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## Time Limits

### Title

Time Running Out: A Portrait of California Families Reaching the CalWORKs Time Limit in 2004, Detailed Research Findings

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**Time Running Out:  
A Portrait of California Families  
Reaching the CalWORKs Time Limit in 2004**

**Second Report from the Evaluation of  
California's Five-Year Welfare Time Limit**

*Rebecca A. London and Jane G. Mauldon*

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OFFICE OF RESEARCH  
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

WELFARE POLICY RESEARCH PROJECT

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## About the Welfare Policy Research Project

The Welfare Policy Research Project (WPRP) is a nonpartisan, legislatively mandated program. It is administered by the Office of Research in the Office of the President of the University of California.

This report is the second in a series from an ongoing study commissioned by WPRP's advisory board on behalf of the State of California. The views and recommendations expressed in this report are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the opinions of the sponsors and funders or the Regents of the University of California.

## Reports from WPRP's Time-Limits Study

WPRP's advisory board commissioned a study aimed at understanding the effects of the sixty-month CalWORKs time limit.

***Current report:*** In this report, the second in a series, the authors analyze responses to the first-wave survey of CalWORKs recipients approaching the sixty-month time limit. The researchers describe the recipients' characteristics, and address two key questions: To what extent do the survey respondents understand the relevant CalWORKs time-limit policies, and how, if at all, are they preparing for time-limit grant reductions?

***Forthcoming reports:*** Additional reports in 2006 and 2007 will address the following: How state and county time-limit policies and procedures may have changed since initial implementation; the demographic characteristics of those who time out, how these characteristics may have changed over time, and how those who time out differ from those who exit CalWORKs in other ways; and how households subject to the time limit are faring. At the conclusion of the study, WPRP will issue a final policy brief that summarizes the key findings from the previous papers.

***Prior report:*** The first report, published in February 2006, describes the early efforts of the state and counties to implement CalWORKs time-limit policies and is available on WPRP's website: <http://wprp.ucop.edu/researchpublications2.asp>.

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In response to the 1996 federal overhaul of the welfare program for poor families with children, the State of California in 1997 created the California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids (CalWORKs) program. CalWORKs seeks to promote employment and self-sufficiency while reducing dependence on cash assistance. Adults receiving CalWORKs benefits are subject to a five-year time limit for cash assistance. In 2002, the Welfare Policy Research Project (WPRP) advisory board commissioned a study to examine the effects of sixty-month welfare time limits in California. This report is the second in a series from this ongoing study.

### Background

The CalWORKs program imposes a sixty-month time limit on cash assistance to needy parents. In 2003, the first year that the time limit affected CalWORKs families, the overall CalWORKs caseload remained nearly constant.<sup>1</sup> The first adults to time out of CalWORKs did so in January 2003, which also marks the start of the state-funded Safety Net program that provides reduced cash assistance to children once their parents time out. The Safety Net caseload grew rapidly during its first nine months to 24,415 cases, constituting 7.7 percent of the CalWORKs caseload. Safety Net caseload growth slowed during the subsequent two-year period, from October 2003 to September 2005, and then accelerated in the six-month period ending March 2006. By March 2006, there were 41,860 Safety Net cases, constituting 13.9 percent of the CalWORKs caseload.<sup>2</sup>

These caseload trends provide the context for this second report from the study, *The Effects of Five-Year Welfare Time Limits in California*, commissioned by WPRP.<sup>3</sup> In this report, we describe CalWORKs families as they approach the time limit. In order to understand the degree of readiness of the families for this event, we examine findings from a telephone survey we conducted between June 2004 and August 2005. We interviewed 1,797 recipients in six focus counties who were within six months of reaching the sixty-month time limit according to county administrative records. The six counties are Alameda, Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, Sacramento, and Tulare.<sup>4</sup> The survey explores the demographic characteristics of the recipients as well as family employment and employment history, barriers to employment, material hardship, and knowledge of the time-limit policy and the amount of time on aid still available to them.

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<sup>1</sup> These caseload calculations include Safety Net cases, but exclude child-only cases, which are not subject to the time limit.

<sup>2</sup> Authors' calculations from the CA 237 CW, available at [http://www.dss.cahwnet.gov/research/CA237CW-Ca\\_389.htm](http://www.dss.cahwnet.gov/research/CA237CW-Ca_389.htm).

<sup>3</sup> The first report is available at WPRP's website: <http://wprp.ucop.edu>. Crow, Sarah E. and Jacquelyn Anderson. 2006. *Working Against the Clock: The Implementation of Welfare Time Limits in California*.

<sup>4</sup> The entire survey was fielded in English, Spanish, and Vietnamese. A shorter version was offered through simultaneous translation to respondents speaking any other language.

