

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

Program/Area: CalWORKs/Welfare-To-Work

Title: School Attendance

Number: 100-E4

Status: *Signature on file*

Effective Date: 1/1/1998

Revision Date: 12/31/15

Approved:

PURPOSE To provide guidelines on informing applicants/recipients of California's Compulsory Education Law, CalWORKs' (CW) School Attendance Requirements for children over 16 years of age, and how to evaluate for an exception/good cause for children deemed chronic truant prior to applying a school attendance penalty.

BACKGROUND Effective January 1, 1998, CalWORKs required that all aided children in the Assistance Unit (AU) for whom school attendance was mandatory attend school regularly. Penalties to reduce the CW grant were applied to AUs with children under 16 years old not attending school regularly by removing the needs of all adults in the AU. In AUs with children 16 or 17 years old who failed to attend school regularly, the needs of the children 16 or 17 years were removed. Additionally, penalties to reduce the CW grant were applied when regular school attendance was not verified.

Effective January 1, 2015, Assembly Bill (AB) 2382 changed the school attendance regulations. Applicants and recipients are no longer required to provide verification of school attendance at application or redetermination, with the exception of individuals participating in Cal-Learn. Children are presumed to be attending school regularly unless deemed chronic truant. The needs of children over 16 years of age who are deemed chronic truant will be removed from the AU unless an exception/good cause criteria exists.

DEFINITIONS **Chronic Truant** – pursuant to section 48263.6 of the Education code, any student subject to compulsory full-time education or continuation education who is absent from school without a valid excuse for ten percent or more of the school days in one school year, from the date of enrollment to the current date.

1.**NOTE:** The school district, School Attendance Review Board (SARB) or Truancy Court will determine children who meet the chronic truant criteria.

School Attendance Penalty – reduction in the CW grant by not including the deemed chronic truant child (16 years of age or older) in the grant computation.

INFORMING REQUIREMENTS All applicants and recipients must be informed of California's

Compulsory Education Law, which requires children between 6 through 18 years of age to attend school, except those over 16 years old who have graduated from high school or passed the California High School Proficiency Exam (CHSPE) and obtained parental permission to leave.

The [CalWORKs School Attendance Requirements informing notice \(F063-30-941\)](#) will be provided at application and redetermination.

PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

All Children shall be presumed to be attending school. However, children over 16 years of age who are deemed chronic truant by a school district, the county SARB, or the Truancy Court Team are subject to a school attendance penalty unless an exception/good cause exists.

CHILDREN DEEMED CHRONIC TRUANT

The Truancy Court Team provides a Truancy Court Case Listing on a semi-monthly basis. Children included on the list have been deemed chronic truant.

2. The School Attendance Liaison will use the Truancy Court Case Listing to identify CW aided children over 16 years of age to notify the Intake Employment Eligibility Specialist (IEES)/Continuing Employment Eligibility Specialist (CEES)/CalWORKs Eligibility Technician (CWET) to begin the exception/good cause evaluation prior to applying the school attendance penalty.

Refer to the [Truancy Court Processing Guide](#) for more information.

EXCEPTION/GOOD CAUSE PROCESS

EXCEPTION/GOOD CAUSE EVALUATION CRITERIA

3. Upon receiving notification from the School Attendance Liaison that a child over 16 years of age in his/her caseload has been deemed chronic truant, the IEES/CEES/CWET will evaluate to determine if the child meets one of the following exception/good cause criteria for not attending school:

- Attendance records are not available
- Child has been attending school
- Any member of the household (including other siblings and parents) is eligible to participate in the Family Stabilization Program for any reason
- The child or parent/caregiver is complying with requirements imposed by a SARB, the County Probation Department, or the District Attorney
- A member of the household is cooperating with a plan developed by a county agency such as Juvenile Probation, Children and Family Services or Foster Care, etc.
- Good cause for not attending school exists at any time during the

month for any of the following reasons:

- Dispute of the attendance information provided by the school
- Homelessness
- Personal safety of child at risk (i.e. bullying, gang activity)
- Lack of appropriate clothing
- Absence(s) due to a medical reason
- Absence(s) due to the death of a family member related by blood or marriage
- Other (contact Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS) Program for direction)

4. NOTIFICATION TO THE PARENT/CARETAKER

5. To determine if an exception/good cause criteria exists, the IEES/CEES/CWET will:

1. Complete *Section I. Good Reason for Not Attending School* of the [School Attendance Verification Request from the Parent/Caretaker notification \(F063-30-955\)](#) and send it to the parent/caretaker along with the [School Attendance Authorization to Release Information form \(F063-30-386\)](#) with a 10-day return due date.

