

47. Health Alliance

The CalWORKs Community Health Alliance is a partnership between Santa Clara County Social Services Agency, Santa Clara Valley Health and Hospital Systems' Department of Alcohol and Drug Services (DADS), Department of Mental Health, and the Indian Health Center. The purpose of this partnership is to provide comprehensive behavioral health services for CalWORKs clients and their family members.

The Health Alliance uses a behavioral health model that focuses on the health of the whole person to provide services that enhance and support self-sufficiency.

Behavioral health services are holistic and address a person's:

- Emotional well-being,
- Substance abuse issues,
- Relationship issues,
- Mental health issues,
- Family stress,
- Psycho/social functioning.

These issues can have a serious impact on a client's ability to gain and/or maintain employment. The goal of the Health Alliance is to provide services that will support the client to return to work.

47.1 Services

Services provided by the Health Alliance include:

- Outpatient substance abuse treatment services,
- Outpatient mental health treatment services,
- Transitional housing services,
- Residential treatment services for women with children,
- Specialized services for American Indians, and
- Psychiatric services.

47.1.1 Outpatient Substance Abuse Treatment Services

Outpatient behavioral health services are provided through the Community Health Alliance providers. Services include the following:

- Assessment
- Individual therapy
- Group counseling

- Family/couples counseling
- Psychoeducational and support groups
- Case management, advocacy, and linkage
- Integrated services for health issues including Eastern medicine models.

Services vary from short-term to intensive treatment and are tailored to the individual client's needs. All services are designed to support the client in returning to work.

Health Alliance staff also conduct co-located services to introduce Health Alliance services to clients and meet with clients in one-on-one interventions to explain behavioral health services in more detail. Health Alliance staff conduct outreach presentations during the CalWORKs Employment Services (CWES) orientation and also are available at some of the Employment Connections Centers, Adult Education Centers, Community Colleges, and community based partners.

47.1.2 Outpatient Mental Health Treatment Services

Longer-term, intensive outpatient mental health and case management services are provided through the county's CalWORKs Mental Health Service Team (MHST). Services are targeted for adults and children with intensive, long-term mental health issues such as depression, schizophrenia, anxiety disorders, and post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Services are family focused and include psychiatric evaluations; medication monitoring; and individual, family, and group counseling.

Appropriate client referrals are CalWORKs adults or children who have serious mental health issues or who may have a dual diagnosis (i.e., have mental health and drug and alcohol issues), and who are in need of more intensive, ongoing mental health services.

47.1.3 Transitional Housing Services

Transitional Housing Units (THU) are provided by Asian Americans for Community Involvement (AACI) for Asian CalWORKs women and their children who are homeless or in need of a safe place to live while attending CalWORKs outpatient behavioral health services.

No treatment is provided at the THU, clients are required to be in CalWORKs outpatient treatment while they are staying at the THU.

47.1.4 Residential Treatment Services

24-hour residential substance abuse and mental health treatment is available for women and their children through ARH's House on the Hill program. Up to two children under the age of five can stay in the residence with the mother.

47.1.5 Specialized Treatment Services for American Indians

A range of brief and intensive services are provided for American Indian CalWORKs clients by the Indian Health Center. The Indian Health Center provides culturally appropriate, holistic mental and physical health services to these CalWORKs clients. Services include individual counseling, culturally appropriate substance abuse treatment, access to cultural programs, and access to specialized substance abuse residential treatment programs for American Indians.

47.1.6 Psychiatric Services

Psychiatric evaluations and ongoing medication monitoring is provided for clients who need these services.

47.2 Health Alliance Services Program Eligibility

47.2.1 Eligible Clients

The following CalWORKs clients can access Health Alliance services:

- CalWORKs adults who are participating in the Welfare-to-Work (WTW) Program through CWES and their children,
- CalWORKs adults who are exempt from CWES and their children,
- Employed post-aid CalWORKs clients up to 12 months,
- CalWORKs adults who are under a Domestic Abuse exemption,
- CalWORKs children whose parents are sanctioned but who are in the process of curing the sanction,
- CalWORKs adults whose child(ren) has been removed from the home and have a reunification plan in place, and
- A client who is in need of a second Mental Health evaluation and who is NOT currently seeing a psychiatrist, may be referred to the Health Alliance for services. Clients will need to engage in counseling services as part of the mental health evaluation referral. [\[Refer to “Referral Procedures,” page 5-12\]](#)

Health Alliance services may continue for a client who is currently receiving Health Alliance services when a client meets any of the following criteria:

- Becomes pregnant and receives the pregnancy exemption,
- Is exempt due to care of a child under the age of 6 months,
- Receives an exemption of three (3) months for a subsequent child,
- Is a CWES adult who is receiving mental health services, or meets a disability criteria, or is applying for SSI benefits.

