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**WELFARE AND INSTITUTIONS CODE - WIC**

**DIVISION 9. PUBLIC SOCIAL SERVICES [10000 - 18999.98]** ( Division 9 added by Stats. 1965, Ch. 1784. )

**PART 2. ADMINISTRATION [10500 - 10985]** ( Part 2 added by Stats. 1965, Ch. 1784. )

**CHAPTER 4.1. Statewide Automated Welfare System [10816 - 10824.5]** ( Heading of Chapter 4.1 amended by Stats. 1984, Ch. 268, Sec. 39.5. )

**10816.** The system shall have the following goals:

- (a) Prompt and accurate verification of eligibility.
- (b) Accurate computation and timely disbursement of benefits for such public assistance programs.
- (c) Equitable, timely, and consistent treatment of recipients within each program.
- (d) Reduction of administrative complexity.
- (e) Strict enforcement of management and fiscal controls.
- (f) Collection of management information.

(Added by Stats. 1979, Ch. 282.)

**10817.** The department shall seek advice and assistance from the State Department of Health Services and counties in the planning and implementation of the system so that efficient, effective, and equitable administration of public assistance programs can be maintained.

(Amended by Stats. 1979, Ch. 1133.)

**10818.** The department shall submit to the Joint Legislative Budget Committee by August 1, 1984, a detailed work plan for the implementation of the statewide automated welfare system. The work plan shall include at least the following:

- (a) A detailed description of the functions to be performed by the system.
- (b) The sequence of the functions to be assumed by the system, and the dates on which the functions would be assumed.
- (c) The long-range design goals for California's welfare computer systems.
- (d) The cost of the equipment and the administrative costs of implementing the system.
- (e) The impact of such a system on the administration of such public assistance programs.
- (f) Mechanisms by which the savings resulting from computer systems development can be recouped through reduced welfare administrative costs.
- (g) A detailed description of how the data will be collected, stored, and disseminated to protect the privacy of individuals to ensure the confidentiality of such data.
- (h) Recommendations for necessary legislative changes to implement the system.

The department shall provide to the counties no later than July 15, 1984, copies of the draft of the detailed work plan. The counties may submit no later than August 15, 1984, to the Joint Legislative Budget Committee their comments and recommendations on the detailed work plan.

(Amended by Stats. 1984, Ch. 268, Sec. 40.7. Effective June 30, 1984.)

**10819.** The department may test the system in several counties prior to actual statewide implementation. Criteria in selecting county test sites may include high dollar error rates for overpayments and payments to ineligible, high administrative unit costs, size of county, and scope of data-processing activities.

The department may delay implementation of the system in counties where not cost effective. If the implementation is delayed in such counties, the counties shall make available their data on a timely basis so that a statewide file on public assistance recipients can be maintained.

*(Amended by Stats. 1984, Ch. 268, Sec. 40.9. Effective June 30, 1984.)*

**10820.** To ensure statewide uniformity in program administration, the department shall do the following:

- (a) Develop and publish an exclusive manual of standards procedures for use by county welfare departments in their daily administration of public assistance programs.
- (b) Provide a comprehensive training package for the use of the uniform standards manual.
- (c) Develop standard forms to use with the statewide automated welfare system.

*(Amended by Stats. 1984, Ch. 268, Sec. 41.2. Effective June 30, 1984.)*

**10823.** Nothing in this chapter shall be construed to reduce or otherwise impair the authority of the State Department of Health Services under Sections 10740 and 14100.1 as the single state agency responsible for administration of the medical assistance program. However, the State Department of Social Services shall develop and implement a statewide automated welfare system for the public assistance programs as provided in Section 10815. The department, in developing this system, shall recognize and utilize to the extent feasible, the centralized Medi-Cal eligibility system now maintained by the State Department of Health Services, and shall ensure that the fully implemented system shall meet those Medi-Cal program requirements deemed necessary by the State Department of Health Services. Both departments shall coordinate their efforts to ensure the mutual benefits of the statewide automated welfare system.

