PURPOSE | SCHOOL ATTENDANCE REQUIREMENT | INFORMING NOTICES | DEFINITION OF REGULAR ATTENDANCE | REPORTING PERIODS | COOPERATION | PENALTIES | SOCIAL SERVICES AGENCY (SSA) SCHOOL ATTENDANCE LIAISONS | ORANGE COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT CHILD WELFARE AND ATTENDANCE DIRECTORS (CWA) | MONTHLY PROCESS OF CORRECTING DISCREPANCY REPORTS | PROCEDURE FOR APPLICANTS | PROCEDURE FOR RECIPIENTS | SCHOOL ATTENDANCE VERIFICATIONRETURNED STATING: "CHILD NOT ENROLLED" | GOOD CAUSE | GOOD CAUSE GRANTED | HOW PENALTIES ARE APPLIED | PENALTY COMPUTATION | TRACKING PENALTIES | RESTORATION OF AID AFTER PENALTY IMPOSED | ADDING A CHILD TO THE AU/CHILD TURNS 6 YEARS OFAGE | TEENS TURNING 18 | TREATMENT OF INCOME | CALFRESH IMPACT | MEDI-CAL IMPACT | CALWIN ENTRIES | TRACKING IN CALWIN | CALWIN MANAGEMENT REPORTING | NOTICES OF ACTION | OTHER CLIENT CORRESPONDENCE | ATTACHMENTS | REFERENCES

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PURPOSE

Effective January 1, 1998, CalWORKs requires that all aided children in the Assistance Unit (AU) for whom school attendance is mandatory attend school regularly. If regular school attendance is not verified, penalties that reduce the CalWORKs grant must be applied. Implementation of verification procedures was effective 12/01/1998.

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SCHOOL ATTENDANCE REQUIREMENT	All aided children ages 6 through 17 including Maximum Family Grant (MFG) children, must attend school regularly.

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INFORMING NOTICES The School Attendance Release of Information form F063-30-386 (Attachment 2) is included in the application packet and the Redetermination/Recertification/Review (RRR) packet. The School Attendance Requirements Informing Notice (Attachment 1) is mailed to the clients once a year.

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DEFINITION OF REGULAR ATTENDANCE

Regular school attendance is defined as a child having a 92 percent school attendance rate. A regular school year consists of 180 school days. Schools will report that a child has irregular attendance when that child has been absent more than 15 days, regardless of the reason, since the start of the school year. (See reporting periods below). If the child was not on aid at the beginning of the school year, the 15-day count will begin with the beginning date of aid.

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All schools in Orange County will use these standards to determine regular attendance for the purpose of compliance with CalWORKs regulations. These standards are separate and apart from compulsory education and truancy requirements of the Department of Education.

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REPORTING PERIODS Schools will use the following reporting period for counting absences:

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The reporting period starts at the beginning of each school year, (July 1st for year-round schools), and ends at the end of the school year.

If the child was not on aid at the beginning of the school year, the 15-day count will begin with the beginning date of aid.

Quarterly reporting is mandated for the school districts during the months of **January, April and October**.

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COOPERATION The parent/caretaker relative must cooperate in the process to obtain routinely available proof of school attendance for each aided child age 6-17.

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PENALTIES

A penalty will be imposed to reduce the CalWORKs grant if:

The parent/caretaker relative refuses to sign School Attendance Release of Information, or provide other verification of current public school attendance.

Or:

The parent/caretaker relative fails to cooperate in providing current verification of attendance at a private school, out-of-county school or home school.

Or:

A child age 6-17 is not enrolled in school or the school reports that the child is not attending school regularly and there is no good cause (see good cause section below).

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The parent/caretaker relative must also:

Provide verification to substantiate a claim of good cause.

Provide verification from the child's school to cure a penalty. The school must verify that the child has attended school for 20 days with no more than 2 absences from school after a penalty is applied.

