates that the need exists, whichever is later, and shall remain in effect until the end of the SAR or AR/CO Payment Period in which the special need is expected to end, with the exception of the Pregnancy Special Need ([Refer to Chapter 35](#)).

Actual costs must be verified at the processing of the SAR 7 or at annual redetermination for SAR and AR/CO AUs. This information provided together with the submitted evidence must be sufficient for the county to determine eligibility and/or grant amounts. If the special need is time-limited, the special need payment will be allowed to continue until the end of the payment period in which the need expires.

34.2 Recurring Special Needs [EAS 44-211.2]

34.2.1 Types

Recurring special needs include:

- Therapeutic Diets
- Special Laundry Costs
- Special Chore Services
- Excessive Use of Utilities
- Special Transportation Needs
- Special Telephone Service or Equipment
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A recurring special need results in added costs to the family which they are expected to incur during two or more months in a calendar year.

34.2.2 Allowance

The allowance for a recurring special need cannot exceed the actual increase in costs to the family as a result of the special need. Actual costs in excess of the allowable are to be verified on the "Eligibility Status Report" (SAR 7). If, however, the special need allowance guidelines are utilized, the EW may

authorize payment at the rates indicated, without verification of actual cost. Special needs must be reverified at least once a year. This may be required more often, depending upon the type of need and the potential for change.

The total allowance which is available for each AU per month for all recurring special needs cannot exceed the amount resulting from multiplying \$10 by the number of persons in the AU. If a recipient within a CalWORKs AU of three applies for a recurring special need allowance, they will only be eligible for a maximum of thirty dollars (\$30) per month. An AU of One will only be eligible for a maximum of the dollars (\$10) per month.



Note:

The total allowance rule does not apply to the Pregnancy Special Needs. It is specific to the recurring special needs listed in this chapter.

Persons who are not aided because they are excluded from the AU are not eligible for a recurring special need allowance, nor is an individual with a penalty that requires that their needs not be considered in the Maximum Aid Payment (MAP) determination. Individuals subject to a child support penalty may be eligible for a special needs payment as their needs continue to be considered in the MAP determination.

34.2.3 Therapeutic Diets

When recommended by a physician, a special need may be allowed for a therapeutic diet. The allowance for a therapeutic diet is not limited to those listed below. However, the final determination of the need should be based upon consultation with the EW Supervisor and/or the District Office Manager.

A recipient is entitled to establish actual expenses related to the diet plan if it is to his/her benefit to do so. However, if the recommended diet plan includes one or a combination of the following diets, the EW may pay the amount indicated for the highest cost diet without verification of actual costs.

34.2.4 Procedure

The EW must take the following steps when it is discovered that the applicant/recipient may be eligible for a special need based upon the need for a therapeutic diet:

STEP	ACTION
1.	Print out the "Special Diet Request" form (CSF 25) from CalWIN.
2.	Give the form to the client.
3.	Document the statement of facts or on the "Maintain Case Comments" window that the CSF 25 was given, for whom, etc.
4.	Authorize payment of the special need when the CSF 25 has been completed by the physician and returned.

STEP	ACTION
5.	Follow-up at the appropriate time.



Example:

A recipient indicates at RV that she is diabetic and her doctor has recommended that she go on a special diet. The EW generates a CSF 25 from the **Client Correspondence** subsystem, giving the form to the recipient to take to her doctor. When completed by her physician, the client brings the CSF 25 back to her EW, who authorizes a special need payment. The physician has indicated that this diet is needed for a period of 5 months. The EW must follow up at the end of the SAR or AR/CO Payment Period in which the special need is expected to end, so that a timely and adequate NOA can be issued.

34.2.5 Therapeutic Diet Amounts

If the client is determined eligible for a therapeutic diet and wishes to use the standard, the EW allows:

- \$15 for:
 - Diabetic, 2200 calories or more.
 - High Calorie - High Protein (including special formula for infant).
 - Lactation (while breast-feeding).
- \$9 for:
 - Diabetic, under 2200 calories.
 - Bland.
 - Low Fat - Cholesterol.
 - Low Salt (sodium, under three grams).

34.2.6 Special Laundry Costs

When a recipient is required to change and clean bedding or clothing more often than usual because of a medical condition, these additional laundry costs may be allowed. Without verification of actual costs, the EW may authorize \$3.00 per month. To substantiate this payment, a statement from a medical doctor, verifying the medical condition must be on file.

34.2.7 Special Chore Services

When it is verified that the family caretaker is unable to perform household chores such as cooking, cleaning, ironing, etc. for members of the AU, due to health reasons, and these chores cannot be done by other household members, it is possible to allow the actual cost of employing someone to perform these chores.

34.2.8 Excessive Utility Usage

When it is verified by the EW that a recipient has excessive use of utilities due to a reason not common to the majority of our recipients, the actual cost of this excessive use may be allowed. The use must be essential for their health. Their actual cost must be in excess of the in-kind utility values for that size AU. Without verification of actual cost by the recipient, only allow \$5.00 per month. To substantiate this cost, the county must have on file a statement from a medical doctor, verifying the medical condition that would necessitate this excessive use of utilities.