*(Amended by Stats. 1984, Ch. 268, Sec. 41.7. Effective June 30, 1984. See same-numbered section, as amended by Stats. 2023, Ch. 43.)*

**10823.** (a) (1) The Office of Technology and Solutions Integration shall implement a statewide automated welfare system for the following public assistance programs:

(A) The CalWORKS program.

(B) CalFresh.

(C) The Medi-Cal program.

(D) The foster care program.

(E) The refugee program.

(F) County medical services programs.

(2) Statewide implementation of the statewide automated welfare system for the programs listed in paragraph (1) shall be achieved through no more than four county consortia, including the Interim Statewide Automated Welfare System Consortium, and the Los Angeles Eligibility, Automated Determination, Evaluation, and Reporting System.

(3) Notwithstanding paragraph (2), the Office of Technology and Solutions Integration shall migrate the 35 counties that currently use the Interim Statewide Automated Welfare System (SAWS) into the C-IV system within the following timeline:

(A) Complete Migration System Test and begin User Acceptance Testing on or before June 30, 2009.

(B) Complete implementation in at least five counties by February 28, 2010.

(C) Complete implementation in at least 14 additional counties on or before May 31, 2010.

(D) Complete implementation in all 35 counties on or before August 31, 2010.

(E) Decommission the Interim Statewide Automated Welfare System on or before January 31, 2011.

(4) Notwithstanding paragraph (2), the Office of Technology and Solutions Integration shall oversee the migration of the 39 counties composing the C-IV Consortium into a system jointly designed by the 39 counties plus Los Angeles County under the LEADER Replacement System contract. This migration shall result in a new consortium to replace the LEADER and C-IV Consortia.

(5) The consortia and the state shall take any action necessary to ensure that the current SAWS maintenance and operations agreements are extended for the LEADER and C-IV Consortia, pending the completion of the LEADER Replacement System and migration of the C-IV Consortium as set forth in paragraph (4), and for the continuation of the Welfare Client Data System Consortium.

(6) Each SAWS consortium shall provide a seat on its governing body for a representative of the state and shall allow for the stationing of state staff at the project site.

(b) Nothing in subdivision (a) transfers program policy responsibilities related to the public assistance programs specified in subdivision (a) from the State Department of Social Services or the State Department of Health Care Services to the Office of Technology and Solutions Integration.

(c) (1) On February 1 of each year, the Office of Technology and Solutions Integration shall provide an annual report to the appropriate committees of the Legislature on the statewide automated welfare system implemented under this section. The report shall address the progress of state and consortia activities and any significant schedule, budget, or functionality changes in the project.

(2) The report provided pursuant to this subdivision in 2012 shall also include the projected timeline and key milestones for the development of the LEADER Replacement System and of the new consortium described in paragraph (4) of subdivision (a).

(d) Notwithstanding any other law, the Statewide Automated Welfare System consortia shall have the authority to expend within approved annual state budgets for each system as follows:

(1) Make changes within any line item, provided that the change does not create additional project costs in the current or in a future budget year.

(2) Make a change of up to one hundred thousand dollars (\$100,000) or 10 percent of the total for the line item from which the funds are derived, whichever is greater, between line items with notice to the Office of Technology and Solutions Integration, provided that the change does not create additional project costs in the current or in a future budget year.

(3) Make requests to the Office of Technology and Solutions Integration for changes between line items of greater than one hundred thousand dollars (\$100,000) or 10 percent of the total for the line item from which the funds are derived, which do not increase the total cost in the current or a future budget year. The Office of Technology and Solutions Integration shall take action to approve or deny the request within 10 days.

(e) (1) The Statewide Automated Welfare System shall be the system of record for Medi-Cal and shall contain all Medi-Cal eligibility rules and case management functionality.