**Note:**

A client who becomes exempt but is not already receiving Health Alliance services should NOT be referred unless they meet one of the criteria of an eligible client as stated above.

47.2.2 Ineligible Clients

The following CalWORKs clients are NOT eligible for Health Alliance services:

- Clients who are only receiving Food Stamps and/or Medi-Cal (except parents who have a Family Reunification plan),
- Parents who are not on aid or in employment services, even if their children are on aid (i.e. sanctioned parents, parents who are on SSI and ineligible non-citizens),
- Non-employed individuals discontinued from cash aid including adults who have timed out of CalWORKs, and
- Clients who are seeing a psychiatrist (not a Health Alliance provider), and in need of a second Mental Health Evaluation.

47.3 Informing Requirements

All CalWORKs applicants and recipients must be informed of the availability of Health Alliance services.

Clients must be assured that utilizing Health Alliance services will not result in negative consequences (e.g., reduced benefits, law enforcement involvement, etc.).

Eligibility Workers (EW) must inform the client that they can self-disclose any substance abuse or mental health issues at any time. Prime opportunities may exist at the time of benefits application or during Employment Services participation.

The "CalWORKs Community Health Alliance" brochure must be provided to each CalWORKs AU:

- During the Intake process,
- At the annual CalWORKs Redetermination (RD), and
- Any time the client requests substance abuse/mental health services.

EWs and CWES Workers must review the "CalWORKs Community Health Alliance" brochure and document in the **Maintain Case Comments** window that substance abuse and mental health information was given and explained.

47.4 Confidentiality and Disclosure

A client's confidentiality must be protected at all times. With the exception of mandated reporting responsibilities associated with child or elder abuse and/or the client is at risk of harm to him/herself or others, information is not to be shared with any other agencies, resource and referral program or to any employee of the agency who is not directly involved in the client's case, unless a written release of information has been signed or the information is required to be disclosed by law.

When a client chooses not to disclose participation in the Health Alliance to their EW or CWES Worker, the information must be held confidential by the Health Alliance provider.

The client must be advised that he/she will not be permitted to:

- Utilize "a temporary absence" to continue to be eligible for CalWORKs when confined to a treatment facility for more than 30 days.
- Integrate Health Alliance activities into their WTW plan. They must meet their required hours of participation through other CWES activities.
- Benefit from support services, such as transportation and child care for the specific purpose of participating in Health Alliance activities.

The "CalWORKs Treatment Provider Consent to Release Information" (SC 27) is completed by Health Alliance with the client to obtain their consent to release information to EWs or CWES Workers.

47.5 Temporary Absence

Clients may be confined to a treatment facility which may exceed the "30 days" or the "one full calendar month" time limitation. Clients entering a medical hospital, psychiatric care facility or a drug and/or alcohol rehabilitation treatment facility are considered "temporarily absent" from the home for the entire duration of their confinement under the "hospitalization" exception criteria and may continue to be eligible for cash aid. Refer to Handbook Section "[Temporary Absence \[EAS 82-812; 82-812.6\]](#)," page 25-14].

The Health Alliance service provider will notify the EW via the "CalWORKs Referral Results" (SC 29) if the client is in a residential treatment that will last 30 days or more.

47.6 Participation Requirements

Health Alliance activities do not carry any specific exemption or good cause from CWES registration or participation requirements. Clients whose activities include Health Alliance **MUST** meet the participation requirements (32/35 hour per week).

If there is a recommendation for an exemption from CWES program requirements, the client must meet the criteria for the applicable exemption.

47.7 Support Services

Child Care, transportation and ancillary expenses are authorized, if needed, to support any Health Alliance activity that becomes part of the WTW plan. Supportive services needs must be reviewed any time there is a modification to the WTW plan.

47.7.1 Legal Barriers

CalWORKs clients receiving Health Alliance services may also receive assistance with removing legal barriers, including the **PARTIAL** payment of certain types of fines, in certain instances and if necessary to support the holistic treatment of benefit for the client.

Clients needing these services should be referred to the CalWORKs Social Work Unit.

