

2. Vocational Services Program Activities Requirements

2.1 Vocational Services Program

The mission of the Vocational Services Program is to maintain participants' dignity while providing assistance with compassion and respect. Through this program, participants are provided with the tools for achieving and maintaining self-sufficiency through employment; and are offered opportunities and the support necessary in order to help participants build self-esteem and encourage self-reliance in a safe, positive environment.

The Vocational Services Program is designed to provide hands-on work experience, develop skills and good work habits for individuals who are job ready, especially for those who have a gap in their work history or are lacking in work experience. The Vocational Services Program also provides Job Search Training and refers participants to adult education and vocational training which includes the Department of Rehabilitation

2.2 Workfare

The purpose of this activity is to provide hands on work experience, develop new skills and good work habits, especially for participants who have a gap in their work history or lack of work experience. Employable participants shall participate in this activity unless based upon an employability assessment, the Employment Counselor determines otherwise.

Participants are referred to a work activity, based on their skills and interests. Referrals may be to local public or private non-profit agency, or government facility within the county. The required number of workfare hours for the month is determined by dividing the GA grant amount by the state minimum wage. Workfare participants may be required to participate concurrently with Job Search activity.

Participation must be recorded on the "Vocational Services Activity Time Sheet" (VS 9). Failure to do so constitutes non-compliance and will result in discontinuance and sanction of GA benefits. [[Refer to "VS 9 - Vocational Services Activity Time Sheet," page 2-10](#)].

2.2.1 Workfare Assignment for Married Couples

The Workfare assignments for married couples are not necessarily based on an equal division of the GA grant amount. The one member of a couple who is being assigned to Workfare may be assigned the total number of hours equal to the GA grant amount divided by the state minimum wage. The required number of hours may also be split by the couple.

2.2.2 Expectations of Participants in Workfare

Participants are expected to:

- Report to the assigned workfare site on time.
- Perform work activities under the direction of a work-site supervisor.
- Comply with work site regulations as explained by the work-site supervisor.
- Cooperate with the work site supervisor and others at the work-site in order to fully complete the assignment.
- Conduct themselves as an employee.

2.2.3 Individuals Non-referable to Workfare

Participant with a criminal record or participants with medical limitations and who are determined by the Employment Counselor to be non-referable to Workfare, may be assigned to other activities to comply with Vocational Services Program requirements.

2.3 Supervised Job Search

Activities under the Supervised Job Search component include, but are not limited to:

2.3.1 Supervised Job Search

Supervised Job Search is an activity assigned to employable participants who are on the path to becoming self-sufficient. Supervised Job Search participants must record participation on the “General Assistance Job Search Verification” (VS 1527) form. VS Employment Counselors must monitor Supervised Job Search participants by reviewing the job search information on the VS 1527 form. This activity may be assigned concurrently with other activities.

In order to meet the Supervised Job Search requirements, the participant must make:

- 18 job search contacts with potential employers on a monthly basis (30 day period) when assigned concurrently with another activity and 2 weekly contacts with EDD
- 24 job search contacts with potential employers on a monthly basis (30 day period) when there is no other activity assignments and 2 weekly contacts with EDD.

Job search contacts made by the participant must be documented on the form “Vocational Services Job Search Verification” (VS 1527) which must be submitted to Vocational Services Program by the due date printed on the top of the form. [\[Refer to “VS 1527 - Vocational Services Job Search Verification,” page 2-11\]](#). Failure to do so constitutes non-compliance and will result in discontinuance and sanction of GA benefits.

2.3.2 Job Search Training

The purpose of Job Search Training (JST) is to help participants search and prepare for work to achieve self-sufficiency. JST consists of workshops which focus on various areas including self-esteem, motivation, job search strategies, overcoming barriers to employment, creating a resume, job interviewing techniques, and job retention. Employment Counselors provide participants with employment counseling, job search techniques and job leads. Participants have access to job listings and leads, Job Fair information, resource materials, and office equipment located in the Vocational Services Employment Readiness Center.

