

**County of Orange Social Services Agency  
Family Self-Sufficiency**

**Program/Area:** CalWORKs/Welfare-To-Work

**Title:** Self-Initiated Program (SIP)

**Number:** 220

**Effective Date:** 05/01/2009

**Status:** Signature on file

**Revision**

**Date:** 12/16/2014

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**PURPOSE**

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidelines to be used when approving and monitoring Welfare-To-Work (WTW) participants into a Self-Initiated Program (SIP) WTW activity.

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**APPROVAL  
CRITERIA**

Any participant who at the time he/she is required to participate in WTW activities **AND** prior to the Appraisal process is already enrolled in an undergraduate degree or certificate program that leads to employment, may continue in that program during his/her CalWORKs 48-month time limit on cash aid if all of the following conditions are met:

1. The County determines that continuing in the program is likely to lead to self-supporting employment for that participant in a demand occupation in the local labor market.
2. The participant continues to make satisfactory progress in the program as determined per Policy 208 Satisfactory Progress .
3. The SIP is approved and agreed to as the WTW plan.

**Note:** When a participant exhausts the WTW 24-Month Time Clock, the participant will have to meet federal work participation requirements. Refer to Policy 207 WTW 24-Month Time Clock.

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**VOLUNTEERS**

An exempt individual may volunteer to participate and be approved as a SIP as long as he/she meets all of the following conditions:

- Enrolled in an educational program prior to the Appraisal process.
- The program leads to self-supporting employment for the participant in a demand occupation in the labor market.
- Complies with all other program regulations and makes satisfactory progress.

Volunteers are eligible to receive Supportive Services and do not have a minimum hourly participation requirement.

**Note:** Failure to make satisfactory progress may result in placement in a new WTW activity but will not result in a financial sanction for volunteers. Voluntary participants may end their participation at any time without penalty.

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**SIP VS. VOCATIONAL  
TRAINING**

SIP is a WTW activity where participants are self-enrolled in an approvable educational program prior to their WTW Appraisal date. Vocational Education and Training is a WTW activity where a participant has completed the WTW flow of activities, completed an Assessment, and has been referred to training by the Case Manager (CM) based on the results of the assessment report. Refer to Policy 223 Vocational Training for more information.

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## **APPROVED LIST OF SCHOOLS AND PROGRAMS**

Policy 221 Orange County List of Approved Educational Providers and Programs is a list of the approved schools and programs offered by local Community Colleges (Policy 221 A), Regional Occupational Programs (ROP - Policy 221 B) and Adult Basic Education (ABE - Policy 221 C) sites.

SIP programs and the educational provider must be approved by FSS Program before the participant's SIP goal can be approved if it is not included in Policy 221 A, B, or C Orange County List of Approved Educational Providers and Programs or in CalWIN as a provider for the SIP activity.

Private schools already evaluated by Program for approval, have been entered in CalWIN as educational providers. If the school/program is found either in CW Policy 221A, B, or C, or in CalWIN as a provider for the SIP activity, then the SIP may be approved. As this is an evolving process, some schools and programs may need to be approved or added to CalWIN. The CM shall search for an existing provider to see if it is already entered in CalWIN. If the provider is not in CalWIN, refer to the Adding Schools or Programs Not on Approved List section below.

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## **ADDING SCHOOLS OR PROGRAMS NOT ON APPROVED LIST**

If the participant's choice of school/program is not in CW Policy 221A, B, or C, or already entered in CalWIN as a provider, the CM will need to discuss with the participant and determine if the education plan selected by the participant could lead to employment in a demand occupation in the local labor market.

An employer's statement promising a job to the participant in that occupation when the participant completes his/her educational program may be used to verify a demand occupation in a local labor market. If this is not an option, then the CM will need to use documentation obtained from the Internet. One site available for this documentation is EDD's website:

<http://www.labormarketinfo.edd.ca.gov/>.

Once the local labor market demand documentation is on file in the WTW case and narrated in CalWIN Case Comments, the CM completes sections A, B, C, and E on the Request for Non Supportive Services/Vendors form. This form is sent to FSS Program via chain of command for evaluation and approval of the school before adding it to CalWIN.

**Note:** Do not send the Request for Non Supportive Services/Vendors form to the CalWIN Providers Mailbox. FSS Program will send the form to the CalWIN Providers Mailbox after approving the provider.