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SOCIAL SERVICES AGENCY (SSA) SCHOOL ATTENDANCE LIAISONS

Each CalWORKs regional office has a designated Social Service Agency (SSA) School Attendance Liaison for the purpose of communication with the school districts.
A list of CalWORKs aided children titled Aided Student List by SSA Region (MSS083-1) and ASL-Discrepancy Report (MSS083-5) are updated monthly and available for viewing in the Report Portal Intranet Database. Utilizing the ASL-Discrepancy Report (MSS083-5) report, the SSA School Attendance Liaison will:

1. Review and print, if necessary, the updated Aided Student List for their regional offices. The report is updated by the 10th of each month and will list CalWIN discrepancies with school information. The report will also list children who are coded as having a signed Release of Information form on file.
2. Inform all regional CALWORKs supervisors that the ASL-Discrepancy Reports (MSS083-5) are ready for distribution to their workers for corrections. Set a 30-day calendar control from the report date for the return of reports from each unit.
3. Coordinate electronic forms received via e-mail from the school districts in regional School Attendance Liaison's mailboxes. The regional mailboxes are monitored by SSA School Attendance Liaisons and facilitate communication between SSA and school districts. The electronic forms are used to identify students with attendance problems, or students no longer enrolled in a school district.

These forms are:

School Attendance Verification form F063-30-393 (Attachment 3)

Student Absent for 15 days form F063-30-393A (Attachment 4)

Students Not Enrolled form F063-30-393B (Attachment 5)

1. Forward the electronic forms via email to regional supervisors as soon as received. Sets a 30-day calendar control from the date of the email for the return of the updated verification from regional supervisors.
2. Communicate with School District Child Welfare and Attendance Director (CWA) when any problem resolution is necessary or as questions arise.
3. Assist CalWORKs Program with any other issues regarding school attendance.
4. Coordinate new school code request with Program.
Receives the CalWORks School Code Request form (Request for Non-Supportive Services/Vendors) from the unit supervisor. (Attachment 6)

Review request for accuracy.

If school is not listed on Worker Tool 8 (WT8), forward to Program requesting new CalWIN school code.

If school is listed, inform unit supervisor.

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ORANGE COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT CHILD WELFARE AND ATTENDANCE DIRECTORS (CWA)

Each participating Orange County School District has a designated liaison to work with SSA. In addition to the CWA, the school district's Superintendent may designate a different individual to work with SSA. Effective October 2007, the Aided Student List by School Districts report, three attendance forms and the SSA School Attendance Liaison list are available on-line in the Partners Data Interchange System (PDIS) application.
Note: The PDIS application is only used by the school districts. To protect confidentiality of students, each school district end-User who processes the quarterly reports is assigned a User ID and Password issued by SSA Systems Coordinator.

The CWA or designee will:

1. Review and compare with their school records, the Aided Student List by School District. This report will list all children coded as students in their school district and have a signed School Attendance Release of Information form on file with SSA.

1. Review the list by the 30th day of the following month, (e.g. list available january 10th, review by February 10th) and identify those students who have irregular attendance or are not enrolled at their districts.

1. Complete the appropriate School Attendance Verification form(s) available in the PDIS application system when a student is not meeting SSA's definition of regular attendance (15 days absent since the start of the school year). Email completed forms to the appropriate regional school attendance mailbox. The verification form can be sent to SSA at any time during the year.

1. Restart the count of days absent after the School Attendance Verification form is submitted to SSA.

1. At any time throughout the year, complete a School Attendance Verification form or 7278 30-Day Review Form when submitted by a parent/caretaker relative. This form will be used when a penalty has been imposed or after Good Cause has been granted. The form will be mailed back to the appropriate SSA School Attendance Liaison by the school. To be in compliance for this review, the child may not have missed more than **2 days** of school in the **20-school day period** after the School Attendance Verification form FDES-DI-383 was signed and dated by the CWA.

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MONTHLY PROCESS OF CORRECTING DISCREPANCY REPORTS

The ASL-Discrepancy Report (MSG083-5) is updated monthly and available to print on or after the 10th of each month. This report lists discrepant school codes, incorrect schools & addresses and missing release codes in CalWIN. Workers are to:

Review the reports to identify incorrect information.

Review the case record and update entries in CalWIN.

If information is not in the case record, contact client to obtain current information and update correct information in CalWIN.

If missing release code is identified, follow instructions in the School Attendance Resource Guide.

Return the discrepancy reports to unit supervisor.

