



## AB 363 - CalWORKs Recipient Education Program

### SUMMARY

Assembly Bill 363 will increase access to critical educational support for CalWORKs students in need, strengthen the financial support provided to program participants, and expand participants' opportunities for experiential and work-based learning to enhance social and economic mobility.

### BACKGROUND

The CalWORKs Recipient Education Program (CalWORKs REP) helps community college students prepare for employment by providing vital services such as work-study, job placement, childcare, skills training, and case management support. In 2022-23, there were about 17,000 CalWORKs REP students statewide.

CalWORKs REP is funded using TANF and Prop 98 funds. In 2024-25, REP is funded at \$63 million using TANF and Prop 98 funds. Each program is allocated a \$125,000 base amount for Proposition 98 and TANF funds. After applying the base, the remaining funds are distributed to each program using prior year REP enrollment data. Programs are guaranteed at 95% of the prior year's allocation.

### PROBLEM

Students are only eligible for CalWORKs REP if they are currently receiving the cash-aid portion of the CalWORKs program administered by the county. Cash aid under CalWORKs is restricted to a 60-month lifetime limit for most adults; however, children under the age of 18 may be eligible for cash aid without a time limit. Restricting CalWORKs REP access for adults who have timed out of cash aid disproportionately impacts adult community college students and limits their access to crucial services at a time when they need them the most. The compounded effect of losing cash-aid benefits and being ineligible for CalWORKs REP results in an overwhelming disruption to their family stability and chances of academic success.

Second, only the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) portion of funding for CalWORKs REP can be used to provide direct aid to CalWORKs

REP students. Current law does not provide the same kind of flexibility for the Proposition 98 portion of the program funding. This severely limits colleges' ability to provide adequate resources to CalWORKs REP students. Funds can help students pay for technology and equipment that are essential for their academic studies, including laptops, internet access, and software applications. These students are typically single parents with childcare needs who may be unable to visit the college computer lab during evenings and weekends.

A final challenge is the requirement that employers provide a 25% match for work-study wages, which serves as a disincentive for employers to participate in the program. There is no such match requirement for federal work-study, and aligning to federal requirements would provide a greater incentive for off-campus employers to participate.

### SOLUTION

AB 363 will make three changes to the program resulting in CalWORKs REP students receiving increased access to educational and financial resources. The changes are the following;

1. **Allow colleges to remove 25% employer match for work-study jobs.** Employers are currently insufficiently incentivized to hire students due to this cost. This bill will allow colleges to use existing funds to cover full wages and create more opportunities.
2. **Allow the Prop 98 portion of CalWORKs REP funding to be used for direct aid.** Currently, only the TANF dollars help families with direct aid.
3. **Expanding CalWORKs REP eligibility to include CalWORKs recipients timed out of benefits, but who have a dependent receiving CalWORKs benefits.** Currently, adults who have timed out of CalWORKs cash aid also lose eligibility to CalWORKs REP. AB 363 will allow colleges to accept students who timed out of their CalWORKs cash aid but still have dependents who are currently receiving CalWORKs cash aid and services.

## **SUPPORT**

---

California Community Colleges, Office of the  
Chancellor (Sponsor)  
Alliance for Children's Rights  
Allan Hancock College  
Barstow Community College  
Butte College  
California Community College Calworks Association  
Chief Executive Officers Of The California Community  
Colleges Board  
City College Of San Francisco Calworks Program  
Community Action Partnership Of Orange County  
Grace Institute - End Child Poverty in CA  
Foothill-De Anza Community College District  
Fresno City College  
Miracosta Community College District  
Mt. San Antonio College  
Norco College  
North Orange County Community College District  
Rio Hondo College  
Riverside City College  
Riverside Community College District  
Student Senate For California Community Colleges  
Victor Valley College  
West Kern Community College District  
West Los Angeles College

## **FOR MORE INFORMATION**

---

Kenneth Cruz | Legislative Director  
Office of Assemblymember Isaac Bryan  
(916) 319-2055  
[Kenneth.Cruz@asm.ca.gov](mailto:Kenneth.Cruz@asm.ca.gov)