## Characteristics of Families Nearing the CalWORKs Time Limit in the Six Focus Counties

### Demographics

Recipients nearing the CalWORKs time limit (that is, within six months of reaching sixty countable CalWORKs months) are diverse in many regards, including race/ethnicity. Administrative data show that about 39 percent of those close to reaching the time limit statewide were Latino, 30 percent were African American, and 21 percent were English-speaking whites, with many other groups making up the remaining 10 percent. In the six focus counties, recipients close to reaching the time limit were even more diverse. Among survey respondents in the average focus county, about 31 percent were Latino (one-third of whom were Spanish-speaking), 29 percent were African American, 18 percent were English-speaking whites, 7 percent were Vietnamese-speaking, 1 percent were English-speaking Asians, 8 percent were “other” ethnicities and English-speaking, and 6 percent were “other” ethnicities and non-English-speaking (Exhibit E.S.1).

In the average focus county, 26 percent of those close to the time limit were married, and an additional 9 percent were cohabiting with a partner. Nearly half the families (46 percent) had three or more children; among Latino respondents, 59 percent had three or more. In the six focus counties, 56 percent of families with adults nearing the time limit included a child age five or younger.

**Exhibit E.S.1**  
**Race/Ethnicity of Surveyed Sample**

	Alameda	L.A.	Orange	Riverside	Sacramento	Tulare	Total
<b>Race/Ethnicity and Language ***</b>							
White, English-Speaking	7.8	6.3	18.1	24.2	22.0	29.4	18.0
African American, English-Speaking	56.4	39.5	10.1	25.0	36.4	6.8	29.0
Latino, English-Speaking	6.3	17.9	22.0	30.8	11.4	37.1	20.9
Latino, Spanish-Speaking	3.3	17.6	14.3	7.1	1.4	16.4	10.0
Asian, English-Speaking	1.3	1.8	0.5	0.0	1.7	0.6	1.0
Vietnamese, Vietnamese-Speaking	8.4	3.1	26.9	1.5	2.6	0.0	7.1
Other Race/Ethnicity, English-Speaking	9.1	5.6	6.3	8.9	12.0	6.5	8.1
Any Race/Ethnicity Except Latino and Vietnamese, Non-English-Speaking	7.3	8.3	1.8	2.6	12.5	3.3	6.0
<b>Sample Size</b>	<b>283</b>	<b>438</b>	<b>190</b>	<b>172</b>	<b>449</b>	<b>265</b>	<b>1,797</b>

**Notes:**

- (1) The county-specific columns are weighted to reflect the characteristics of those approaching the time limit in each county. However, the Total column is a simple average of all preceding columns. It is weighted to give equal importance to small and large counties, and not to reflect the population variations across counties.
- (2) Totals may not equal 100 because of rounding.
- (3) Statistically significant differences across counties are shown as follows: \*\*\*p<.01 \*\*p<.05 \*p<.10.

### *Individual and Spouse/Partner Employment*

Roughly half of the survey sample was employed at the time of the survey: 47 percent of single parents were working, and 55 percent of two-parent households had at least one parent employed. At the time of the survey or within the prior twelve months, 69 percent of single parents were employed, and 82 percent of two-adult families had at least one adult employed. Furthermore, at the time of the survey half (51 percent) of employed single parents worked at least thirty-one hours a week, while two-thirds (64 percent) of employed two-adult families registered at least sixty-one hours of employment a week between them.<sup>5</sup> Among single parents, Vietnamese speakers and African Americans most frequently reported employment, while among two-parent families, Asians who spoke Vietnamese or English had the highest rates of employment.

We also examined data from Unemployment Insurance (UI) wage records to describe respondents' work histories between 1999 and 2004, a five-year period over which most of the recipients presumably were receiving welfare continuously, or nearly so. During this period, 26 percent of single parents and 32 percent of two-parent families had earnings in at least thirteen quarters of the twenty quarters examined.

Although many of the CalWORKs recipients nearing the time limit were working, their jobs typically did not provide basic benefits. For example, only 11 percent of jobs held by single working adults in the sample provided sick leave, and only 15 percent offered health insurance. Among two-parent families with at least one employed adult, 16 percent of couples had at least one job that offered sick leave, and 19 percent had at least one job that offered vacation leave.

Although the work effort of many CalWORKs recipients is substantial, another large portion of the caseload has had no formal labor market experience for many years. People in the latter group will probably find it difficult to obtain and maintain employment once they reach the time limit. Thirty-one percent of single-parent respondents reported no employment in the past year, and 19 percent of two-parent households had no working adult in the same time period. More than one-fifth of the sample (21 percent of single-parent families and 24 percent of two-parent families) had no UI-covered employment in the preceding five years.<sup>6</sup> Only 3 percent of adults in single-parent families and 5 percent of adults in two-parent families worked in UI-covered employment in all twenty quarters.

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<sup>5</sup> Despite the significant numbers of adult recipients who were working at the time of the survey, it is likely that California will find it difficult to meet the recently revised TANF work-participation rate requirements. For a discussion, see the analysis from the Legislative Analyst's Office, Analysis of the 2006-2007 Budget Bill, Health and Human Services Chapter, pp. C-188 through C-196.