(2) Notwithstanding paragraph (1), the business rules necessary for an eligibility determination to be made under the Modified Adjusted Gross Income (MAGI) rules pursuant to the federal Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (Public Law 111-148) may be housed in the California Healthcare Eligibility, Enrollment, and Retention System developed pursuant to Section 15926, hereafter referred to as CalHEERS. If that authority is exercised, the business rules contained in CalHEERS shall be made available to the Statewide Automated Welfare System consortia, through an automated interface, in order for the consortia to determine eligibility for Medi-Cal under the MAGI rules.

(3) Effective January 1, 2016, the functionality to create and send notices of action for Medi-Cal and premium tax credit programs, as described in Section 36B of Title 26 of the United States Code, shall be implemented consistent with the following:

(A) Except as specified in subparagraphs (B) and (C), the Statewide Automated Welfare System shall be used to generate noticing language and notice of action documents and to send notice of action documents for all Medi-Cal programs, including, but not limited to, MAGI and non-MAGI based programs.

(B) If authority is exercised pursuant to paragraph (2), CalHEERS shall be used to generate noticing language for the premium tax credit program, including, but not limited to, Medi-Cal denial noticing language related to tax subsidy approvals, and shall be used to generate and send notice of action documents for the premium tax credit only program.

(C) If authority is exercised pursuant to paragraph (2), in any mixed eligibility cases that include an approval or approvals for MAGI Medi-Cal eligibility determinations, non-MAGI Medi-Cal eligibility determinations, or both, and premium tax credit approvals, the Statewide Automated Welfare System shall be used to combine the noticing language for Medi-Cal programs generated by the Statewide Automated Welfare System and the noticing language for the premium tax credit program generated by CalHEERS into one notice, and the Statewide Automated Welfare System shall be used to send the document, as one combined notice, for all programs.

**10823.1.** (a) It is the intent of the Legislature that representatives from the State Department of Social Services, the State Department of Health Care Services, the Office of Technology and Solutions Integration, the SAWS consortia, and the counties meet with advocates, clients, and other stakeholders no less than quarterly to review the development status of the California Automated Consortium Eligibility System (CalACES) and the California Statewide Automated Welfare System (CalSAWS) projects.

(b) Meeting agendas shall be established based on input from all parties, who may indicate their priorities for discussion.

(c) The State Department of Social Services, the State Department of Health Care Services, the Office of Technology and Solutions Integration, and the SAWS consortia shall engage with stakeholders to discuss current and planned functionality changes, system demonstrations of public portals and mobile applications, and advocates' identification of areas of concern, especially with the design of public-facing elements and other areas that directly impact clients.

(d) These meetings shall commence in the summer of 2018 and shall continue at least quarterly through development, implementation, and maintenance.

*(Amended by Stats. 2023, Ch. 43, Sec. 39. (AB 120) Effective July 10, 2023.)*

**10823.2.** (a) The State Department of Social Services, the State Department of Health Care Services, and the Office of Technology and Solutions Integration shall develop, in consultation with the County Welfare Directors Association of California, the SAWS consortia, and stakeholders, a formal process for health and human services advocates and clients to provide input into new or changing public-facing elements of CalACES and CalSAWS.

(b) The process described in subdivision (a) shall include public portals, mobile applications, notices, certain ancillary services, and intercounty transfers.

(c) The process described in subdivision (a) may include focus groups, user-centered design sessions, and user acceptance testing.

*(Amended by Stats. 2023, Ch. 43, Sec. 40. (AB 120) Effective July 10, 2023.)*

**10823.3.** (a) The development of the SAWS enrollment and eligibility functionality, case management systems, ancillary services, public portals, and mobile applications shall, to the extent possible within the technology, have the goals of:

(1) Minimizing the burden of the overall eligibility process for enrollment and retention of benefits for low-income Californians and streamlining interactions for both clients and eligibility workers.

(2) Facilitating applicant and client submission of feedback.