Unit supervisor will forward unit reports to the regional School Attendance Liaison by the 30-day calendar deadline

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PROCEDURE FOR APPLICANTS

Inform all applicants of the school attendance requirement for all aided children in the AU ages 6-17.

Attendance at Orange County Public Schools:

Have parent/caretaker relative sign the School Attendance Release of Information form F063-30-386 (Attachment 2) for aided children ages 6-17. List each child on the form and file in case on the Vital Statistics Acco

Enter School Attendance Release of Information in CalWIN. (Refer to the School Attendance Resource Guide for specific CalWIN entries).

If the aided child's school is not listed in WTB complete the CalWORKs School Code request form (Attachment 6) and forward via e-mail to supervisor for review.

Unit supervisor will review the form for completeness and verify that school is not on WTB, then forward form to regional School Attendance Liaison who will forward to Program requesting to add the school to CalWIN.

When form is returned by Program via the regional School Attendance Liaison, the worker will enter school attendance information for each aided child in CalWIN. (Refer to the School Attendance Resource Guide for specific CalWIN entries).

If the parent/caretaker relative refuses to sign the School Attendance Release of Information but is willing to provide the verification, allow 10 days to provide one of the following:

Current report card that clearly shows daily attendance

Child's attendance record from the school or school district

Completed School Attendance Verification form F063-30-393.

Private Schools, Out-of-County Schools and Home Schooling:

Parent/caretaker relative must provide one of the following verifications:

Current report card.

Child's attendance record from attending school or home school.

Completed School Attendance Verification form, F063-30-393. Allow 30 days for parent/caretaker relative to provide this verification.

If parent/caretaker relative refuses to sign the School Attendance Release of Information or provide current verification, apply penalty when case is approved.

If a child in the AU will turn 6 within the next year, calendar control or set User Alert in CalWIN for a reminder to send a School Attendance Release of Information to the parent/caretaker relative.

If a change of address is reported, request school information for each child.

A 16-17 year old not in school must sign a WTW plan with the sole activity of attending school to obtain a high school diploma or equivalent. If he/she does not cooperate, apply penalty when case is approved.

A child is considered attending school regularly unless School Verification Form F063-30-393 is received from designated school stating otherwise. Applicants are not required to submit verification of school attendance prior to approving aid.

Note: If school is not in session when verification is requested, extend time allowed for verification until school is in session again.

PROCEDURE FOR RECIPIENTS

Reinvestigation/Recertification/Review (RRR): Inform recipients of the school attendance requirement for all aided children in the AU, ages 6-17.

Reminder: If a child in the AU will turn 6 years of age within the next year, calendar control or set User Alert in CalWIN to send a School Attendance Release of Information to the parent/caretaker relative.

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE VERIFICATIONRETURNED STATING: "CHILD NOT ENROLLED"

When a school district reports the child is not enrolled in school, the worker must contact the parent/caretaker relative to clarify the information. The child may be enrolled in school with a different name or date of birth, may have changed schools/school districts, or may not be enrolled.

1. If the parent/caretaker relative is able clarify the information, or provide a Student ID number, return the Verification of School Attendance Form F063-30-393 with additional information to the school district via the SSA School Attendance Liaison and update CalWIN.

1. The worker does not take negative action during this process and allows 30 days for return of Verification of School Attendance Form F063-30-393.

1. If the parent/caretaker relative cannot explain the discrepancy, send the Verification of School Attendance Form F063-30-393 to the parent with a 10-day deadline.

1. Impose penalty if the form is not returned by the deadline. Refer to School Attendance RG for CalWIN entries.

Penalties: If the parent/caretaker relative refuses to sign the School Attendance Release of Information Form F063-30-386, provide other verification, or it is verified that the child is not in regular attendance:

1. Contact parent or caretaker relative to determine if Good Cause exists. See Good Cause section of this policy.

If Good Cause does not exist, send NOA M40-105E Proof of School Attendance Not Provided and OCC 727-B, 30-Day School Review Form. Form727-B is generated in CalWIN via Client Correspondence/Other Correspondence.

1. Refer to School Attendance Resource Guide for CalWIN entries.

1. If Good Cause is granted for irregular attendance, make appropriate entries in CalWIN and set calendar control.

Change of address:
If a change of address is reported and the aided children in the AU are attending different schools, an updated school Attendance Release of Information form must be signed by the parent/caretaker relative. CalWIN entries must be updated for each child.