The required number of hours for JST is 12 hours per month combined with the required number of 18 job search contacts. Failure to complete the required number of JST hours constitutes non-compliance and will result in discontinuance and sanction of GA benefits.

2.4 Education and Vocational Training

2.4.1 Education

Participants who have been assessed by an Employment Counselor and is determined that additional education would be beneficial to increase their employability are referred to this activity.

Education is a stand-alone activity that can be initiated by participants or based on Employment Counselor assessment of employability. Participants may be referred and/or approved for adult education centers within the county for educational activities such as English as a Second Language (ESL), Adult Basic Education (ABE), basic literacy, or high school equivalence (GED) in order to improve basic skills and enhance employability. Employment Counselors must perform periodic assessments at the end of each quarter to evaluate participants' progress.

The number of class hours is determined by the educational program. Three (3) or more absences from class per month without good cause constitutes non-compliance. Timely verification of attendance must be submitted on a monthly basis to the Vocational Services Program using the form "Monthly Attendance Report" (VS 68). [Refer to "VS 68 - Monthly Attendance Report," page 2-11]. Failure to do so constitutes non-compliance and will result in discontinuance and sanction of GA benefits.

2.4.2 Vocational Training

Based on individual assessments conducted by Employment Counselors, participants may be approved for or referred to short-term (twelve month or less) vocational training according to their employment goals, barriers or interests. Employment Counselors must conduct periodic assessments at the end of each quarter to evaluate participants' progress.

The number of monthly hours of participation is determined by the training program. Three (3) or more absences from class per month without good cause constitutes non-compliance. [Refer to “Non-Compliance Process,” page 5-1]. Timely verification of attendance must be submitted on a monthly basis to Vocational Services using the form “Monthly Attendance Report” (VS 68). Failure to do so constitutes non-compliance and will result in discontinuance and sanction of GA benefits.

2.4.3 Acceptance Into an Educational or Vocational Training Program

When a participant is accepted into an educational or vocational training program, the process below MUST be followed.

Step	Who	Action
1.	Participant	<p>Notifies VS immediately upon being accepted and provides the EC with the following information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Type of training, • Name of the training provider, • How the training is paid for, • Start date and anticipated end date, • Training schedule <p>Note: The verification must be completed on the school letterhead and must include all required information described above.</p>
2.	EC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides the participant with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Several copies of the “Monthly Attendance Report” (GA 68) and • A return appointment. • Sets up education/vocational training activities under the VSAS Service Provider. • Enters case comments in VSAS [Narrative] tab and CalWIN Maintain Case Comments window.

2.5 Self-Initiated Workfare

Participants who reside in shelters where work experience assignment is provided in exchange for services/housing can satisfy the Vocational Services Program requirement.

The “Self-Initiated Workfare” allows a participant to initiate his or her own workfare program with the approval of Vocational Services Program. The hours of participation are determined and monitored by the provider. Participants are required to report periodically to Vocational Services Program. Failure to do so constitutes non-compliance and will result in discontinuance and sanction of GA benefits.

2.5.1 Process for Approval of the Self-Initiated Workfare

The process for the Self Initiated Workfare below **MUST** be followed.

Step	Who	Action
1.	Participant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Notifies Vocational Services Program immediately upon being accepted and provides the EC with verification of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agency name. Start date and anticipated end date. Hours of participation <p>NOTE: The verification must be completed on the agency letterhead.</p>
2.	EC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sets up service provider activity in VSAS. Provides an appointment notice to return provider progress report. Enters case comments in VSAS [Narrative] tab and CalWIN Maintain Case Comments window.

2.6 Able Bodied Adults Without Dependents (ABAWD)

Able-Bodied Adult Without Dependents (ABAWD) is an able-bodied CalFresh recipient 18 to 49 years old with no dependent children.

Note:

An individual is an ABAWD beginning the month after their 18th birthday and is no longer an ABAWD beginning the first day of the month of their 50th birthday.

ABAWDs are required to meet certain work requirements or participate in approved activities to be eligible for CalFresh, unless they meet an ABAWD exemption. Otherwise, ABAWDS can only receive three months of CalFresh benefits in a 36-month period.