34.2.9 Special Transportation Needs

When a recipient must travel daily or an unusual distance to receive required medical treatments, the actual cost of special transportation can be allowed. This cost should not exceed the actual cost of the least expensive method of transportation. The EW must take into consideration:

- What transportation is reasonably available to the recipient?
- Is it reasonable to expect the recipient to take the bus, or does she need to drive her car?
- The practicality and availability of transportation must be considered.
- The recipient's health.

The EW must document the computation on the statement of facts, the SAR 7 or the Maintain Case Comments screen. This must include:

- What method of transportation is being used,
- How many days the transportation is needed per month,
- The number of miles traveled, and
- To what doctor, clinic, etc.

If the recipient uses their own car, a rate of \$0.12 per mile can be allowed.

34.2.10 Special Telephone Service or Equipment

When the recipient incurs a cost of special telephone service or equipment such as the cost of an amplifying device when a member of the household has an auditory impairment.

34.2.11 CalWIN Entries for Recurring Special Needs

Recurring special needs are entered in the **Display Case Special Need Payment/Request Summary** window in CalWIN. Here is an example of entries for a Therapeutic Diet (Diabetic 2200 calories or more):



Note:

The recurring special needs will be issued along with the grant.

34.3 Nonrecurring Special Needs [EAS 44-211.3]

34.3.1 General

A payment for a nonrecurring special need shall be granted to an eligible AU when either of the following conditions exists:

- There is a household emergency resulting from sudden and unusual circumstances beyond the AU's control.

- Homelessness when the AU is seeking permanent housing. [Refer to “Financial Eligibility,” page 33-1] and [Refer to “Homeless Assistance,” page 36-1] for information about the Homeless Assistance program.]

34.3.2 Resource Rule

An AU is ineligible to receive a nonrecurring special need payment if it has over \$100 in nonexempt liquid resources. The EW must evaluate nonexempt liquid resources when an AU requests a nonrecurring special need payment.

Liquid resources of \$100 or less shall not be considered for purposes of computing the nonrecurring special need payment.

34.3.3 Liquid Resources

Liquid resources, as referred to in this section, include those resources which are, or can be made, IMMEDIATELY available. This includes cash, negotiable stocks or bonds, bank accounts, etc.

The following are NOT considered liquid resources:

- Cash surrender value of insurance policies.
- Mortgages or trust deeds.
- Household furnishings and personal effects.
- Automobiles.
- Real property.
- Tools of trade, equipment, or materials necessary to implement and continue an approved employment plan.



Reminder:

We cannot count the same monies as both income and a resource in the same month. Income in one month becomes property in the following months, if any of the funds remain.

34.3.4 Emergencies Resulting from Sudden and Unusual Circumstances

An AU is entitled to receive a nonrecurring special need payment to repair or replace clothing or household equipment; to provide assistance for damages to the home; OR to pay for interim shelter when the AU's home was destroyed or made uninhabitable or inaccessible.

- The loss or damage must have been caused by sudden and unusual circumstances beyond the AU's control.
- The payment is issued by Fiscal.

- The EW determines if the payment is to be made and the amount paid for repair or replacement. This includes the provision of donated or used serviceable items. Possible questions you may want to ask the client:
 - Have you checked all the wiring? Is it plugged in? Are the fuses working?
 - Is there a family member, relative or friend who can repair or provide the item?

The total amount allowed for the payment for household emergencies can not exceed \$600 for each incident resulting from the circumstances described above.

- The amount of the payment for each item to be repaired or replaced or to assist with damage to the home is the actual cost, including sales tax, up to a total maximum not to exceed \$600.
- Payments are made to repair or replace clothing, household items or damage to the home belonging to and occupied by the AU. Payment cannot be made to repair or replace clothing or household items or the home which does not belong to a member of the AU, i.e., furniture in a furnished apartment.

34.3.5 Damage to the AU's Home

Within the \$600 limit, payment may be made for the costs of essential repair or replacement resulting from damage to the home owned and occupied by a member of the AU.

The payment is allowed for the following costs:

- Moving and/or storage costs necessitated by the damage to the home.
- Labor and material costs for repair of the home in which the AU lives and which a member of the AU owns.

34.3.6 Clothing and Household Equipment

Within the \$600 limit, a payment may be made for clothing and household equipment.

A payment made to replace clothing may not exceed \$25 for each member of the AU. The cost of clothing does not need to be verified.