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## **FOUR-YEAR COLLEGES/ UNIVERSITIES/ PRIVATE SCHOOLS**

Participants may start their SIP at a four-year College/University or attend a Community College with the intention of transferring to a four-year College or University as long as it is included in the F063-41-05 Referral for Education/Training and follows the same basic career goal. Once the original approved program training goal has been obtained, the SIP is ended.

- If the participant obtained a four-year Bachelor's Degree of any kind, the participant will not be eligible to participate in a SIP unless the individual is pursuing a California regular classroom teaching credential in a College or University with an approved teacher credential program. This includes Bachelor's Degrees obtained from schools outside the USA. In this situation, if the participant decides to pursue any further educational activities that do not include an approved teaching credential program, the educational activities would need to be pursued independently and would not be a part of the approved WTW Plan.

**Note:** "Independently" means this is not a part of the approved WTW Plan and the hours spent in school would not be used to meet the participant's WTW 20/30/35 required hours of participation.

- If the participant did not obtain a four-year Bachelor's Degree of any kind, the participant may continue his/her education if unable to find unsubsidized employment after completion of a SIP and the Assessment recommends that further education is necessary. Any approved programs after completion of a SIP would be Vocational Education and Training activities.

Participants may remain in school during their CalWORKs 48-month time limit on cash aid only if it has been approved as part of the original training goal on the F063-41-05 Referral for Education/Training Plan.

**Note:** When a participant exhausts the WTW 24-Month Time Clock, the participant will have to meet federal work participation requirements. Refer to Policy 207 WTW 24-Month Time Clock.

- Participants cannot decide to pursue related education at an advanced level simply because they have time on aid remaining in CalWORKs and have completed their original goal.

- Participants may "volunteer" to add additional educational hours beyond their approved 20/30/35 hours on their WTW Plan.

**Note:** The participant may remove the voluntary additional hours from the WTW Plan at any time. When the participant requests to do this, a new WTW Plan will be completed. Refer to Policy 211 WTW Plan.

Participants intending to graduate from a four-year college or university may have a generic major (example: Liberal Arts) during the first year or two of school as long as the final training goal is listed on the F063-41-05 Referral for Education/Training.

- Although this is not a job-related degree program, it could be considered a SIP depending on the degree goal and the local labor market demand for their occupational goal with a four-year degree.

- Contact FSS Program via chain of command for evaluation of non-designated majors.

SIP participants are allowed to be enrolled at an approvable private educational providers program; however, the County does not pay tuition at such schools.

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## PRE-SIP

Pre-SIP is a WTW activity assigned by the CM when he/she identifies a case that is most likely going to be approved as a SIP because the participant has indicated he/she is currently enrolled in an education program. Pre-SIP allows the participant to receive necessary supportive services while final approval and documentation is pending. The CM should obtain proof of school enrollment, registration, or a class schedule prior to assigning the Pre-SIP activity.

- Supportive Services may be provided prior to signing a WTW Plan and obtaining the F063-41-05 Referral for Education/Referral if certain conditions are met.

Refer to Policy 315 Ancillary Supportive Services for specific details and requirements to issue supportive services to a Pre-SIP case.

- In no instance is a participant eligible for Supportive Services prior to the approval of his/her cash aid.

- If the Pre-SIP case is denied SIP status, the participant may finish the current semester before being assigned to a different WTW activity.

- After a Pre-SIP case is denied, the participant must return to the regular WTW flow of activities unless they have changed to an approvable program that begins the next semester.

**Note:** The F063-41-623 WTW SIP Denial Notice of Action (NOA) must be issued to the participant.

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## WELFARE-TO-WORK PLAN

Participation in a SIP must be reflected in the WTW Plan. Refer to [Policy 211 WTW Plan](#) for information on developing the WTW Plan. If the participant will not meet the minimum hourly participation requirements (20/30/35) with his/her education activity alone, the WTW Plan must include other concurrent activities

- The CM must assist the participant to identify other activities as appropriate.
- At the time of SIP approval, the CM and participant shall review the school's website to determine the length and dates of school breaks.
- If the school break is longer than one week, then appropriate WTW activities need to be included in the WTW Plan to cover school breaks that last up to six weeks. If the school break is more than six weeks (i.e. summer break), a new WTW Plan shall be developed before the break begins. The school break activities should be explained to and agreed upon by the participant, so the participant knows what is expected of them during this time.

**Note:** If the participant is assigned to a bridging activity that requires a referral to be submitted, send the referral no earlier than one month prior to the begin date of the bridging activity.