GOOD CAUSE

The worker must contact the client by telephone or mail to determine if Good Cause for failure to regularly attend school or failure to cooperate exists before applying penalties to the AU.

Good Cause reason must be verified.

Reasons for granting Good Cause include, but are not limited to:

1. Client disputes the attendance information provided by the school. Good Cause should be granted for **one month** to allow the parent/caretaker relative time for resolution with the school.

1. Family is living on the street or in a car, with no permanent or temporary residence. Good Cause should be granted until the family secures temporary or permanent housing. **Review status every 30 days.**

1. There is fear or personal safety of the child. This reason requires verification from the school. Allow 10 days for the parent/caretaker relative to provide verification. Good Cause will be granted for **one month** to allow the parent/caretaker relative time for resolution with the school.

1. Child lacks appropriate clothing. Make a referral to the appropriate community resource. Good Cause should be granted for **one month**.

1. Child is out of school for extended period due to verified medical reasons, such as mononucleosis, flu, broken bone, hospitalization, prolonged illness, etc. **Days absent will not be counted toward the 15-day limit.** Allow 10 days for parent/caretaker relative to provide verification.

1. Child is out of school due to the death of a family member related by blood or marriage. **Days absent will not be counted toward the 15-day limit.** Allow 10-days for parent/caretaker relative to provide verification.

1. If the reason is not listed above, contact Regional Manager (RM), Program Manager (PM), or designee via chain of command.

GOOD CAUSE GRANTED

If Good Cause is granted:

1. Set calendar control for appropriate timeframe, and refer to School Attendance Resource Guide for CalWIN entries.

1. When Good Cause has ended:

Send a School Attendance Verification form to the parent/caretaker relative. Check the 30-day review box to request verification that the child is now attending school regularly.

Set a 30-day calendar control for return of verification form from the date form was sent to parent/caretaker relative.

Apply penalty if verifications are not returned timely.

HOW PENALTIES ARE APPLIED

Penalties are effective the first of the month following timely issuance of M40-105E Proof of School Attendance Not Provided Notice of Action. School attendance penalties are considered a County initiated action. Therefore, the worker will take necessary actions mid-quarter. If both parents of the child not attending school regularly are in the AU, both are penalized. **The worker must contact the client to determine if Good Cause for failure to regularly attend school or failure to cooperate exists before applying penalties to the AU.**

Child under 16

The needs of the parent/caretaker relative of the child will not be counted in the Family Maximum Aid Payment (MAP) to determine financial eligibility nor to compute the AU's aid payment.

Child 16 - 17

The child's needs will not be counted in the Family MAP. The child also loses his/her Welfare-To-Work (WTW) exemption. The parent/caretaker relative is not penalized.

If a 16-17 year old child has not completed high school and is not attending/will not attend school, his/her needs will not be counted in the Financial Eligibility Test (FET) or grant determination. He/she is also required to participate in WTW activities for the purpose of completing high school or its equivalent. He/she must be advised of WTW participation requirements. If he/she starts attending school before the WTW plan is signed, he/she will keep his/her needs counted. If his/her needs can be added back. If the child does not cooperate in his/her assigned WTW activities, a penalty will be imposed.

A 16 - 17 year old child who has completed high school is required to participate in WTW activities.

Zero-Parent Cases

If the child is under 16, no penalty can be applied since penalties are only applied to the parent/caretaker relative in the AU. However, workers are to follow up with discrepancy reports, update information in CalWIN and submit reports to the regional SSA School Attendance Liaisons in a timely manner.

PENALTY COMPUTATION

Example 1: Single Penalty
AU of 4 includes another with three children but later refuses to sign a School Attendance Release of Information form and is not found to have good cause. The mother has total earned income of $525 per month and no disability based unearned income.

Example 2: Double Penalty

Same example as above, but mother also fails to cooperate with Child Support Services (CSS).

Example 3: Stepparent Case

AU of 5 includes mother and her separate child and stepfather and 2 common children. Stepfather receives Unemployment Insurance Benefits (UIB) of $700.00 per month. School attendance verification is received showing stepchild is not meeting attendance requirement and there is no good cause.

