



AB 991 (Alvarez) No Wrong Door for Reporting Changes or Providing Requested Verification to County Welfare Offices

Bill Summary

This bill would allow applicants and recipients of public benefits to report changes and provide verification requested by the county welfare office that is required by law.

Background

A number of counties refuse to accept reports of changes of income or other circumstances of public benefit beneficiaries and requested verification through email. This ends up beneficiaries being accused to failure to report changes that often lead to referral for welfare fraud and overpayments.

Current law requires by CalWORKs and CalFresh beneficiaries report to the county when their income exceeds the “income reporting threshold” to avoid overpayments.¹ Counties receive 12.5% incentive payments for collecting overpayments that were allegedly caused by fraud.²

Counties also deny applications for failure to provide verification, also known as “procedural reasons”.

The two tables below show the percentage of applications denied due to procedural reasons, many of which are failure to provide requested verification.³

CalWORKs Applications Denied due to Applicants' Failure to Meet Procedural Requirements			
Month/Year	Total CW Appl. Denials	Total CW Appl. Procedural Denials	%
21-Jul	13181	7215	55%
21-Aug	13950	7492	54%
21-Sep	13516	7411	55%
21-Oct	12506	6914	55%
21-Nov	13459	7609	57%
21-Dec	13616	8059	59%
22-Jan	11831	6907	58%
22-Feb	12091	6775	56%
22-Mar	12911	7183	56%
22-Apr	12131	6356	52%
22-May	12339	6538	53%
22-Jun	12847	6695	52%
22-Jul	12119	6343	52%
22-Aug	14118	7298	52%

CalFresh Applications Denied due to Applicants' Failure to Meet Procedural Requirements			
Month/Year	Denials	Procedural Denials	%
21-Jul	89455	66152	74%
21-Aug	98677	68798	70%
21-Sep	93541	68239	73%
21-Oct	82514	68347	83%
21-Nov	107161	80728	75%
21-Dec	97482	72450	74%
22-Jan	80218	57622	72%

¹ California Department of Social Services. “CF 296 - CalFresh Monthly Caseload Movement Statistical Report” October 28, 2022, <https://www.cdss.ca.gov/inforesources/research-and-data/calfresh-data-tables/cf296>.

² California Department of Social Services. “CA 255 CW – CalWORKs Report on Reasons for Denials and Other Non-Approvals of Applications” October 27, 2022, <https://www.cdss.ca.gov/inforesources/research-and-data/calworks-data-tables/ca-255-cw>.



22-Feb	86068	62347	72%
22-Mar	93146	64157	69%
22-Apr	86766	58930	68%
22-May	82730	54067	65%
22-Jun	89243	58889	66%
22-Jul	91722	60641	66%
22-Aug	107909	70751	66%

Details of the Bill

AB-991 would require counties to accept change reports and requested verification any way the applicant can get it to the welfare office – no wrong door for reporting change or providing requested verification.

Support

- Coalition of California Welfare Rights Organizations (CCWRO) (Co-Sponsor)
- Western Center on Law & Poverty (Co-Sponsor)

For More Information

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