<sup>6</sup> It is true that some of the adults with no UI-reported employment may have worked off the books or in one of the (few) sectors not captured by the UI wage records, but even so, the UI system captures most employment.

## ***Barriers to Employment***<sup>7</sup>

We asked adults in the families close to reaching the time limit about seven potential barriers to employment: depression, anxiety, a stressful event (possibly signaling post-traumatic stress syndrome), alcohol use, drug use, domestic violence, and health conditions that limit work.

Exhibit E.S.2 shows employment barriers reported by the respondents. Over one-fifth of the sample reported symptoms associated with depression (21 percent), anxiety (21 percent), or a recent stressful event (23 percent) that, currently or in the past year, interfered with their ability to work, care for children, or attend school. As in many other surveys, few respondents reported that drugs or alcohol interfered with their work, school, or home life (about 2 to 3 percent each, rates that likely underreport the true prevalence). A total of 11 percent of respondents reported domestic violence in the past year (44 percent reported experiencing domestic violence at some point in the past—not shown). Finally, almost a third of respondents (31 percent) reported health conditions that impeded their ability to work. In addition, 6 percent had a spouse with a limiting health condition and 28 percent had a child with an illness or other health condition that limited daily activities (not shown). In sum, 51 percent of survey respondents reported having at least one barrier that interfered with their ability to complete tasks at work, school, or home, and 28 percent reported having two or more barriers.

Apart from health and mental health-related problems, other factors are also likely to be associated with difficulties in getting and keeping jobs and becoming self-sufficient. For example, 40 percent of the sample had not completed high school and another 36 percent had no education past high school. Among foreign-language-speakers, 25 percent had not completed even eight years of schooling in their native countries.

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<sup>7</sup> For a related WPRP-commissioned study on barriers to employment, see Norris, Jean and Richard Speiglmán. 2005. *Assessing Barriers to Work Among CalWORKs Participants in San Joaquin County: Final Report*. This report is available at WPRP's website: <http://wprp.ucop.edu/researchpublications1.asp>.

## Exhibit E.S.2

### Incidence of Barriers to Employment Reported by Adult Respondents

<b>Barrier to Employment</b>	<b>Percent of Respondents in Average Focus County</b>
Barriers that interfere with work, home or school	
Depression	21.4
Anxiety	20.8
Stressful Event	23.4
Alcohol	2.1
Drugs	2.6
Domestic violence by spouse/partner in past year	10.8
Limiting illness or disability	30.5
Total number barriers (of 7)	
0	49.1
1	22.5
2 or more	28.4
<i>Sample Size</i>	1,639

### ***Material Hardship***

Not surprisingly, the very low-income families who received CalWORKs and reached the time limit reported substantial material hardship. Overall, 43 percent reported having problems paying their rent and 20 percent reported sharing housing with family or friends in order to save money. Over half of all respondents (54 percent) reported problems paying their utility bills, and 39 percent reported having problems affording food. Forty percent reported using a food bank and 10 percent obtained meals from a soup kitchen. Most families we interviewed were categorically eligible for Medi-Cal, but 15 percent of respondents indicated that, at some point in the past year, a family member failed to get medical care when needed, although most (72 percent) eventually obtained this care.

Results differed markedly by race/ethnic group. Vietnamese-speaking respondents reported far fewer material hardships than most other groups. There may be differences in culture or translation that affected how these Vietnamese-speaking respondents answered these questions.

### **CalWORKs Recipients' Knowledge of Time-Limit Policy**

Because cash aid is now time-limited, it is all the more important that county officials provide recipients with accurate information about how time-limit policies will affect them. For example, it is imperative that adult recipients understand how much time on aid remains to them, whether they might qualify for exemptions or extensions, and what services, if any, they can receive after reaching the sixty-month time limit. Only with this knowledge can they make informed decisions about their futures.

Although not all respondents close to reaching the time limit in the six focus counties could identify every aspect of the policy, most understood the fundamentals. For example, 89 percent

of respondents were aware that CalWORKs has a time limit. Of these respondents, 88 percent reported that this limit applies to parents, although just 53 percent understood that the time limit does not apply to children. More than three fifths (61 percent) of respondents who knew there is a time limit correctly identified sixty months as the lifetime limit on aid, and an even higher proportion (70 percent) knew that parents' earnings affect the grant after they reach the limit.

There are, however, important gaps in respondents' knowledge. First, although understanding of the CalWORKs time-limit policy appears to be high among survey respondents in general, there are groups for whom this is not true. In particular, foreign-language-speakers (especially those who speak languages other than Spanish or Vietnamese), immigrants, and those who had not completed high school had significantly lower scores on indices that measure understanding of the time limit, net of other factors. Many respondents (43 percent) did not know how many months of CalWORKs cash aid remained available to them. Among those who felt they knew the number of their remaining months of aid, 19 percent overestimated this amount by at least four months. These are surprisingly high percentages for a group that was within six months of timing out.