(b) The parties listed in subdivision (a) of Section 10823.1 shall jointly update the Legislature at least twice per year through existing processes as to how the SAWS development, implementation, and maintenance minimizes client burden in order to improve access to safety net programs and incorporates ongoing applicant and client feedback towards continuous improvement.

*(Added by Stats. 2019, Ch. 27, Sec. 28. (SB 80) Effective June 27, 2019.)*

**10823.5.** The State Department of Social Services shall pay the county share of Merced County's Merced Automated Global Information Control (MAGIC) application maintenance costs until September 30, 1998, or until Merced County has converted its caseload to one of the Statewide Automated Welfare System (SAWS) consortia systems, whichever occurs first. Merced County shall be the first county implemented under the SAWS consortium system approved for Merced County. Beginning October 1, 1998, Merced County shall pay the county share of MAGIC application maintenance costs based on its percentage share of the total caseload for the consortium approved for Merced County on October 1, 1998. The caseload percentage share shall be adjusted each fiscal year to reflect changes in caseload throughout the consortium. Caseload for the purposes of this section shall be defined as actual average annual duplicated case counts for the most current full fiscal year for the programs included in the consortia system. Beginning October 1, 1998, and until Merced County has converted its caseload to the SAWS consortium approved for Merced County, the department shall pay the difference between the total county share of MAGIC application maintenance costs and the Merced County caseload percentage share of MAGIC application costs.

*(Added by Stats. 1997, Ch. 606, Sec. 21. Effective October 3, 1997.)*

**10823.6.** (a) It is the intent of the Legislature that health and human services programs shall leverage telephonic signature technology to enhance the ability for county human services customers and staff to complete transactions by telephone through the creation of a global telephonic signature solution for use by county human services departments, to the extent permitted by program policy.

(b) The California Statewide Automated Welfare System (CalSAWS) consortium shall be authorized to develop, deploy, and maintain a simple, standalone telephonic signature solution according to the following requirements:

(1) The telephonic signature solution shall allow for storage and retrieval of recorded telephonic signatures in compliance with program policy.

(2) This telephonic signature solution shall be available until equivalent functionality has been integrated into the following case management systems:

(A) CalSAWS.

(B) Case Management Information and Payroll System (CMIPS).

(C) California Automated Response and Engagement System (CWS-CARES).

(c) This section shall only be implemented to the extent funding is appropriated for these purposes.

(d) This section shall be rendered inoperative upon integration of the telephonic signature solution into all statewide systems included in paragraph (2) of subdivision (b), and is repealed as of January 1 of the calendar year following the date of the inoperability.

*(Added by Stats. 2021, Ch. 85, Sec. 23. (AB 135) Effective July 16, 2021. Conditionally inoperative as prescribed by its own provisions. Repealed on January 1 after inoperative date.)*

**10824.** (a) The counties not participating in the Interim Statewide Automated Welfare System Consortium or the Los Angeles Eligibility, Automated Determination, Evaluation, and Reporting Consortium shall collectively pay 5 percent of the total application development costs of the Statewide Automated Welfare System consortium to which they belong. The proportion of the 5 percent of total application development costs paid by a participating county shall be the same proportion that the county's caseload bears to the total consortium caseload for the fiscal year in which the contract for application development is executed. "Caseload" for purposes of this section, means the actual average annual duplicated case counts for the programs included in each consortia's application. A county subject to this section may pay its proportion of application development costs during development of its consortium's system, or, by agreement with the department, may pay its proportion after its consortium's system in production, but within four years after the start of production in a county.

(b) The department shall pay the county share of all other Statewide Automated Welfare System development and implementation costs approved by the Department of Finance and the federal funding agencies for the counties participating in each consortium, except the Los Angeles Eligibility, Automated Determination, Evaluation, and Reporting Consortium.