- The SIP completion training goal should be clearly indicated on the Referral for Education/Training (F063-41-05) and the WTW Plan (WTW 2). The Activity section on page 2 of the WTW Plan shall reflect the intended employment goal of the program and be as specific as possible (i.e. SIP - AA in Child Development). "School" and "Working with children" is not an acceptable goal as it is not career specific.

- If the individual's SIP and concurrent activities are such that the individual will meet federal participation requirements, the right side of the WTW Plan (Federal Work Activities) is completed. Otherwise, the left side of the WTW Plan ("CalWORKs WTW 24-Month Time Clock") is completed.

- Example 1 shows a completed WTW Plan for a SIP activity that is counting towards the Vocational Education 12-month lifetime limit.

- Example 2 shows a completed WTW Plan for a SIP activity that is not counting towards the Vocational Education 12-month lifetime limit.

- Select *Job skills training directly related to employment* on page 1 of the WTW Plan if the participant has a GED/HS diploma.

- Select *Education directly related to employment* on page 1 of the WTW Plan if the participant does not have a GED/HS diploma.

**Note:** If the participant's current program does not meet SIP approval criteria, the WTW Plan must show the specific date that the current semester or quarter will end. This will be the end of the participant's SIP unless he/she has transferred to an approved program, at which time a new WTW Plan must be completed reflecting the program's goals and time frame.

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## **SIGNING A NEW WTW PLAN EACH SEMESTER**

Prior to the start of each new school semester, the participant must meet with the CM to sign a new WTW Plan. Any change in activity requires signing a new WTW Plan. A new semester class schedule is considered a change in class activity. The new WTW Plan will reflect the change of the new semester dates and class schedule. The final training goal will remain unchanged. Failure or refusal of the participant to sign a new WTW Plan each semester would be reason to initiate the non-compliance process. This policy applies to the summer session and other intersessions as well. Refer to Policy 240 Good Cause/Compliance/Sanction for more information on the non-compliance process.

- School staff does NOT need to sign a new referral form (F063-41-05).
- The participant's class schedule is sufficient documentation.
- CMs may need to meet with the participant on campus to sign the WTW Plan if an office appointment is not feasible or timely so as not to interrupt participation.
- The participant should not have his/her activity delayed or interrupted because the new WTW Plan has not been signed. However, the new WTW Plan needs to be completed as close to the start of the new semester as possible.

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## **SELECTION OF ALLOWABLE ACTIVITIES AND CLASSES**

The CM should consult with the designated CalWORKs College Counselors at the community colleges to determine if work-study, internships, or other approved activities are available.

- Classes required to meet a programs General Education requirement are allowed. These classes may be outside the primary area of study for the SIP goal.
- Elective classes are allowed. These may also be outside the primary area of study for the SIP goal, and should be reasonable in terms of supportive service requests for supplies. Refer to Policy 315 Ancillary Supportive Services.

The CalWORKs College Counselors are trained to advise the participants on which classes are best for their goal and schedules.

Areas of concern should be communicated to the Educational Liaison in the Regional Office.

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## ONLINE CLASSES AND DISTANCE LEARNING

Online and Distance Learning classes are offered at many local colleges and can be approved if the participant is enrolled in an approved online school and program.

If the specific school and general program is on the list in CW Policy 221 A, B, or C or the school is already entered in CalWIN as a provider, the online class may be used as part of SIP. If the school/program is not listed in CW Policy 221 A, B, or C, or not already entered in CalWIN as a provider, contact FSS Program through the chain of command for evaluation and approval of the school **before** approving the SIP activity.

Supportive Services including transportation, ancillary expenses, and child care are available for participants in approved online or Distance Learning classes. For example, transportation would be needed for attending in-person examinations, and the participant may need to purchase books required by the online course. Child care shall be provided based on the individual's need for the services, taking into account scheduling and other factors. The following scenarios are examples of when CalWORKs Stage One Child Care services may or may not be provided:

- A participant requests child care while taking an online course that must be taken during a specific day(s) and time(s) and there is no able and available member of the Assistance Unit to provide care during that time. In this scenario, child care services may be provided.
- A participant requests child care for a school age child while taking online courses that can be taken anytime. Under this scenario, child care services may not be provided unless there is good cause for the participant to take the online course(s) while the child is not in school.

Refer to Policy 315 Ancillary Supportive Services, Policy 301 Child Care Eligibility, and Policy 310 Transportation Supportive Services for more information.