For detailed ABAWD information refer to [[“Able Bodied Adults Without Dependents \(ABAWDs\) - Work Requirements,” page 28-1](#)] of the CalFresh Handbook.

2.6.1 ABAWD Exemptions

Individuals who are ABAWDs (age 18-49), but meet an exemption criteria below are not subject to the ABAWD requirements.

1. Pregnant
2. Exempt from CalFresh work registration requirements, which includes any individual who is:
 - Under 16 or over 59 years of age (note: the work registration age limits are different than the age limits under ABAWD rules).
 - Physically or mentally unfit for employment.
 - Subject to and complying with any work requirement under Title IV of the Social Security Act including California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids (CalWORKs) programs.
 - A parent of or responsible for the care of a dependent child under age 6 (Note: the child does not have to be a CalFresh member or living in the home for this work registration exemption).
 - Responsible for the care of an incapacitated person including SSI/SSP or IHSS recipients (Note: the incapacitated person does not have to be a CalFresh household member or living in the home).
 - Has applied for or is receiving unemployment insurance benefits.
 - A regular participant in a drug addiction or alcoholic treatment and rehabilitation program. Employed or self-employed at least 30 hours per week or receiving weekly earnings at least equal to the federal minimum wage multiplied by 30 hours.
 - Enrolled in a school, training program or institution of higher education on at least a half-time basis and meeting CalFresh student eligibility.
3. Physically or mentally unfit to work (even if temporarily) for one of the following reasons:
 - Applied/receiving temporary or permanent public or private disability benefits
 - Obviously unfit or unable to work based on the EW's observation or if one of the following indicators are present:
 - Unfit or unable to work due to domestic violence
 - Unfit or unable to work due to chronic homelessness. Refer to [["Physically or Mentally Unfit to Work," page 28-6](#)] of the CF handbook for more information on chronic homelessness.
 - Unfit or unable to work due to alcohol or drug addiction
 - Medically-certified as physically or mentally unfit or unable to work
4. Participating in an Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) training program for at least half time.

2.7 Vocational Services and ABAWD Work Requirements.

General Assistance (GA) employable clients must comply with Vocational Services Program work requirements. In addition, GA employable clients who also receive CalFresh (CF) and are classified as ABAWD, must meet the ABAWD work requirements.

There are three groups of clients who must meet the Vocational Services Program requirements or the Vocational Services and ABAWD requirements.

Clients Receiving...	Must meet...
GA only	Vocational Services Program requirements.
GA and CalFresh (ABAWD 18 to 49 years old with no Exemption)	Vocational Services and ABAWD requirements.
GA and Calfresh (Non-ABAWD 50 years old and over or with ABAWD Exemption)	Vocational Services Program requirements.

The calculation of monthly Workfare hours for an individual or a married couple is determined by the CF benefit amount divided by the highest minimum wage associated with the participant's address or the GA benefit amount divided by the state minimum wage, which ever is higher.

[Refer to [CF handbook chapter 28](#)] for more information on ABAWD requirements and "ABAWD Time Limit Exemptions," page 28-3].

2.7.1 Vocational Services Program Requirements Guide

The following table shows which activities meet the Vocational Services requirements and the Vocational Services & ABAWD requirements.