Second, few respondents understood the criteria governing exemptions and extensions. When found to be exempt, an adult recipient is not subject to the sixty-month limit on cash assistance. An adult who qualifies for an extension is permitted to receive cash aid past sixty months. The CalWORKs time limit policy is complex: there are twelve grounds for exempting an adult from the time limit, and six reasons a recipient might see his or her time on aid extended past sixty months.<sup>8</sup> Overall, only 31 percent of respondents agreed that there were any reasons that might allow a CalWORKs recipient to continue receiving aid after reaching the time limit.

The people who possessed the characteristics that would make them eligible for exemptions or extensions (whether or not the exemption or extension had been granted) were somewhat more knowledgeable about these criteria than those without these conditions. For example, of the 523 people who reported being sick or disabled, one-third knew that such circumstances might allow recipients to receive CalWORKs benefits beyond the time limit. By contrast, only 19 percent of the 1,274 respondents who did not report being sick or disabled understood this to be the case. Of the 169 who reported having experienced domestic violence, nearly 21 percent knew that such a situation might qualify recipients for time on aid past sixty months, compared to 14 percent of the 1,628 respondents who did not report domestic violence.

Finally, respondents were not uniformly knowledgeable about the services for which they retain eligibility after reaching the sixty-month time limit. Forty-six percent or more did not know that they could remain eligible for food stamps, housing, and child-care assistance (assuming in each instance that the household meets pertinent income and assets tests). Respondents were more knowledgeable about the post-program services for which their children would retain eligibility.

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<sup>8</sup> Of the twelve reasons cited, ten are called exemptions by CalWORKs and two have the same effect but are not termed "exemptions."

## Key Findings

Following is a summary of the five key findings that emerged from analysis of recipients' responses to the first-wave survey.

### ***1. The CalWORKs population nearing the sixty-month time limit is ethnically and linguistically diverse.***

Nearly all of the analyses demonstrated that to understand the CalWORKs caseload nearing the time limit, one must consider its ethnic diversity. County variation in respondent and programmatic outcomes is shaped by tremendous variation across counties in the ethnicity of CalWORKs recipients and languages spoken by them. This diversity is important for a variety of reasons. Serving a population that speaks many different languages is a challenge for county offices, which strive to offer verbal and written communication in the native languages of their non-English-speaking recipients. Beyond the practical concern of communicating effectively, cultural factors influence key aspects of CalWORKs recipients' attitudes toward work, their family size and relationships and, consequently, their grasp of time-limit policies and their response to them.

### ***2. Recipients close to reaching the time limit focus on employment, but their earnings are low and their job-related benefits are limited.***

Policymakers and CalWORKs staff emphasize that, for those who are able to work, employment is crucial to achieving self-sufficiency. CalWORKs recipients in the focus counties also view work as the logical alternative to welfare. When asked about activities they were undertaking as they neared the time limit, most reported that they were working or engaged in activities to move them toward work. And indeed, of those families still receiving CalWORKs benefits, roughly half were employed at the time of the survey, an indication that many will be employed once they reach the sixty-month time limit.<sup>9</sup>

At the same time, however, the jobs that current or former recipients typically held pay low wages and provide few or no benefits. Most employed recipients nearing the time limit in the six focus counties did not have jobs that offered health insurance (84 percent), sick leave (87 percent), or vacation leave (83 percent). Moreover, the very fact that almost all of these families still qualified for CalWORKs cash aid while employed indicates that they had low earnings, close to or below the poverty level.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> See the Legislative Analyst's Office, Analysis of the 2006-2007 Budget Bill, Health and Human Services Chapter, pp. C-188 through C-196.

<sup>10</sup> Eighty-nine percent of survey respondents reported receiving CalWORKs cash aid in the month preceding the interview.



***3. Barriers to employment are pervasive among those approaching the time limit, yet few recipients realized they might qualify for exemptions or extensions.***

In the survey we conducted, we asked CalWORKs recipients about conditions that make it difficult to obtain or keep a job, attend school, or care for children. We found these so-called barriers to employment to be pervasive among those nearing the time limit. Adult recipients experiencing such chronic problems might seek to qualify for a time-limit exemption or extension. However, we found that even recipients who reported domestic violence, ongoing health problems, or other qualifying problems were usually unaware that their conditions might warrant an exemption or extension. Without such knowledge, recipients cannot make informed decisions about their futures on and off CalWORKs.

***4. More than half of the CalWORKs families nearing the time limit have very young children.***

Much of the national discussion of welfare reform has focused on adults' characteristics. However, in California, the characteristics of the children whose parents are nearing the time limit are very important because some, perhaps many, of these children will enter the state-funded Safety Net program. More than half of the CalWORKs families nearing the time limit in the six focus counties had a preschool-age child or one who had just entered kindergarten. These very young children could remain in the Safety Net program for thirteen or more years if their parents do not earn enough to make their children ineligible for aid.