As distance learning is available from sources other than the local community colleges, verification of hours and progress must be reported. Each school may use a different process for monitoring but the verification provided should reasonably verify the participant's hours spent online and be signed by the provider. The F063-41-06 Attendance/Progress Report is an option for the distance learning provider to report the participant's hours and progress. Time spent online must be monitored by the provider and reported to SSA.

There are some schools that only offer distance learning occupational and degree programs. Because some of these schools are private, the CM will need to work with the participant and the school to ensure the school will provide a monthly report to the County that the provider will sign verifying attendance and participation in the required hours.

If the school/program does not have a process to verify hours and is unable to provide a monthly report, the participant would self-certify the hours as a last resort by completing the F063-41-06 Attendance/Progress Report. The participant will also have to provide his/her grade report when issued by the school to serve as verification that he/she is making satisfactory progress.

**Note:** As it is the participant's choice to select an online class, WTW Ancillary Supportive Services would not cover the expense of purchasing a Personal Computer or Internet Services for the participant's use in this learning format.

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## TELECOURSES

If the specific school and program is listed in CW Policy 221 A, B, or C or the school is already entered in CalWIN as a provider, then the televised class may be considered as part of the SIP's course work.

Other classes may be approved if appropriate to the program and goal. Contact FSS Program via chain of command for evaluation and approval of the school and program not listed in CW Policy 221 A, B, or C.

**Note:** As it is the participant's choice to select a telecourse, WTW Ancillary Supportive Services would not cover the expense of purchasing a television or other related equipment for the participant's use to complete this class.

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## RECIPIENTS WITH FOUR-YEAR COLLEGE DEGREES

Any individual who possesses a four-year baccalaureate degree of any kind will not be eligible to participate in a SIP unless the individual is pursuing a California regular classroom teaching credential in a College or University with an approved teacher credential program. This includes Bachelor's Degrees obtained from schools outside the USA.

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## EVALUATE AVAILABILITY OF EDUCATIONAL LOANS AND GRANTS

When the CM asks the participant if they have any educational loans or grants, the WTW 8 Student Financial Aid Statement Welfare-To-Work Supportive Services is required. The WTW 8 will be reviewed and completed by the participant and imaged into OnBase. The participant has the option to decline the use of educational loans or grants to pay for supportive services available to them through WTW. A new WTW 8 is not needed at the beginning of each school term. If there was a change on the participant's decision, a new WTW 8 needs to be completed. After completion of the WTW 8, narrate in CalWIN Case Comments.

If the participant has the option and chooses to decline the use of educational loans or grants to pay for the required books, supplies, and mandatory fees, the supportive services are covered by Ancillary.

If the participant does not have the option to decline the use of educational loans or grants for supportive services (i.e. private schools that the educational loans and grants are dispersed directly to the school and not the participant), then only the "out of pocket" expenses for the participant are covered by Ancillary. Refer to Policy 315 Ancillary Supportive Services for more information.

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## **PARTICIPATION HOURS REQUIREMENT**

CMs are to follow the participation guidelines in Policy 202 Work Participation Hours and Activities.

### **Single-parent families**

A participant in an approved SIP is required to participate an average of 20 or 30 hours per week in allowable hours.

- An average of 20 hours per week for single parents with a child under six years old
- An average of 30 hours per week for single parents without a child under six years old in allowable hours.

The only exception is when the participant is an exempt volunteer. Hourly participation requirements do not apply to exempt volunteers. Refer to Policy 202 Work Participation Hours and Activities and Policy 100-F1 WTW Exemptions for more information.

### **Two-Parent Families**

If both mandatory participants in a two-parent household are in a SIP, each person must participate an average of 30 hours per week in allowable hours. They cannot split the hours as in other situations.

- The total hours of participation for this two-parent SIP household would then be 60 hours. The only exception is if one of the participants is an exempt volunteer.
- If one of the SIP participants is an exempt volunteer and the other participant is a mandatory participant, the mandatory SIP participant is required to participate an average of 30 hours per week and the remainder of the 35 hours must be met by either the mandatory SIP participant or the exempt volunteer.

**Exception:** If the exempt volunteer's exemption is based on a disability, the mandatory parent would be required to participate an average of 20 or 30 hours per week. The 35-hour requirement only applies for all other exemptions non-disability based. If one of the SIP participants is an exempt volunteer and the other participant is a mandatory participant, the mandatory SIP participant is required to participate an average of 30 hours per week and the remainder of the 35 hours must be met by either the mandatory SIP participant or the exempt volunteer.