6. VERIFICATION PROVIDED BY PARENT/CARETAKER

7. If the parent/caretaker provides documentation that verifies the child meets one of the exception/good cause criteria for not attending school, the IEES/CEES/CWET will:

8. Document in CalWIN Case Comments the exception/good cause criteria met and the type of verification provided.
9. Image into OnBase any documentation provided by the parent/caretaker.
NOTE: If the documentation discloses confidential information regarding child abuse, domestic abuse, mental/physical conditions etc., do not image into OnBase.

10. Acceptable verification includes:

- Any official document from the school of attendance or other school authority such as SARB, Probation, or the District Attorney.
- A copy of plan developed by a county agency such as Juvenile Probation, Children and Family Services or Foster Care, etc.

NOTE: If the plan discloses confidential information regarding child abuse, domestic abuse, mental/physical conditions etc., do not image into OnBase.

- Other documentation that includes a contact person and a phone number.

11. VERIFICATION NOT PROVIDED

12. If the parent/caretaker does not provide the necessary verification by the due date, the IEES/CEES/CWET will:

1. Refer children 16 or 17 years old to Welfare-to-Work (WTW).
2. Refer to the [Children Over 18 Years section](#) of this policy to determine if CW eligibility continues when the child turns 18 years of age.

13. VERIFICATION ASSISTANCE REQUEST

14. If the parent/caretaker completes and returns the [School Attendance Authorization to Release Information form \(F063-30-386\)](#) requesting assistance to obtain verification from a school authority, the IEES/CEES/CWET will:

1. Complete the *Verification Request* section of the [School Attendance Communication Document eForm \(F063-41-424\)](#) and send it to the appropriate Regional School Attendance Inbox.

15. RESPONSE TO VERIFICATION ASSISTANCE REQUEST

16. On a flow basis, the Regional School Attendance Liaison will monitor the appropriate Regional School Attendance Inbox to identify requests for assistance to obtain verification from a school authority submitted by staff via the [School Attendance Communication Document eForm \(F063-41-424\)](#).

17. Upon 3 working days from receiving a request the liaison will:

1. Use the current [Child Welfare and Attendance \(CWA\) and SARB Phone List](#) to identify the appropriate school authority for the child whose school attendance is being verified.
2. Complete and forward the [School Attendance Verification Request from a School Authority \(F063-30-393\)](#) to the appropriate school authority with a 10-day due date.
3. After the school authority replies, complete the *Response to Verification Request* section of the [School Attendance Communication Document eForm \(F063-41-424\)](#) including when the school authority does not respond (refer to [step 5 Exception/Good Cause Determination section](#) of this policy) and

send it to the IEES/CEES/CWET.

18. EXCEPTION/GOOD CAUSE DETERMINATION

19. Upon receiving a response from the School Attendance Liaison via the [School Attendance Communication Document eForm \(F063-41-424\)](#) the IEES/CEES/CWET will:

1. Review the *Response to Verification Request* section of the eForm to determine if the child meets an exception/good cause criteria.
2. If the child meets an exception/good cause criteria:
 - a. Document in CalWIN Case Comments the criteria met and the type of verification provided.
 - b. Image into OnBase any documentation provided by the school authority and the [School Attendance Communication Document eForm \(F063-41-424\)](#) completed by the School Attendance Liaison. Move together
NOTE: If the documentation discloses confidential information regarding child abuse, domestic abuse, mental/physical conditions etc., do not image into OnBase.
3. If the *Response to Verification Request* section of the eForm indicates that the child does not meet an exception/good cause:
 - a. Refer children 16 or 17 years old to WTW.
 - b. Refer to the [Children Over 18 Years section](#) of this policy to determine if CW eligibility continues when the child is 18 years old.
4. If the *Response to Verification Request* section of the eForm indicates that the child is not enrolled in that school:
 - a. Contact the parent/caretaker to verify the current school information.
 - b. Complete a new [School Attendance Communication Document eForm \(F063-41-424\)](#) and re-send it to the appropriate Regional School Attendance Inbox after the updated school information is received.
5. If the *Response to Verification Request* section of the eForm indicates that the school authority did not respond:
 - a. Complete *Section II. No Response from School Authority* of the [School Attendance Verification Request from the Parent/Caretaker notification \(F063-30-955\)](#) and send it to

the parent/caretaker along with a 10-day return due date.

b. If the parent/caretaker does not respond:

- i. Refer children 16 or 17 years old to WTW so that a WTW Plan can be developed.
- ii. Refer to the [Children Over 18 Years section](#) of this policy to determine if CW eligibility continues when the child is 18 years old.