***5. There is wide variation in recipients' understanding of time-limit policies, but understanding improves when counties employ frequent communication in various forms.***

Survey respondents' knowledge about various aspects of the time-limit policy varied tremendously. Language, immigrant status, and education level proved particularly important in predicting which CalWORKs recipients best understood the rules. The form and frequency of communication from the welfare office were also of critical importance. Respondents who reported both having conversations with county staff and receiving letters and brochures better understood time-limit policies.

Respondents who remembered receiving such communication were more knowledgeable about relevant policies. This finding suggests that frequent and varied types of communication from the county were key to promoting understanding. Given recipients' diverse language needs and limited formal education, it is crucial that counties develop easily understood materials in a multitude of languages, and that they communicate this information regularly to recipients.

# 1. INTRODUCTION

In August 1996, President Clinton signed into federal law the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (PRWORA, P.L. 104–193), replacing the country’s primary welfare program for poor families with children, Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC), with a program called Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF). Prompted by concerns about increasing welfare caseloads and long-term dependency, TANF imposed, for the first time ever, a five-year lifetime limit on cash assistance paid for with federal funds. By limiting cash assistance to five years, Congress sought to reduce welfare dependency, increase the speed with which welfare recipients leave welfare for work, and reduce federal expenditures on public assistance.

In response to the new federal law, the State of California created the California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids (CalWORKs) program. CalWORKs seeks to promote employment and self-sufficiency while reducing dependence on cash assistance, but also provides added protection for children. Adults in the CalWORKs program are subject to a five-year time limit for cash assistance, but their children can continue to receive reduced cash grants through the state-funded Safety Net program, as long as they meet Safety Net eligibility criteria.<sup>11</sup> In other words, California law mandates that only adults lose their eligibility for cash aid upon reaching the sixty-month time limit, while federal law would terminate cash aid to all family members in households in which an adult has reached his or her five-year time limit.<sup>12</sup>

The University of California’s Welfare Policy Research Project commissioned a study, *The Effects of Five-Year Welfare Time Limits in California*, that is being conducted by Berkeley Policy Associates in collaboration with MDRC and the University of California, at Berkeley and at Santa Cruz. The study examines the implementation of time limits in California by addressing four basic questions: (1) How are CalWORKs recipients being informed about the sixty-month time limit? (2) How are counties preparing recipients for the time limit? (3) How are counties preparing their administrative operations for the time limit? (4) How are counties implementing the time limit?

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<sup>11</sup> Parents’ incomes are counted when determining their children’s eligibility for the state-funded Safety Net program. Therefore, it is important to note that the Safety Net program *undercounts* families affected by the time limit because some cases leave assistance entirely when adults reach the time limit. The degree of undercounting can be established only by a careful examination of administrative data, which is outside the scope of this study.

<sup>12</sup> Ten other states also continue to provide assistance to families after they reach the federal welfare time limit, typically with grants that are smaller than those provided under the federally funded program. For more background on the federal and state policies, please see the following: (1) Bloom, Dan, Mary Farrell, and Barbara Fink. 2002. *Welfare Time Limits: State Policies, Implementation, and Effects on Families*. New York: MDRC; and (2) Crow, Sarah E. and Jacquelyn Anderson. 2006. *Working Against the Clock: The Implementation of Welfare Time Limits in California*. This report is available at WPRP’s website: <http://wprp.ucop.edu/researchpublications2.asp>. Note that child-only cases are not subject to a time limit in either federal or state law, and children can continue to receive federally funded cash assistance if they move into a household in which no adults have exhausted their federal time limit.

The outcomes portion of the study asks the following: (1) What do recipients understand about the time limit? (2) How are recipients preparing for the time limit? (3) What are the demographic characteristics of families who reach the time limit? (4) How does imposing the time limit affect the CalWORKs caseload? (5) How does reaching the time limit affect families?

To answer these questions, we rely on various sources of data, some statewide, and some from six focus counties: Alameda, Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, Sacramento, and Tulare. The principal data sources consist of the following: (1) two rounds of on-site interviews with key officials in the six focus counties and at the California Department of Social Services (CDSS); (2) two waves of a survey of front-line CalWORKs staff in the six focus counties; (3) two waves of a survey of the county welfare directors in all fifty-eight California counties; (4) two waves of a recipient survey in the six focus counties, first interviewing adult recipients as they near the sixty-month time limit and interviewing them again about one year later; and (5) administrative data from county records and from the state Medi-Cal Eligibility Data System (MEDS), the Welfare Data Tracking Information Program (WDTIP), if available, and the compilation of quarterly earnings data from employers for the federal Unemployment Insurance (UI) Program, maintained by the state Employment Development Department.

## **This Report**

This report, second in a series, focuses on CalWORKs households in which the adults are close to exhausting their sixty months of cash aid. In the chapters that follow, we describe: CalWORKs time-limit policies and caseload trends (Chapter 2); time-limited households in the six focus counties (Chapter 3); and adult recipients' knowledge of the time-limit policy and the characteristics that affect their degree of understanding (Chapter 4). In Chapter 5, we summarize key findings that we will continue to follow in subsequent reports.