- Volunteers do not have a minimum hour requirement.
- If one of the mandatory participants in a two-parent household is in a SIP and the other mandatory participant is not in a SIP, the mandatory SIP participant is required to participate an average of 30 hours per week and the remainder of the 35 hours must be met by either the mandatory SIP participant or the other mandatory participant.

"Allowable" hours include:

- Classroom time
- Academic Credit Study Time

**Note:** Effective Spring Semester 2015, Non-Credit study time hours are no longer allowable hours for SIP participants.

- Laboratory time, as required by the instructor
- Internship time
- Work Study
- Other currently approved WTW activities (Refer to WT 15 - WTW Activities Worker Tool)

Non-education related activities may be scheduled; however, they are not allowed if they would interfere with the SIP activity and the participant's educational plan.

**Concurrent Activities:** If the SIP activity hours are insufficient to meet the 20/30/35 hourly requirement, the participant must be assigned concurrently in other allowable WTW activities.

- Based on the participant's need, this could also include English-as-a-Second Language (ESL), Adult Basic Education, GED, or other approved WTW activities.
- The WTW Plan would need to reflect the mutually agreed upon concurrent activities.

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**USE OF JSR, JOB SKILLS,  
AND STEPS**

VTC/VTR participants may be required to enroll in Job Search Readiness (JSR), Job Skills, or Striving Towards Elevating Personal Success (STEPS) if their VTC/VTR activities do not meet required participation hours. This would most often apply during break periods from school. The 6-week maximum per year participation limit for JSR and Life Skills still applies. Refer to Policy 204 Job Search - JSR and Policy 214 ResCare Academy for more information on JSR and Life Skills.

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## **ACADEMIC CREDIT STUDY TIME**

Academic credit study time is part of the SIP WTW activity that counts toward meeting the 20/30/35 hourly requirement. Academic credit study time is when the study hours have units assigned to them. The participant must receive academic credit in order for the study time hours to be included in the SIP participant's WTW Plan. Effective Spring Semester 2015, non-credit study time hours are not allowable hours for SIP participant's and cannot be included in the WTW Plan. Non-credit study time continues to be allowable hours for Vocational Education and Training, Adult Basic Education, and English-as-a-Second Language.

SIP participants who have non-credit study time hours and who do not meet the required participation hours without counting the non-credit study time, shall be offered the opportunity to attend a one-day Assessment in order for the participant to make an informed decision about the activities that may replace or supplement the SIP hours in his/her WTW Plan. The SIP participant can voluntarily choose to end his/her SIP at any time before the program is completed. The CM must have a discussion with the participant, offer the one-day Assessment, discuss the results and recommendations from the Assessment, and narrate the participant's decision in CalWIN Case Comments.

If the participant agrees to a one-day Assessment, the CM shall submit the Career Assistance and Assessment Referral form F063-41-162 and include a note in the Worker Comments section stating the participant is currently enrolled in the SIP activity and needs to be evaluated for Vocational Education and Training. Following the Assessment, the CM and participant will participate in a WTW Plan discussion to determine the best and appropriate direction. Per Policy 211 WTW Plan and Policy 210 Vocational Assessment, Assessment results should be reviewed with the participant and used as a guide to create the WTW Plan, but should not exclusively dictate which activities he/she must attend.

The SIP participant may voluntarily end his/her SIP activity and be assigned to the Vocational Education and Training activity which can include supervised study time hours for the non-academic credit participation hours. The CM must send the WTW SIP Discontinuance NOA F063-41-332 to notify the participant that he/she requested to end his/her SIP activity.

If the participant remains in the SIP activity and the SIP participation, as determined by the number of hours required for classroom, laboratory, or internship activities does not meet the weekly hourly participation requirements, he/she must meet the minimum required hours by including concurrent activities in his/her WTW Plan.

The academic credit study time must be monitored for attendance.

CalWORKs counselors may utilize the F063-41-06 to verify the academic credit study time and are not required to submit a separate attendance report. For schools without a CalWORKs counselor, the F063-41-06 Attendance/Progress Report can be completed by the provider to verify the hours and progress or a separate attendance report, time sheet or other documented proof of attendance from the school signed by the provider verifying the hours can be submitted monthly.

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**SPECIAL CLASSES AND LEARNING DISABILITY**

The hours spent in special classes or tutorials determined to be necessary by the educational institution to mitigate barriers to educational success for SIP participants identified as having learning disabilities may be counted towards the 20/30/35 hourly requirement. A letter from the educational provider must be on file. Refer to Policy 210A Learning Disability Screening and Evaluations. When a SIP participant needs to be tested for a learning disability related to his/her education plan, it is expected that the college will complete the testing. (Refer to Policy 210A Learning Disability Screening and Evaluations.)