TRACKING PENALTIES

To apply a School Attendance penalty, entries on the Display Sanction Summary Collect Sanction/POI/Penalty Detail child window in CalWIN must be completed. Refer to the School Attendance Resource Guide for specific CalWIN entries.

RESTORATION OF AID AFTER PENALTY IMPOSED

To restore aid after a penalty has been imposed, the parent/ caretaker relative may contact the school and request a review of the child's attendance record. **The child must have regular attendance for 20 school days.** A representative from the school or the parent/caretaker relative will return a completed Other Client Correspondence OCC 727 B 30-Day School Review form to the SSA worker.

When a penalty is imposed, NOA M40-105E will be sent to inform the client of the decrease in his/her cash aid along with the 30-day review form, OCC 727 B. The parent/caretaker relative must take this form to the school when the child has been in regular attendance for 20 days after the School Attendance Verification form was signed and dated by the CWA. The school will complete and return the form to SSA. Regular attendance is defined as a child who has not been absent for more than 2 days in a 20-school day period.

If verification of regular attendance is provided after a penalty has been imposed, the needs of the parent/caretaker relative or child will be restored effective the first of the following month after the 30-day review form has been provided.

- Add parent's/child's needs back into the budget and send NOA M40-105D – Increase - Proof of School Attendance Provided

If a penalty is imposed when school is not in session, i.e. end school year, apply a one-month penalty. Restore needs after one month, effective the first of the following month. **The child's attendance count restarts at the beginning of the next school year.**

ADDING A CHILD TO THE AGCHILD TURNS 6 YEARS OF AGE

Once the child becomes a recipient or in the month a child turns 6, the School Attendance Release of Information form will be sent to the parent/caretaker relative for signature if one is not already on file. Set a calendar control for 10 days for return of the form.
Follow verification instructions under Procedure for Recipients section of this policy.

TEENS TURNING 18

Verification of regular school attendance is not required for an 18-year old child, unless they meet certain eligibility requirements. Refer to CalWORKs Policy 100 E-8, Eligibility for Teens Turning Age 18, for age eligibility requirements.

TREATMENT OF INCOME

Any non-exempt income of penalized persons is counted in the family's grant determination and they remain eligible members of the AU.

CALFRESH IMPACT

CalFresh benefits will not increase when a penalty is applied for non-cooperation with school attendance requirements. The penalized individual will remain CalFresh eligible and the CalFresh Household retains Categorical Eligibility.

MEDI-CAL IMPACT

A penalized individual is still a part of the AU and remains eligible to cash-based Medi-Cal.

CALWIN ENTRIES

Refer to School Attendance Resource Guide for specific CalWIN entries.

TRACKING IN CALWIN

Staff may set User Alerts in CalWIN to track information. Refer to Alerts Resource Guide for this process

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CALWIN MANAGEMENT REPORTING

CalWIN will produce the Aided Student List MSG083-1 and sort this list based on the school codes entered by the worker. The School codes are listed in WTB Orange County School District and School Codes.

NOTICES OF ACTION

- **NOA- M40-105E** - Proof of School Attendance Not Provided
- **NOA- M40-105D** - Proof of School Attendance Provided

OTHER CLIENT CORRESPONDENCE

- **727** B –30 day School Review Form

ATTACHMENTS

- School Attendance Requirements Informing Notice, (Attachment 1)
- School Attendance Release of Information, F063-30-386 (Attachment 2)
- School Attendance Verification, F063-30-393 (Attachment 3)
- Students absent for 15 days, F063-30-393A (Attachment 4)
- Students Not Enrolled, F063-30-2-393B (Attachment 5)
- School Code Request form (Attachment 6)

REFERENCES

- EAS Section
- 40-105.5(a)(b)(c)(d)(e)(f)(g)
- 40-028(.2)(.21)(.22)(.3)
- 42-712(.41)(.42)(.43)
- 42-719 (.1)(.2)(.3)(.31)(.32)(.33)(.34)
- ACL 98-35, 97-70, 04-50
- CalWORks Policy 100 E-8 Eligibility for Teens Turning Age 18
- School Attendance Resource Guide
- Worker Tool 8 – Orange County School Districts and School Codes
- Alerts Resource Guide

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