Options	VS Activity/ Component	Monthly Requirements
A	Workfare + Supervised Job Search	The required number of Workfare hours is determined by the amount of GA benefits divided by the state minimum wage + 18 monthly contacts with potential employers and 2 weekly contacts with EDD. Meets VS, and ABAWD
B	Self-Initiated Workfare	The required number of Self-Initiate Workfare hours is determined by the provider. Hours must be no less than the calculation resulting from the amount of GA benefits divided by the State minimum wage. Meets VS and ABAWD
C	Vocational Training	The number of hours of participation is determined by the training program. NOTE: For ABAWD clients, the required number of class hours must be 80 per month (averaging 20 hours per week). If the total hours determined by the training program is less than 80 per month, Vocational Training may be combined with Job Search Training to complete the ABAWD required number of hours. Meets VS, ABAWD
D	Education	The number of hours of participation is determined by the educational program. NOTE: For ABAWDs, the required number of class hours must be 80 per month (averaging 20 hours per week). If the total hours determined by the training program is less than 80 per month, the number of hours spent on homework may be factored in. Meets VS and ABAWD
E	Supervised Job Search only (Only for Individuals who are not referable to Workfare ; i.e. 290, medical limitations, etc.)	24 monthly contacts with potential employers and 2 weekly contacts with EDD. Only meets GA-VS requirements NOTE: For ABAWD purposes, individuals with a 290 record are given a 15% ABAWD exemption. A GA 53 must be sent to the EW to record this exemption in CalWIN, if not already recorded.
F	Job Search Training + Supervised Job Search	12 hours participation per month. + 18 monthly contacts with potential employers and 2 weekly contacts with EDD. Only meets VS requirements.

**Note:**

All the components above meet the CFET requirement.

2.8 Forms

The forms below are used to monitor compliance and participation in the Vocational Services activities.

2.8.1 SCD 523 - Vocational Services Cooperation Agreement

This form is provided to participants during the individual orientation and initial assessment interview. The participant must agree to cooperate and abide by Vocational Services Program requirements.

2.8.2 VS 30 - Vocational Services Schedule and Appointment

The purpose of the VS 30 form is to keep track of the next scheduled appointment date.

Who	Action
EC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides VS 30 to participants at every return appointment. • Reminds participants of future activity due dates. • Informs the participant to obtain a date stamp from GA clerical staff on the VS 30 when submitting required documents, to be used as a receipt.

2.8.3 VS 9 - Vocational Services Activity Time Sheet

The purpose of the VS 9 is to inform participants of their assigned workfare details. Participants must provide work site supervisors with this form to be signed. Once assignment is complete, the participant must submit the completed VS 9 to VS clerical staff, so the number of hours worked can be entered into VSAS for monitoring participant compliance.

Who	Action	
EC	Provides participants with a VS 9.	
Participant	Submits the VS 9 form to the designated VS clerk by the due date, but no later than the last business day of the month.	
Clerical	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Receives the VS 9 from the participant. Reviews the VS 9 for completion, including the correct number of hours. Date stamps the VS 9. 	
	If VS 9 is . . .	Then . . .
	Complete	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enters the date the VS 9 was received and records the hours the participant worked into VSAS Activity Data Entry window. Forwards the VS9 to IDM
Incomplete/late	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has the participant sign the OD log. Calls the EC Officer of the Day (OD) for a “good cause” determination <p>Note: If the participant refuses to meet with the OD, then clerical will stamp the form with office stamp “Declined to see OD” and cause determination is not made.</p>	
EC OD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reviews and discusses the “incomplete/late” form with the participant. Requests for verification and determines good cause as appropriate. If good cause is granted, enters information in VSAS. If good cause is not granted, informs the participant that benefits may be discontinued and a Fair Hearing appointment will be mailed. Enters case comments in VSAS [Narrative] tab and CalWIN Maintain Case Comments window. Forwards form to clerical for data entry along with any supporting documents to IDM. 	

2.8.4 VS 1527 - Vocational Services Job Search Verification

This form is used to monitor the required number of job searches.