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**SCHOOL BREAKS**

During breaks of **one week or less** the participant's WTW activity that would normally be scheduled counts as participation. If the break is **longer than one week**, the 20/30/35 hour rule will apply.

- The CM should anticipate helping the participant comply with the minimum hourly participation requirements during this time by advising the participant of activity options at the time the SIP is approved.
- This mutual decision should be reflected on the WTW Plan and narrated in CalWIN Case Comments.

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**DISCUSSING SATISFACTORY PROGRESS EXPECTATION**

When setting up a SIP WTW Plan, it is important to advise the participant of the requirements while participating in educational activities in Policy 208 Satisfactory Progress. The participant must sign the agreement of understanding per Policy 208 by completing the F063-41-202 Academic and Progress Expectations form. Policy 208 was developed with and agreed to by the community college representatives in Orange County and follows their own academic standards. The CM shall give the participant a copy of the signed form, image the form into OnBase, and narrate in CalWIN Case Comments that F063-41-202 was explained to the participant and signed by the participant.

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**REFERRAL FOR EDUCATION/TRAINING**

The CM is to complete the appropriate fields on the F063-41-05 Referral for Education/Training form and provide it to the participant. The CM will explain the form to the participant. The participant will sign the release of information authorization on the form, take the form to the community college or other provider to complete the school/agency fields, and return the completed form back to the CM.

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**ATTENDANCE REPORTING**

Monthly attendance reports are required. It is the participant's responsibility to submit the report monthly and timely to the CM. The school counselor can assist, but they are not held responsible for delays or failure to report by the participant. The F063-41-06 Attendance/Progress Report form shall be used. Self-reporting by the participant is still acceptable for monthly reporting if the provider will not complete the attendance report. Completed reports are due by the 10th calendar day of each month. Refer to the Participation Tracking Resource Guide for instructions on entering participation hours in CalWIN.

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## **PROGRESS AND GRADE REPORTING**

Participants must submit school documentation, such as grade reports, or other verified acceptable documentation from the training or educational providers to verify satisfactory progress at the end of each semester or grading period.

If the program is scheduled to last for less than three months, then grade reports or progress reports need to be provided at the program's midpoint.

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## **WORKING WITH COLLEGE COUNSELORS AND OTHER EDUCATION PARTNERS**

SSA staff working with a participant in an educational training activity must maintain professional and regular communication with the CalWORKs College Counselors at the schools. Orange County Community Colleges and Regional Occupation Center Providers (ROCP's) receive funding from the State to provide professional counselors that are trained to assist participants who are in the CalWORKs program. These counselors follow guidelines given to them by the State Chancellor's Office.

- College Counselors receive training about State, Federal and County regulations within CalWORKs.

- In some cases the College Counselors may be authorized to act on behalf of the participant as an Authorized Representative (AR) with the participant's approval. The regulations allow an AR to act on behalf of the participant. College counselors may also advocate on behalf of the participant and are allowed to do so if the action is reasonable and not disruptive to operations and the case management process.

- College Counselors also review specific policy issues and act on the advice of their own legal counsel. This may include representing a participant and speaking about their situation with the judge during a Fair Hearing.

- Developing professional, respectful and open communication is important to guarantee the success of the SIP participant and create a working relationship of mutual intent that will assist the participant into self-sufficiency.

- At no time however, should the actions of a College Counselor interfere with SSA staff or their ability to follow and administer regulations and policy as required by law.

- Problems should be documented and reported immediately to the Supervisor/SSA Regional Educational Liaison (see below for more information) who should follow the chain of command and advise FSS Program as soon as possible.

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## **SSA EDUCATIONAL LIAISONS**

Each Regional Office has selected a primary and a back-up [Educational Liaison](#) to work with the CM, the providers, college counselors, and assist with SIP related case questions. Their main goal is to work with the educational provider and CalWORKs staff to handle complex or unusual case situations with educational and supportive service related issues. The liaison may contact various staff for specific information related to a SIP case. Staff shall provide the liaisons with any assistance requested whenever possible.

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## **ENTERING SCHOOL INFORMATION IN CALWIN**

The CM is not able to enter information in the Data Collection subsystem in CalWIN as it may impact eligibility to benefits. This may apply to employment information, work-study income, and financial aid information. The Intake/Continuing workers shall enter this information since the entries can affect eligibility to benefits in CalWIN. The CM will send case information about the participant via the F063-41-211 Employment Services Communication form to the Intake/Continuing worker.