Items of household equipment which may be repaired or replaced include, but are not limited to the following (these require cost estimates):

- Bedding, dishes, kitchen utensils—\$12 for each person in the AU.
- Cook stove—\$142
- Refrigerator—\$190
- Space heater—\$73

- Double bed including mattress—\$143
- Other essential furniture—\$50



Example:

STAGE	WHO	ACTION																					
1.	Client	Calls the EW to report there has been a fire in the home causing damage to the kitchen and bedrooms. This is a family of three. Items needing replacement are the stove, refrigerator, bedding and clothing, dishes, kitchen utensils and 2 beds.																					
2.	EW	Notifies the client of: The allowable cost for replacement of items. The necessity of obtaining the cost estimate for replacement, not including clothing. Verification of the incident, i.e., fire, police or insurance reports.																					
3.	Client	Client obtains estimates for needed items and provides to the EW.																					
4.	EW	Calculates the total for needed items: <table style="margin-left: 20px;"> <tr><td>\$142</td><td>–</td><td>stove</td></tr> <tr><td>190</td><td>–</td><td>refrigerator</td></tr> <tr><td>286</td><td>–</td><td>2 beds (2 x \$143)</td></tr> <tr><td>75</td><td>–</td><td>clothing (3 x \$25)</td></tr> <tr><td>36</td><td>–</td><td>bedding, dishes and kitchen utensils (3 x \$12)</td></tr> <tr><td><u> </u></td><td></td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>\$729</td><td></td><td></td></tr> </table> Explains to the client that although the total amount is \$729, the maximum amount that we can reimburse is \$600.	\$142	–	stove	190	–	refrigerator	286	–	2 beds (2 x \$143)	75	–	clothing (3 x \$25)	36	–	bedding, dishes and kitchen utensils (3 x \$12)	<u> </u>			\$729		
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<u> </u>																							
\$729																							
5.	EW	[Refer to “Processing the SCD 414,” page 34-10] to process the SC 414.]																					
6.	Fiscal	Processes the SCD 414 and issues the check.																					

34.3.7 Multiple Payments

The EW may elect to pay the nonrecurring special need allowance in multiple payments over a period not to exceed 3 months. Payments spread over 3 months are not considered to be recurring.

34.3.8 Interim Shelter

An AU may receive a nonrecurring special need payment for the costs of interim shelter when the AU's home has been destroyed, made uninhabitable or inaccessible.

An AU is NOT eligible to receive a nonrecurring special need payment for the costs of interim shelter if that AU is eligible to receive the payment through the Homeless Assistance program. [\[Refer to “Financial Eligibility,” page 33-1\]](#) and [\[Refer to “Homeless Assistance,” page 36-1\]](#).

**Note:**

If an AU has received Homeless Assistance and the AU's home is subsequently destroyed, made uninhabitable or inaccessible, the AU may qualify for interim shelter assistance. However, both interim shelter and Homeless Assistance cannot be paid for the same incidence of homelessness.

**Example:**

An AU was homeless. The AU moved into an apartment upon receipt of permanent housing on 2/10/95, after receiving seven days of temporary shelter. The AU cannot also be given an interim shelter payment for this incidence of homelessness. On 5/21/95, the apartment was destroyed by an earthquake. The AU would be eligible for interim shelter because this is a different incident of homelessness and there is no eligibility for Homeless Assistance.

34.3.9 Processing the SCD 414

The "Special Need Requisition" (SCD 414) shall be processed by the EW as follows:

STEP	ACTION
1.	Verify CalWORKs eligibility for the caretaker.
2.	Request the nonrecurring special need items on the SCD 414, completing all necessary information (i.e., name, address, case number, etc.).
3.	Enter the amount of available liquid assets. Must be \$100 or less to be eligible.
4.	Sign your name on the EW Signature line.
5.	Obtain the approval signature of the Eligibility Work Supervisor.
6.	Scan the SCD 414 and all related documentation into IDM - "Permanent".

34.3.10 CalWIN Entries for Non-Recurring Special Needs

Non-recurring special needs are entered in the **Display Case Special Need Payment/Request Summary** window in CalWIN. Here is an example of entries for the replacement of a stove that was destroyed in a fire:

Collect Case Special Need Payment/Request Details

[View History](#) | [View Deleted](#) | [Search Comments](#) | [Maintain Comments](#) | [Case Overview](#) | [Run EDBC](#) |

[Save](#) | [Switch](#) | [Reset](#) | [Add](#) | [Detail](#) | [Delete](#) | [Print](#) | [Close](#)

* Effective Begin Date: 11/25/2020 [🔗](#) Effective End Date: 11/25/2020 [🔗](#)
 * Individual Name: Special, Diet | 42 | 657-98-2020 [🔗](#) * Request Date: 11/25/2020 [🔗](#)
 * Type: Repair/Replace Cook Stove [🔗](#) * End Date: 11/25/2020 [🔗](#)

Reason: Destroyed in Fire [🔗](#) Verification: Received [🔗](#)
 * Source: Other Conclusive Verification [🔗](#)

Expense Details

Recurring * Amount Requested: \$142.00 Verification: Received [🔗](#)
 Non-Recurring Amount Authorized: \$142.00 * Source: Other Conclusive Verification [🔗](#)

Provider Name:

Miles for Transportation:



Note:

These non-recurring special needs will be issued as a “Warrant” and mailed to the client. In the **Authorize Special Payment** window, select “Warrant” as *Issuance Type* and “Regular Mail” in the *Issuance Method* field.