IMPOSE THE SCHOOL ATTENDANCE PENALTY

When children ages 16 or 17 fail to comply with the mandatory activities on their WTW plan, the IEES/CEES/CWET will:

1. Apply the school attendance penalty by removing the child from the AU. Refer to the [Maintain Student Details](#) section of CalWIN Online Help to impose the school attendance penalty.
2. Document in CalWIN Case Comments the reason the school attendance penalty is being imposed.
3. Send the following notices of action to notify the parent/caretaker that the school attendance penalty will be applied:
 - School Attendance Child Age 16 and Over (M40-105E) and
 - Multipurpose - Budget (NA 200) or
 - Quarterly Reporting Budget (NA 1239)

LIFT THE SCHOOL ATTENDANCE PENALTY

When children ages 16 or 17 comply with the mandatory activities on their WTW plan or if verification that an exception/good cause criteria is met, the IEES/CEES/CWET will:

1. Document in CalWIN case comments the exception/good cause criteria met and the type of verification provided.
2. Refer to the [Remove School Attendance Penalty](#) section of CalWIN Online Help to lift the school attendance penalty.

CHILDREN OVER 18 YEARS

Children over 18 years of age are not eligible to CW benefits when (whichever occurs first):

- The child graduates from high school or completes a vocational or technical training program,
- The child turns 19, or
- The child stops attending school full-time

School attendance verification is required for children over 18 years of age who are enrolled full-time in high school and are expected to graduate before reaching age 19. Refer to [Policy 100-E8 - Eligibility for Teens Turning Age 18](#) for more information.

**MID-PERIOD
COUNTY
INITIATED
ACTIONS**

Imposing and lifting school attendance penalties are county-initiated actions and will be initiated mid-period with timely notice when appropriate.

20. Refer to [Policy 100-E5.A - Mid-Period Reporting in SAR](#).

Refer to [Policy 100-E13 - Annual Reporting/Child-Only Cases](#).

**IMPACT TO
OTHER
PROGRAMS**

CalFresh: Benefits will not increase when a school attendance penalty is imposed. The penalized child remains eligible and the household retains Categorical Eligibility.

Medi-Cal: The penalized child remains eligible to cash-based Medi-Cal.

**SCHOOL
INFORMATION
IN CALWIN**

The school of attendance will be entered in CalWIN for each school age child in the household. At application, redetermination or when a change in school is reported, the IEES/CEES/CWET will:

21. The school of attendance will be entered in CalWIN for each school age child in the household. At application, redetermination or when a change in school is reported, the IEES/CEES/CWET will:

1. Ask the parent/caretaker the current school information for each school-aged child.

NOTE: The Authorization to Release information is not needed to enter this information in CalWIN.

2. Review the [CW Orange County School District and County Provide ID \(WT8\)](#) to determine if the school of attendance is listed.
 3. Refer to the [Maintain Student Details](#) section of CalWIN Online Help to enter new or update student details including the school of attendance.
 4. If the school is not listed on the WT8 and/or in CalWIN, refer to the [School Attendance Processing Guide](#) under the Requests to Add a School in CalWIN section for more information.
NOTE: The parent/caretaker may refer to his/her child's school by a name different than how the school is listed on the WT8 or CalWIN.
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**AIDED
STUDENT LIST
DISCREPANCY
REPORTS**

The Aided Student List Discrepancy Report (ASL MSS083-5) available by the 10th of each month via the SSA Report Portal includes a list of cases with school information discrepancies.

22. The School Attendance Liaison will work with the appropriate regional staff to correct the discrepancies identified in the report.

Refer to the [School Attendance Processing Guide](#) under the Aided Student List Discrepancy Reports section for more information.

REFERENCES

- [Policy 100-E5.A - Mid-Period Reporting in SAR](#)
- [Policy 100-E8 - Eligibility for Teens Turning Age 18](#)
- [Policy 100-E13 - Annual Reporting/Child-Only Cases](#)
- [Policy 211 - Welfare-to-Work Plan](#)
- [School Attendance Processing Guide](#)
- [Truancy Court Processing Guide](#)
- ACLs 98-35, 97-70, 04-50, 13-51, 15-22, and 15-47

FORMS/ NOTICES

- [School Attendance Forms and Notices List](#)
- [School Attendance Verification Request from the Parent/Caretaker notification \(F063-30-955\)](#)
- [School Attendance Authorization to Release Information form \(F063-30-386\)](#)
- [School Attendance Verification Request from a School Authority \(F063-30-393\)](#)
- [CalWORKs School Attendance Requirements informing notice \(F063-30-941\)](#)
- [School Attendance Communication Document eForm \(F063-41-424\)](#)
- [School Attendance Child Age 16 and Over \(M40-105E\)](#)
- [Multipurpose - Budget \(NA 200\)](#)
- [Quarterly Reporting Budget \(NA 1239\)](#)