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## SUMMARY OF SIP APPROVAL PROCESS

The following is a summary of the SIP approval process:

1. Evaluate case for Pre-SIP status if appropriate.
  1. Review the WTW 24-Month Time Clock with the participant, including informing the participant that SIP may count as the Vocational Education federal core activity for a 12-month lifetime limit.
  1. Coordinate with the participant on submitting a completed F063-41-05 Referral for Education/Training.
  1. Complete the WTW 2 WTW Plan Activity Assignment.
  1. Evaluate the availability of educational loans and grants. Complete and have the participant sign the WTW 8 form. Send a copy to the Intake/Continuing worker and image into OnBase. Narrate in CalWIN Case Comments.
  1. Discuss supportive services, provide required informing notices and evaluate the need for child care, transportation and ancillary services. The advance payment or reimbursement should be provided without delay with proper verifications per Policy 315 Ancillary Supportive Services and Policy 310 Transportation Supportive Services.
    - Availability of Supportive Services should not become a participation barrier to someone in an approved SIP.
  1. **Approve ancillary funds for books timely, as participants generally cannot begin classes without required books or supplies each semester.**
    - SIP participants always need supportive service assistance at the start of a new semester. This is usually August, June, and January. (Refer to Policy 315 Ancillary Supportive Services, Policy 310 Transportation Supportive Services, and/or Policy 301 Childcare Eligibility for more information on supportive services).
  1. Discuss attendance reporting with the participant and F063-41-06 WTW Attendance/Progress Report form.
  2. Discuss grade reports with the participant and Policy 208 Satisfactory Progress.
    - Explain F063-41-202 Academic and Progress Expectations to the participant and ensure the participant understands the requirements. Narrate in CalWIN Case Comments that F063-41-202 was explained to the participant and signed by the participant.
    - The participant will be required to provide copies of grade reports at least quarterly.
    - If the program is scheduled to last for less than three months, then grade reports need to be provided at the program's midpoint.
    - Failure to progress per Policy 208 Satisfactory Progress may result in a SIP denial or discontinuance and assignment to a different WTW activity.
- Note:** F063-41-623 WTW SIP Denial shall be sent to the participant when the SIP is Denied and F063-41-332 WTW SIP Discontinuance shall be sent to the participant when the SIP is discontinued.
1. Complete all appropriate entries:
    - Schedule the SIP.
    - Send F063-41-211 Employment Services Communication form to the Intake/Continuing worker with a copy of the WTW 2 plan.
  1. Narrate in CalWIN Case Comments. Refer to Case Comments Resource Guide.
  1. Complete CalWIN SIP entries as directed in the WTW Plan Resource Guide.

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**CASE-BY-CASE SITUATIONS AND QUESTIONS**

Due to the variation in educational programs and educational providers, as well as the different needs of our participants, there may be situations that require individual evaluation for SIP participants. CMs should work with their Supervisors and the Regional Educational Liaisons when questions arise that are not addressed in the policy. Contact FSS Program through the appropriate chain of command for case-by-case situations that need further clarification or evaluation.

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**SCHOOL AND/OR MAJOR CHANGE**

FSS Program must evaluate and approve any case that involves a change in the participant's school and/or major course of study that is different from the information included in the original and agreed upon F063-41-05 Referral for Education/Training. Provide all of the following information via chain of command to FSS Program:

1. Reason for the request to change majors.
2. Provide the name of the agency that the school is accredited by.
3. Compare Academic/Education Plan of previous major and new major. Let FSS Program know if all classes will transfer to new major. If all classes will not transfer to new major, list the classes that will not transfer. Attach verification of the Academic/Education Plan.
4. Compare the F063-41-05 of previous major and new major. Let FSS Program know if the date of completion remains the same or if it is different. Attach verification of the F063-41-05 Referral for Education/Training.
5. Provide verification (i.e. report card and/or the F063-41-06 Attendance/Progress Report that the client is currently making satisfactory progress in the SIP activity.

FSS Program will evaluate the request and notify the region if the request is approved or denied.

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**SIP INTERRUPTION**

If SIP participation is interrupted due to an exemption or good cause, participation may be resumed in the original approved SIP if all of the following conditions are met.