## ***Data Sources***

We rely on a telephone survey of recipients nearing the time limit to gauge their understanding of time limit policies, and how, if at all, the time limit affects their perceived opportunities, decisions about welfare receipt, employment, living arrangements, and other important matters.

In addition to the recipient survey, we examine statewide administrative data and conduct in-depth analyses in six focus counties: Alameda, Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, Sacramento, and Tulare.

The recipient survey collects a wealth of information from CalWORKs recipients who were close to timing out in 2004 and 2005 that is not available from administrative data sources. In some instances, we merge survey and administrative data. For example, we combined the recipient survey data with state MEDS data and UI wage records to identify the number of months a respondent received aid and the respondent's employment history.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> Because these analyses use state MEDS data rather than the state Welfare Data Tracking Information Program (WDTIP) data or county data, they cannot distinguish between months of welfare receipt that counted toward the recipients' time limit and months that were exempted. At this writing, officials at the California Department of Social Services do not yet consider WDTIP data to be reliable. In a future report, absent WDTIP, the authors will

## *Selection of Counties*

In selecting the focus counties, we sought variation on four key characteristics: (1) region of the state; (2) economic activity, measured by the county's unemployment rate; (3) type of economy in the county—urban, suburban, agricultural, or mixed;<sup>14</sup> and (4) the county's CalWORKs caseload size (expressed here as the number of children receiving cash aid in one-parent, two-parent, and Safety Net cases). The counties we selected represent California's diversity and accounted for 56 percent of all CalWORKs cases in California, as of March 2005.<sup>15</sup> Exhibit 1.1 compares the focus counties on these dimensions.

The three southern counties—Los Angeles, Orange, and Riverside—are, respectively, urban, suburban, and mixed urban and rural. To the north, Alameda County is classified as urban, and is located in the eastern San Francisco Bay Area, a region with its own distinctive economic and political character. Sacramento County, in the northern central part of the state, encompasses both rural and urban areas, while the economy of Tulare County, in the Central Valley, is rural and agricultural.

The most prosperous county among the focus counties is Orange; its median household income in 1999 exceeded \$58,000, its unemployment rate was a low 4.3 percent, and only 2.4 percent of children were on aid. In contrast, the median household income for the entire state was \$47,500. Incomes in agricultural and rural counties such as Tulare were far lower; Tulare's was under \$34,000. Indeed, Tulare is an economic outlier among these counties, in that both its unemployment rate (11.7 percent) and the percentage of its children on CalWORKs (14.4 percent) are far higher than the statewide average rates of unemployment (6.2 percent) and children receiving cash aid (6.4 percent).

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analyze administrative data from the six focus counties in order to compare the characteristics of families that do accumulate sixty countable months of aid from those who do not.

<sup>14</sup> The authors rely on a classification scheme presented in Brady, Henry E., Mary H. Sprague, Fredric C. Gey, and Michael Wiseman. 2004. *Seasonal Employment and Welfare Use in California's Agricultural and Rural Counties*. California Policy Research Center, University of California. However, the authors' scheme differs in that they include a "suburban" classification and do not include any counties that Brady et al. define as "rural."

<sup>15</sup> California Department of Social Services, Research and Development Division; CA 237 data for March 2005. See [http://www.dss.cahwnet.gov/research/CA237CW-Ca\\_389.htm](http://www.dss.cahwnet.gov/research/CA237CW-Ca_389.htm), consulted on 10/13/2005.

**Exhibit 1.1**  
**Characteristics of the Focus Counties**

County	Region	Unemployment Rate, 2004 (%)	Children on CalWORKs one-parent, two-parent and Safety Net, March 2005		County Type
			Number	As % of all children in county	
Alameda	Bay Area	6.0	29,683	8.0	Urban
Los Angeles	South	6.6	201,290	7.1	Urban
Orange	South	4.3	19,788	2.4	Suburban
Riverside	South	5.8	24,909	4.5	Mixed
Sacramento	North	5.2	46,709	12.4	Mixed
Tulare	Central	11.7	19,790	14.4	Agricultural
California	--	6.2	642,434	6.4	--

### *Survey Sample*

The telephone survey of recipients (see further discussion in Chapter 3 and Appendix A) includes nearly 1,800 respondents in the six focus counties. We conducted the full interview in English, Spanish, and Vietnamese. We also conducted abbreviated interviews in any other language that respondents requested, using a simultaneous-translation service.<sup>16</sup> In the first wave of this survey, 2.4 percent of the single-parent respondents (30 adults) and 22.5 percent of the two-parent household respondents (126 adults) required translation into languages other than English, Spanish, or Vietnamese.<sup>17</sup>

We sought to interview CalWORKs recipients when they were within six months of reaching their sixty-month time limit. When we interviewed them, most respondents were within three months of the time limit, and about 10 percent had left CalWORKs prior to timing out.