Who	Action						
VS Clerical	Upon receiving the form from the participant: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Date stamps the VS 1527 • Reviews for completion and accuracy, including the correct number of job search contacts. • Checks for EDD contacts. 						
	Enters the following information into VSAS: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The date the form was submitted, and • The number of contacts reported. 						
	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>If . . .</th> <th>Then . . .</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Met the Job Search requirements</td> <td>VS 1527(s) is scanned to IDM</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Did not meet the Job Search requirements, and/or submitted the VS1527 late,</td> <td>VS 1527 must be given to the EC OD for a good cause determination.</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	If . . .	Then . . .	Met the Job Search requirements	VS 1527(s) is scanned to IDM	Did not meet the Job Search requirements, and/or submitted the VS1527 late,	VS 1527 must be given to the EC OD for a good cause determination.
	If . . .	Then . . .					
Met the Job Search requirements	VS 1527(s) is scanned to IDM						
Did not meet the Job Search requirements, and/or submitted the VS1527 late,	VS 1527 must be given to the EC OD for a good cause determination.						
EC OD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reviews and discusses the form with the participant. • Requests verification and determines good cause as appropriate. • If good cause is granted, enters information in VSAS. • If good cause is not granted, informs the participant that benefits may be discontinued and Fair Hearing appointment will be mailed. • Forwards form to clerical for data entry, and any supporting documents to IDM. 						

2.8.5 VS 68 - Monthly Attendance Report

This form must be submitted on a monthly basis (by the fifth working day of the following month) to Vocational Services for Education and Vocational Training activities.

2.8.6 GA 201 - GA Transportation Approval

This notice of action (NOA) must be provided to the participant every time a transportation allowance is issued.

2.8.7 SCD 1400 - General Assistance Program - Request For Medical Information

This form is provided to participants who are unable to work and need exemption from participation in Vocational Services activities. The participant must have the SCD 1400 completed and signed by the health care provider. The form must be returned to the Eligibility Worker by the due date.



Note:

The SCD 1400 replaces the “Appointment Notice for Medical Verification” form (GA 919).

2.8.8 VS 001 - Vocational Services Appointment Notice

This form is to be provided to participants with information on their next appointment with Vocational Services. The form indicates the type of appointment and the documentation required (if any).

2.8.9 GA 53 - Eligibility Worker/Vocational Services Communication

This form is used by Eligibility Workers and Vocational Services Employment Counselors as a way of communicating information pertinent to the participant in common. The forms must be scanned in IDM.

2.8.10 GA 40 - General Assistance Administrative Review by Director

This form is completed by Vocational Services participants to request an Administrative Review when they disagree with the decision made by the Fair Hearing Officer. The request must be filed within 15 days after notification of the decision made by the Fair Hearing Officer.

2.9 Transportation

Participants are issued a transportation allowance equal to the cost of an adult monthly pass to attend their required Vocational Services activities. Transportation is issued via the CalWIN EBT system. The participant must sign the “Vocational Services Transportation Related Expense Certification” (SCD 2570) form prior to transportation payment issuance. The SCD 2570 explains the purpose of the transportation issuance and certifies that client must use the payment for its intended purpose. A copy of the signed SCD 2570 must be issued to the participant and uploaded to IDM.

The participant must also be provided with a “Transportation Approval Notice” (GA 201) with every transportation allowance issued.

Participants may not receive transportation allowance for Vocational Services activities in the participating month if they received a bus pass through the Universal Pass for Life Improvement From Transportation (UPLIFT) for the same month.

NOTE: Transportation allowance issued is not to be counted as income.

2.10 External Service Providers

2.10.1 CFET Third-Party Partners

The County of Santa Clara has partnered with outside agencies, known as CalFresh Employment & Training (CFET) Third Party Partners to help CalFresh participants who are not ABAWDs and/or are exempt ABAWDs

Vocational Services Employment Counselors may utilize these agencies as service providers and may refer Vocational Services participants who also receive CF and are not ABAWDs or are exempt ABAWDs to receive services such as CFET participants to meet their goals for both GA and CalFresh. VS Employment Counselors may utilize these agencies as Service Providers and may refer-out Vocational Services Program participants as appropriate to receive services such as:

- Supervised Job Search
- Job Retention
- Internships
- Work Experience
- Subsidized Employment
- Apprenticeships
- Pre-Apprenticeships
- On-the-Job-Training
- Education
 - Career and Technical Education (Vocational Training)
 - English Language Acquisition (English as a Second Language)
 - Adult Basic Education (High School Equivalence)
 - Integrated Education Training
 - Job Readiness Training

Below is a list of External Services Providers that partner with the County of Santa Clara:

Service Provider	Services Provided
Goodwill of Silicon Valley	Employment services that include vocational training, job readiness workshops and paid work experience options.
JobTrain, Inc.	Employment services that includes job training, job placement and supportive services.