The CalWORKs Social Worker will develop a plan to address legal barriers, including traffic violations and (non-violent) violations related to the issues for which the client is receiving Health Alliance services. After all alternative avenues have been explored, if deemed appropriate, a Health Alliance client may receive assistance with traffic tickets, court imposed fines, court ordered classes and DMV ordered classes up to a maximum of 20% of the original amount.



Exception:

Financial assistance cannot be approved for legal barriers involving violence or where there is a victim.

The client must be participating and cooperating with the Health Alliance service provider prior to requesting assistance with legal barriers. Financial assistance with legal barriers is only available to participants and is not available to other members of the Aid Unit (AU).

47.8 Referral Procedures

Referrals to the Health Alliance service providers may be generated by any Social Services Agency Staff member. Health Alliance referrals may also be made by any education and training site, community based organization, or other agency working with CalWORKs clients. Clients may also self-refer. The referrals are made directly to the Health Alliance providers.

47.8.1 Completing the Referral

All Health Alliance referrals must be made by completing the "Community Health Alliance Support Service Referral" (SC 1686). The SC 1686 is processed as follows:

Form Section	Who Completes	Action Required
PART A	Referring Party or Client	Complete or have the client complete this section.
		Have the client sign the form. The client may give verbal consent over the phone for the referral.
PART B	Referring Party	Complete all the information on this section: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EW and CWES Worker Name and Worker Number, • Telephone and Fax Number, • Number of months left in the client's CalWORKs 48-month clock, • CalWIN WTW status, • Check the box for services requested, • Enter a brief description of the client's issues, risks, and/or needs.
		Fax the SC 1686 to the appropriate Health Alliance service provider. NOTE: The SC 1686 is NOT faxed to the CalWORKs Social Worker.
PART C	Service Provider	Complete the 'outcome' of the referral
		Fax the SC 1686 to the referring party IF the client chooses to have their hours and schedule sent to the CWES Worker.

47.8.2 Selecting a Health Alliance Service Provider

Clients may be referred to any service provider. Consideration to the client’s language needs, ethnicity, and/or Health Alliance service provider location must be given when choosing a service provider:

Health Alliance Provider	Specialized Language Capacities	Service Offered
Asian American for Community Involvement (AACI) 2400 Moorpark Avenue, Suite 300 San Jose, CA 95128 Email: AACICalWORKsReferral@aaci.org	Cambodian Chinese/Mandarin English Spanish Vietnamese	Substance abuse, mental health treatment and psychiatric services.
Catholic Charities (CCSJ) 195 East San Fernando St. San Jose, CA 95112 Email: calworks-referrals@catholiccharitiesscc.org	Bosnian English Spanish	Substance abuse, mental health treatment and psychiatric services.
Gardner (GFCC) 160 E. Virginia St., Suite 280 Email: CalWORKs@gfhn.org	Cambodian English Spanish	Substance abuse, mental health treatment and psychiatric services.
CalWORKs Mental Health Service Team (MHST) Narvaez Mental Health 1887 Monterey Rd., Suite 205 Email: CalWORKs@hhs.sccgov.org	Cambodian English Mandarin Spanish Vietnamese	Intensive mental health and psychiatric services. Note: This is the only provider that accepts referrals involving CalWORKs children .
If the client needs RESIDENTIAL TREATMENT SERVICES and/or DETOXIFICATION from drugs or alcohol, refer the client the Gateway telephone number: 1-800-488-9919.		

47.9 Time on Aid (TOA)

Some clients may need long-term treatment for mental health and/or substance abuse problems past the 48-month CalWORKs time limit. Health Alliance clinicians should continuously monitor client’s TOA to assure that ongoing treatment needs are addressed appropriately.

At the point the client only has six months left in their 48-month CalWORKs life-time limit, the Health Alliance service provider must begin transitioning the client into mainstream treatment services, this will include counseling the client and if necessary requesting a review for an extender. CWES staff will review and approve the request based on extender guidelines. [Refer to “[Extenders - After the 48-Month CalWORKs Time Limit](#),” page 39-10]] for more information on extenders.

47.10 Clients Eligible for SSI

If a client is unable to work and the following criteria are met, Health Alliance staff may refer the client to the SSI Plus Advocacy Program:

- The client meets the seriously and persistently mentally ill (SPMI) criteria.
- The client has significant organic brain disorders.
- The client has developmental disabilities.

47.11 Clients with Learning Disabilities

If a client has a learning disability, the Health Alliance clinician will work with the client's CWES Worker to refer the client to the appropriate program for screening and assessment if necessary.

