

TFC: CalWORKs S2 7 Questions

UPDATED: 3/14/24

Questions sent from Denyne, Chief Executive Officer for Thriving Families California (TFC)

1. Q: If a family is categorically eligible for child care which also indicates that they are cash aid eligible, can families be directly enrolled into Stage 2?

A: Families can be categorically eligible for Stage Two based on receiving CalWORKs which is a means-tested benefit, as listed in CCB 23-04, and could, therefore, be directly enrolled into Stage Two. They also shall be deemed stable or transitioning off of aid per [WIC 10372](#).

2. Q: Counties are referring directly to CalWORKs Stage 2 as well as agencies have families coming through the doors with documentation that they are a categorically eligible recipient of another program, can agencies enroll families directly on to Stage 2?

A: Yes, families may be enrolled directly into Stage 2 if they are eligible per WIC 10271, however additionally the family shall be deemed stable or transitioning off one of aid per the requirements in WIC 10372.

The family must provide documentation of current enrollment in any one of the means-tested programs listed above unless the contracting agency has, and elects to use, other means of obtaining verification of that enrollment. Even though the family is categorically eligible to receive services, the family is still required to provide income documentation for the purposes of calculating income and family fees. The family can supply this income information in two ways:

1. By submitting the application for the means-tested government program indicating the income declared at the time of enrollment; or,
2. If the application for the means tested government program is not available, by submitting a self-declaration indicating that they do not have access to the application for the means-tested government program, and to the best

of their recollection, the income declared on the application for the means-tested government program.

3. Q: CalWORKs cash aid recipients that are eligible for Stage 1 and Stage 2 child care based on their eligibility for cash aid. Therefore, can't families be directly enrolled onto Stage 2 based on their eligibility for cash aid and/or categorical eligibility (also eligible for cash aid)?

A: A county may enroll a family in Stage Two without ever having received Stage One child care [if the county determines the family is stable immediately upon determining cash aid eligibility].

4. Q: Why would the nine data transfer elements be needed if a family were referred or walked into an agency and was categorically eligible for enrollment into Stage 2?

A: When a county transfers a family receiving Stage One child care to a Stage Two contractor, nine data elements are required (See 5 CCR 18408.) If a family is enrolled directly to a Stage Two program based on categorical eligibility, the nine data elements are not required. The documentation requirements for categorical eligibility can be found in [CCB No. 23-04](#).

5. Q: If a family is cash aid eligible based on a categorical determination does the family need to go into Stage 1? In the language on the CDSS website it notes ["CalWORKs clients may be served in Stage One until the county determines that the family situation is stable, or if no funds are available in Stage Two. Former CalWORKs clients are also eligible to receive child care services in Stage One and/or Stage Two for a total of no more than 24 months after they leave cash aid."](#) Is the above language current noting "may" or is it a must?

A: Counties may transfer a family from Stage One to Stage Two when the county determines that the family's situation is stable (See [MPP Section 301.5](#)). However, based on [CCB No. 23-04](#), families can be categorically eligible for Stage Two and could, therefore, be directly enrolled into Stage Two without having been enrolled in Stage One. Please see [CCB No. 23-04](#) for documentation requirements.

6. Stage 2 question – It was my understanding that families cannot stay in Stage 2 longer than 24 months. However, I was recently made aware that Stage 2 contractors have families on cash aid in Stage 2 and that the 24-month clock (aside from diversion) does not start until off of cash aid. So families can stay in Stage 2 longer than 24-months?

A: [MPP Section 47.230.142](#) specifies that child care services in Stage One and Stage Two combined shall not exceed 24 months after leaving cash aid. Since the 24 months does not start until after leaving cash aid, it is possible for families to receive Stage One, Stage Two, or Stage One and Two combined longer than 24 months.