### *Caseload Analysis*

Together with the administrative data, the survey data permit us to consider how the time limit might further affect the CalWORKs caseload—beyond terminating adults who exhaust their sixty months of cash aid. For example, in anticipation of reaching the time limit, adult recipients might alter their living arrangements: A single parent might choose to marry a partner with income, potentially enabling the family to exit CalWORKs altogether.

<sup>16</sup> For simultaneous translation, we used Language Line Services, based in Monterey, California. The company matches translators to speakers of various languages. The interviewer asks each question in English, and the translator translates each for the respondent. The translator then translates back to English the respondent's answers for the interviewer to code. The service is available twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week, and no appointment is necessary.

<sup>17</sup> This is the first time a major welfare-related study in California has included all other language minorities, making this sample more representative of California's diverse welfare caseload. Among families close to reaching the time limit in the focus counties, 5.9 percent spoke languages other than English, Spanish, and Vietnamese. The numbers reported in the text here are higher (8.7 percent) because the survey intentionally oversampled non-English-speaking and two-parent families.

Alternatively, adult recipients could voluntarily leave CalWORKs prior to reaching the time limit if they take advantage of the program's work-search services and work incentives and succeed in obtaining jobs with adequate pay. CalWORKs offers relatively strong financial incentives favoring employment, although these same incentives permit recipients to continue to receive cash aid at a higher level of earnings than was possible prior to CalWORKs.

Finally, recipients whose cash benefits are small because they have earnings or other sources of income could decide to exit CalWORKs in order to conserve or "bank" their remaining months of aid for times when they might be in greater need. However, the availability of the Safety Net program may make recipients less likely to leave the CalWORKs rolls voluntarily.<sup>18</sup>

### ***Household Analysis***

By linking administrative and survey data, we are able to sketch a portrait of CalWORKs households in which adults are nearing the time limit. We can observe:

- adults' and children's demographic characteristics,
- adults' employment histories,
- reported barriers to employment,
- reported material hardships affecting the families,
- adults' understanding of time-limit policies, and
- the actions adults take to prepare for the time limit.

For most analyses, we examine differences across counties and, in some cases, by race and ethnicity, language, and marital status. A future report will compare data from this survey with data from a second survey that we are conducting with the same respondents about one year later. In this way, we can compare recipients' experiences as they near the time limit with their experiences after the time limit is imposed and their grants have been reduced.

### **Limitations**

While much can be learned from this analysis, it has some important limitations. First, because we interviewed recipients prior to their timing out, this report does not address how recipients are affected when they reach or surpass the sixty-month time limit. In a future report, we will combine data from both waves of the recipient survey to address this important question.

Additionally, we sample only six of California's fifty-eight counties. As a result, the survey is not necessarily representative of the statewide population of people close to timing out. However, the six counties do reflect much of California's diversity, and our investigation of the degree to which the study sample is representative (see Appendix B) reveals that those we surveyed in the six focus counties do resemble in many key respects the statewide population of recipients close to timing out.

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<sup>18</sup> Not all CalWORKs-eligible children are also eligible for Safety Net benefits. In a family with some earned income and a small CalWORKs grant, children may become income-ineligible once the adult reaches the time limit and the family's grant is recalculated to exclude the adult.

The reader should also bear in mind that this is not a study of the CalWORKs population as a whole. We drew the survey sample to represent those approaching the time limit, and they may differ in important ways from the entire population of those receiving CalWORKs at any one time. For example, many in the latter group will be on aid for much less time than sixty months.

Finally, the survey is by design not representative of the first cohort of families to reach the CalWORKs time limit (those who exhausted sixty months of aid early in 2003). This population had received CalWORKs continuously, or nearly continuously, since the program began in January 1998 and, in some cases, had received AFDC for many years prior to the introduction of the time limit. By contrast, this study's sample will better reflect future recipients—those who experience only time-limited cash aid.

### **Other Reports in This Series**

In our first report, we described how the state and the six focus counties implemented the sixty-month time limit on CalWORKs cash assistance in early 2003.<sup>19</sup>

This second report focuses on CalWORKs recipients nearing the time limit.

In our third report, we will combine findings from the first and second waves of the recipient survey.

In our fourth report, we will analyze county administrative data linked to MEDS data to compare households that have accumulated sixty months of CalWORKs cash aid with those that have not. In particular, we will examine their demographic characteristics and patterns of employment and welfare use.

In our fifth report, we will discuss findings from the second wave of county and state site visits and surveys and will examine how state and county time-limit operations have changed since initial implementation of the CalWORKs program.

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<sup>19</sup> The first report is Crow, Sarah E. and Jacquelyn Anderson. 2006. *Working Against the Clock: The Implementation of Welfare Time Limits in California*. This report is available at WPRP's website: <http://wprp.ucop.edu/researchpublications2.asp>

## 2. BACKGROUND ON THE CalWORKs PROGRAM AND CASELOAD

In this chapter, we provide background information about the CalWORKs program and its caseload to assist readers in interpreting the survey findings reported in later chapters. We also describe how CalWORKs policies shaped the content of the two-wave recipient survey.