Service Provider	Services Provided
Rightvarsity Technologies, LLC.	Information Technology (IT) employment and training services through its Technology Workforce Immersion Training program.
Sacred Heart Community Service	Economic Empowerment through employment and financial coaching services, mutual support, community advocacy and power building.
San Jose Conservation Corps + Charter School	High school education, work experience and Job search training to low-income adults between 18 and 27 years-old.
Working Partnerships USA	State certified apprenticeship programs.

For more information on CFET Third-Party Partners, please refer to Cal Fresh Handbook [[“CALFRESH EMPLOYMENT & TRAINING \(CFET\),” page 23-1](#)].

2.10.2 work2future

work2future assists individuals to obtain the skills they need to gain employment, get a promotion or start a new career. work2future offers resume building, job search training and one-on-one career coaching. At participant’s request, GA VS participants may be referred to work2future by a VS EC.

Follow the steps below to refer clients to work2future and maintain client engagement with GA VS while assigned to a work2future activity.

Step	Who	Action
1.	EC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Informs participant about work2future. • At participant’s request, completes a work2future referral in CalWIN (refer to CalWIN Referral process). • In the Notes tab of the referral, includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participant’s name, email and phone number, and • Add comment for work2future: “please email VS@ssa.sccgov.org once client completes work2future Orientation.” • Schedules client for return appointment in VSAS, 30 days out to turn in “work2future Referral” form (WF08) and schedules future appointment. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unchecks “Assign JS” box in VSAS. • Assigns client to “Work 2 Future - Referral” service provider (#61) for 30 days in VSAS with <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Start Date: Today’s date. • End Date: Next appointment date. • Issues participant Vocational Services Appointment Notice (VS 001) and W2F 08 to participant to be completed by appropriate work2future staff and returned on next appointment date. • Enters case comment in CalWIN and VSAS.

Step	Who	Action
2.	work2future	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Receives CalWIN Referral.• Contacts participant and sets up a work2future appointment.• Sends an email to VS via VS@ssa.sccgov.org verifying participant completed work2future Orientation.

Step	Who	Action	
3.	EC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Retrieves work2future email and enters case comment in VSAS and CalWIN On the day of the 30-day return appointment, 	
		If participant...	Then...
		Checks-in for return appointment with completed W2F 08 and/or work2future staff verified completion of work2future Orientation via email	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Schedules a return appointment for client in 90 days. Unchecks the "Assign JS" box in VSAS. Assigns client to "W2F - Career Center" service provider (#119). Start Date: Today's date. End Date: Next appointment date. Issues copies of "Monthly Attendance Report" (VS 68) and the "VS Appointment notice" (VS 001) to participant. Instructs participant to submit completed VS 68 monthly or risk non-compliance. Enters case comments in VSAS and CalWIN.
		Checks-in for return appointment without a completed W2F 08, but work2future staff verified completion of work2future Orientation via email	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Checks case comments in VSAS and CalWIN for information from W2F. Schedules a return appointment for client in 90 days. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unchecks "Assign JS" box Assigns client to "W2F - Career Center" service provider (#119). Start date: Today's date. End Date: Next Appointment date. Issues copies of VS 68 and the VS VS 001 to participant. Instructs participant to submit VS 68 monthly or risk non-compliance Enters case comments in VSAS and CalWIN.
		Checks-in for return appointment without a completed W2F 08 and no email verification of completed Orientation by work2future	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grants maximum 30-day extension to have form completed by W2F. Assigns client to "W2F - Referral" service provider (#119) in VSAS. Sets up a return appointment in VSAS to submit completed W2F 08 form.
No-shows return appointment and does not reschedule	Non-Compliance process will be initiated the first of the following month.		
4.	work2future	Sends a monthly case listing of referred GA VS participants assigned to and completing an employment and training activity at work2future to the GA VS Employment Services Supervisor.	