

## Department of Social Services CalWORKs Child Care Programs Bureau Quarterly Newsletter

APRIL 2007

### **A Timeout with Linda Lewis:**

CalWORKs Child Care Programs Bureau Chief

Greetings Everyone,

As the new Bureau Chief of the Child Care Programs Bureau at the California Department of Social Services (CDSS), I want to take this opportunity to introduce myself to all of you. First, let me tell you a little about myself. I have been working for the State of California in a variety of positions since 1996 when I started as a Student Auditor with the Franchise Tax Board. In January of 2001, I began working for the Department of Finance as the analyst on the child care assignment. During that time, I was responsible for the Department of Education's (CDE) Child Care Budget. In August of 2006, I accepted the position of the Child Care Programs Bureau Chief with CDSS. For the last few months, I have attended many meetings, participated in conference calls and met with many of you as a group or individually to discuss a variety of your concerns with the intent of identifying the major issues in this program.

During the short time I have been here, it is clear to me that child care is an important issue for all of us. It is the goal of this bureau to ensure delivery of child care services to all of our clients.

With that in mind, I am excited to e-mail you our first Child Care Programs Bureau

Quarterly Newsletter with the intent that it will provide information, as well as a vehicle, to continue to expand our method of communication on child care issues. I am committed to fostering partnerships that will enable us to narrow our challenges in all three stages of child care and provide the child care community with a variety of tools to express their concerns/suggestions on a continual flow. I encourage you to send your thoughts, suggestions and comments to the child care news e-mail address [ccnews@dss.ca.gov](mailto:ccnews@dss.ca.gov), we want to hear from You!

### **Child Care Program Updates:**

#### **Proposed Trustline Regulations**

The department released the proposed trustline regulations and received oral comments during the public hearing held November 29, 2006 and written comments from October 13 to November 29, 2006. We are currently working on responding to the comments and making the appropriate revisions. The proposed regulation changes would align policy with statute.

## TANF Reauthorization

The federal Deficit Reduction Act (DRA) was enacted in February, 2006 and reauthorized the Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF). The DRA made substantial changes to the TANF program and funding requirements. These changes required Department-wide, coordinated responses within very short timeframes. The CDSS has convened a workgroup of stakeholders to address the TANF changes and their impact on CalWORKs. The groups are considering policy, statutory and regulatory changes to better align the CalWORKs Program to the changes in TANF, thereby reducing the risk of significant penalties.

The CDSS Child Care Programs convened a workgroup of stakeholders to discuss the definition of "commonly" available child care to those that are "actually" available in order to ensure that families cannot be sanctioned for not choosing child care that in fact may not be accessible. The workgroup will continue to discuss this issue.

## Child Care Program Integrity

Pursuant to Provision 7 of Item 6110-001-0890 of the Budget Act of 2006, the California Department of Education, Alternative Payment Monitoring Unit has completed the annual error rate audit of child care programs. The audit was conducted from December 2005 through June 2006. During this period, 31 of the state's 84 AP contractors were reviewed; 14 of the contractors also provide Stage 1 services; however, Stage 1 files were not reviewed.

## Proposed Legislation:

**AB 975** was introduced on February 22, 2007, by Assembly Member Solorio. This bill would add a section to the Education code to require resource and referral (R&R) programs to provide training and support to license-exempt child care providers in a culturally and linguistically sensitive manner. This bill would also provide \$2,900,000 of state

General Funds to the California Department of Education to distribute to the R&Rs for this purpose.

**SB 197** was introduced on February 7, 2007, by State Senate Member Duchenev. This bill would amend existing law to require that a child who is receiving CPS and has a change of foster care placement would not terminate the child care subsidy but rather continue to receive subsidized services, if their eligibility for such services still applies.

**SB 635** was introduced on February 23, 2007, by State Senate Member Margett. This bill expresses intent of the Legislature to enact legislation to establish best practices for the prevention, detection, identification, and investigation of fraud committed by recipients of stage two and stage three child care services pursuant to the CalWORKs program.

**SB 693** was introduced February 23, 2007, by State Senate Member Ashburn. This bill amends existing law to stipulate that in counties with Trustline Automated Registration Process (TARP) and LiveScan, payments to license-exempt providers are prohibited for any time that the provider is not either Trustline registered or exempt from Trustline registration. The bill proposes that payment immediately cease to a provider when it is discovered that the provider was convicted of a crime for which no exemption can be granted or the Trustline registration is revoked.

## County Questions:

If you need assistance for policy interpretations of the CalWORKs Stage One Child Care regulations, e-mail questions to [childcarequestions@dss.ca.gov](mailto:childcarequestions@dss.ca.gov).

## QUESTION:

The Non-Needy Relative is the caretaker and has care and control for two children. She works full time. The mother has returned to the home.

The mother of the two children has been providing child care for the non-needy relative during the hours the non-needy relative is at work. The mother is in the assistance unit. The mother is required to participate in a welfare-to-work plan. She states that she cannot participate unless she can get child care (supportive services) for the two children.

**ANSWER:**

Based on this scenario, the mother is included in the Assistance Unit with her children because of the CalWORKs mandatory inclusion rule which requires that parents be aided with their children, even though the parent does not have care and control of the children (Manual of Policy and Procedures (MPP), Section 82-820.33).

Current regulations state that child care shall be paid for every client when they are participating in a county approved welfare to work (WtW) activity (MPP, Sections 47-220.21 through .22). Since the mother is a current recipient of CalWORKs cash assistance and expected to participate in WTW activities, the mother is eligible for child care for the two children only during the hours she participates in the county approved welfare to work activities (MPP, Sections 47-401.4 through .43). She is not eligible to receive child care to cover the hours that the non-needy relative is available to provide services.

**Child Care Bureau Sharing Time:**

**Employee Recognition:**

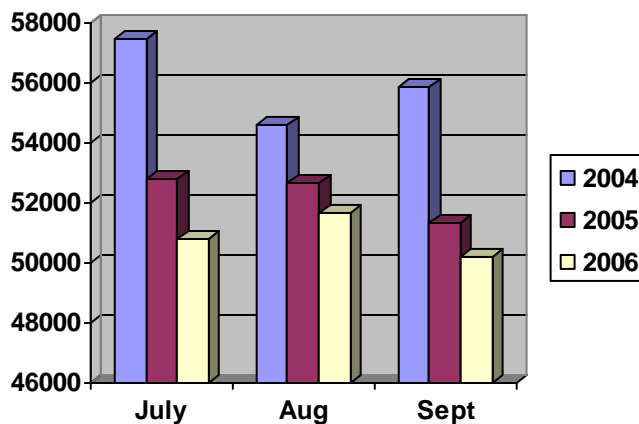
Suzanne McNamee has worked for the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) for over nineteen years. In two different programs, Food Stamps and Child Care, she has assisted counties in developing plans and implementing new or revised program regulations.

Suzanne's organization of program resources merited recognition by the Director of CDSS and she was awarded a Best of the Best 2004 Outstanding Employee Award for this effort. She continues to share her knowledge with the newer Child Care Program Bureau staff.

**Other Information:**

The Child Care Advisory Meeting will be held on Monday, May 7, 2007, from 9:30 to 3:30 at 744 P Street Sacramento, California in room 1850.

**Number of Children Served Statewide in Stage One Child Care:**



CalWORKs Child Care Programs Bureau

Please send your thoughts, suggestions and/or comments to the child care news email address at [ccnews@dss.ca.gov](mailto:ccnews@dss.ca.gov).