1. Good cause criteria are met. Refer to **Policy 240 Good Cause/Compliance/Sanction** for a list of acceptable reasons.
2. Participant was in good standing at the time of interruption.
3. Participant continues to meet the SIP approval criteria.
4. A sanctioned participant may resume the SIP if the sanction is cured and verification is provided that he/she has maintained good standing in his/her SIP prior to and during the sanction period.

Narrate the reason for the SIP interruption in CalWIN Case Comments.

A new F063-41-05 Referral for Education/Training will need to be completed if the program completion date has changed due to the absence

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## **BREAK IN AID AND SIP APPROVALS**

Any approved WTW case that subsequently closes will not be eligible to be considered a SIP upon reapplication. The initial application is the opportunity to be evaluated as a SIP case. All subsequent case approvals are considered re-applications and therefore the participant would not be enrolled in school prior to the initial required Appraisal.

There are two exceptions to this policy:

1. WTW participants with a break in aid of less than 30 days who had an active WTW Plan with a SIP activity when they left aid will continue in their plan if appropriate per Policy 211 WTW Plan.
2. If the case has been closed over 12 consecutive months and upon reapplication the participant's situation has changed significantly, the participant may return to the start of the WTW process and be evaluated for approval of a SIP if he/she is enrolled in an approvable program prior to the Appraisal.

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## **DENIAL OF A SIP**

When SIP approval criteria are not met, issue F063-41-623 WTW SIP Denial. If the participant's current program is not on the approvable training list and the participant fails to select an acceptable course of study, the SIP may be terminated. The participant must be assigned to another approved WTW activity.

**Note:** Participants in non-approvable SIP's must be given the opportunity to continue their educational program until the end of the current quarter or semester before terminating the SIP and returning to the WTW flow of activities.

Narrate the denial reason in CalWIN Case Comments.

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## **COMPLETION OF THE SIP GOAL**

After the educational training program goal has been completed, the participant returns to the regular flow of WTW activities. The SIP is completed when the educational training goal is achieved and verified by the provider. A participant is not allowed to remain in school with a new goal simply because they have not exhausted the 48-month time limit.

- After completion the participant will usually be assigned to JSR if he/she has not completed 6 weeks of JSR within the last 12 months.
- If not full-time employed, the participant is referred to Assessment.
- CalWIN should be updated to show the SIP training is completed.
- Issue F063-41-332 WTW SIP Discontinuance NOA to the participant.

**Note:** The "As of" date entered on the NOA is the last day of the participant's SIP program in which the WTW Supportive Services would be provided.

- Upon Graduation, the CM should make an effort to acknowledge the participants accomplishment.
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## REFERENCES

EAS 42-711.54  
ACL 98-41; 99-32; 99-38; 04-41; 13-68; 14-16; 14-47  
ACIN 1-84-06; I-47-08  
Policy 100-F1 WTW Exemptions  
Policy 202 Work Participation Hours and Activities  
Policy 204 Job Search - JSR  
Policy 207 WTW 24-Month Time Clock  
Policy 208 Satisfactory Progress  
Policy 210 Vocational Assessment  
Policy 210A Learning Disability Evaluation  
Policy 211 WTW Plan  
Policy 214 ResCare Academy  
Policy 221-A Orange County List of Approved Educational Providers and Programs  
Policy 221-B Orange County List of Approved Educational Providers  
Policy 221-C Orange County List of Approved Educational Providers  
Policy 223 Vocational Training  
Policy 240 Good Cause/Compliance/Sanction  
Policy 301 Child Care Eligibility  
Policy 310, Transportation Payments  
Policy 315 Ancillary Payments  
Worker Tool 15 - WTW Activities Worker Tool  
Worker Tool 33 - WTW Activities Matrix

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## ATTACHMENTS

SSA Regional Office Educational Liaison Contacts  
WTW Plan Example 1: SIP activity counting towards Vocational Education 12-month lifetime limit  
WTW Plan Example 2: SIP activity not counting towards Vocational Education 12-month lifetime limit and participant graduated from HS

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## FORMS

WTW 8 Student Financial Aid Statement Welfare To Work Supportive Services  
WTW 2 Welfare-To-Work Plan Activity Assignment  
F063-41-05 Referral for Education/Training  
F063-41-202 Academic and Progress Expectations  
F063-41-06 WTW Attendance/Progress Report  
F063-41-211 Employment Services Communication Document  
F063-41-332 WTW SIP Discontinuance  
F063-41-623 WTW SIP Denial  
Request for Non Supportive Services/Vendors

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## RESOURCE GUIDES

WTW Plan/Adding Activities With/Without Plan  
Participation Tracking Resource Guide