(c) The department shall pay the county share of maintenance and operations costs for the first 12 months of production of the Statewide Automated Welfare System for the counties participating in each consortium, except the Los Angeles Eligibility, Automated Determination, Evaluation, and Reporting Consortium.

(d) For purposes of this section, "production" means the first conversion of a county case to the Statewide Automated Welfare System application used by the county's consortium, or the first processing of an intake case using the county's Statewide Automated Welfare System consortium application, whichever occurs first.

(e) The department shall pay all Statewide Automated Welfare System maintenance and operations costs for specified counties as defined in this subdivision. A county qualified for Statewide Automated Welfare System maintenance and operations funding is defined as one having an average monthly, duplicated continuing case count below 3,700 cases for the CalWORKs, nonassistance CalFresh, public assistance CalFresh, Medi-Cal, foster care, refugee, and county medical services programs. The department shall make its determination based on actual case counts for the most current full fiscal year. The department shall provide funding for the county share-of-costs for those counties that annually meet this definition until June 30, 2001.

(f) Beginning October 1, 1998, the original 14 Interim Statewide Automated System counties shall pay the county share of Statewide Automated Welfare System maintenance and operations costs at the county administrative cost sharing ratios otherwise provided by law. Counties described in subdivision (e) shall not be subject to this requirement.

(g) The department shall pay the county share of Napa County's Interim Statewide Automated Welfare System's application maintenance costs through September 30, 1998. Beginning October 1, 1998, Napa County shall pay the county share of the Interim Statewide Welfare System application maintenance costs at the county administrative cost sharing ratios otherwise provided by law.

(h) (1) The county shall secure the prior approval of the department for any use of Statewide Automated Welfare System equipment, software or resources for activities and program administration not eligible for federal financial participation.

(2) The county shall allocate Statewide Automated Welfare System costs to the respective programs eligible for federal financial participation in accordance with the cost allocation requirements of each program.

(3) The county shall allocate as Statewide Automated Welfare System costs only for activities and program administration eligible for federal financial participation.

(i) If a county uses Statewide Automated Welfare System equipment, software, or resources for activities and program administration not eligible for federal financial participation, and fails to comply with provisions specified in subdivision (h), the county shall be liable to the department for any disallowance due to that use by the county of Statewide Automated Welfare System equipment, software,

or resources. In the event of such a loss, the department may recover the loss by reducing funds otherwise due the county as state participation in programs administered by the county under the supervision of the department.

(j) The department shall fund each county's share of the Central Data Base for the Medi-Cal Eligibility Data System until the end of the 12th month after Statewide Automated Welfare System production begins, as defined in subdivision (d).

*(Amended by Stats. 2011, Ch. 227, Sec. 32. (AB 1400) Effective January 1, 2012.)*

**10824.5.** (a) Any single state automated welfare system implemented pursuant to this chapter shall include a notification to inform the caseworker of a public assistance program applicant or recipient of the following information:

(1) That the applicant or recipient has indicated the need for an accommodation due to disability consistent with Section 12132 of Title 42 of the United States Code and Section 35.130 of Title 28 of the Code of Federal Regulations.

(2) That the applicant or recipient has disclosed a disability or experience of domestic violence that may affect the applicant's or recipient's eligibility for certain exemptions from, and exceptions to, requirements imposed by any public assistance program included in the single state automated welfare system pursuant to Section 10823.

(b) The State Department of Social Services shall collaborate with county welfare departments in developing the notification required by this section.

(c) The notification required by this section shall be immediately visible to the caseworker upon opening the applicant's or recipient's file in the system.

(d) The department shall include in any amendment of or revision to a form or report that is adopted on or after January 1, 2020, and that is to be completed by an applicant for, or a recipient of, public assistance, using the single statewide automated welfare system, questions that permit the applicant or recipient to disclose a disability, the need for accommodation due to disability, and any experience of domestic violence.

*(Amended by Stats. 2019, Ch. 155, Sec. 1. (SB 735) Effective January 1, 2020.)*