We administered the first wave of the survey to CalWORKs adults who resided in our six focus counties (Alameda, Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, Sacramento, and Tulare) and who were within six months of reaching the sixty-month time limit. We designed this first survey to capture the characteristics of families nearing the time limit and to gather information about adult respondents' understanding of the time limit, their activities in preparation for the time limit, their employment histories, the characteristics of jobs they held, and any barriers to employment they reported. In addition, the first-wave survey collects information on children's well-being, and any material hardship the families reported.

In the second wave of this survey, we will re-interview the same set of respondents about one year later to assess how, if at all, the time-limit-related grant reductions affected the well-being of their families. (See Chapter 3 and Appendices A and B for a more detailed discussion of the survey.)

### The CalWORKs Program and Survey Content

In 2006, Congress reauthorized the TANF legislation. Prior to that time, the federal government permitted states to pay benefits to families and individuals who did not qualify for federally funded cash assistance. Such benefits were paid with state dollars, and these state expenditures could be counted toward meeting the federal Maintenance of Effort (MOE) requirement that mandates the minimum amount states must contribute to the program.<sup>20</sup> (We refer to state spending that counts toward the MOE requirement as "MOE dollars.") Before 2006, the time-limit policies of a state did not have to mirror the federal policies so long as the variations that exceeded federal limits were funded with MOE dollars, or by other state funds not counted toward the MOE requirement.

When Congress reauthorized the TANF program in 2006, however, it placed new limits on state MOE funds. States are still free to extend benefits to families and individuals excluded from federal aid, but the state expenditures that pay for these extended benefits may no longer count toward meeting the federal MOE requirement.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> Prior to the 1996 federal overhaul of welfare, the federal and state governments shared the costs of AFDC through a categorical matching grant. The federal government matched state spending at a designated rate. The 1996 legislation created a federal block grant to fund TANF. However, each state is required to maintain a certain level of funding, known as Maintenance of Effort (MOE) spending.

<sup>21</sup> For more information on how these changes will affect California, see *Analysis of the 2006-2007 Budget Bill*, Office of the Legislative Analyst, pp. C-188 – C-196; and *New TANF Requirements Could Result in New Large Costs and Risk of Federal Penalties for California*, Center for Law and Social Policy, January 13, 2006. See also the interim final rules issued on June 29, 2006, by the federal Department of Health and Human Services to



California and federal policies share many of the same objectives, but CalWORKs differs from TANF in several important respects, some of which we highlight below.

### ***Employment***

Moving recipients from welfare to work is the principal goal of both the TANF and CalWORKs programs, and imposing a sixty-month lifetime limit on cash aid is central to both the federal and state strategies to reduce welfare dependency.

To meet this objective, CalWORKs is a “work-first” program that uses both carrots and sticks to encourage recipients to find and maintain employment. The incentives include subsidized child care and transportation, other support services, and an earnings disregard that enables recipients to combine earnings from employment with their cash grants.<sup>22</sup> The disincentives include fiscal penalties or sanctions for failing to comply with work requirements, and grant reductions after adults have accumulated sixty months of cash aid.<sup>23</sup>

With the program’s heavy emphasis on employment, it seems plausible that many of the CalWORKs families who reach the sixty-month time limit will include an employed adult, and possibly even one working full time. It is important to understand the nature and characteristics of these adults’ employment because their earnings capability is often key to their achieving economic self-sufficiency. Accordingly, we queried survey respondents extensively about their own current and recent employment and earnings and about the employment of other adults in the household.

In addition, a head of household with earned income may choose to exit CalWORKs when that person’s earnings or those of a spouse reduce the cash grant. Recipients with such earnings may decide that it is prudent to “bank” remaining months of CalWORKs aid for the future, when they might lose their incomes and qualify for the maximum allowable cash grant. Consequently, we asked respondents whether they ever considered banking months and whether they had ever done so. (See Chapter 3 for a review of responses to these employment-related questions.)

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implement the February 2006 legislation reauthorizing TANF: 45 Code of Federal Regulations, Parts 261, 262, 263, and 265.

<sup>22</sup> For more on supportive services that counties provide to employed CalWORKs recipients, see the first report from this study: Crow, Sarah E. and Jacquelyn Anderson. 2006. *Working Against the Clock: The Implementation of Welfare Time Limits in California*. This report is available at WPRP’s website: <http://wprp.ucop.edu/researchpublications2.asp>. The CalWORKs earnings disregard permits that the first \$225 of earnings and every 50 cents above that amount be deducted before calculating a family’s CalWORKs grant. In 2003, according to CDSS calculations, a single parent with two children became ineligible for a CalWORKs grant when his or her monthly gross earnings reach \$1,583. CDSS, CalWORKs Benefits Model for Federal Fiscal Year 2003, online at <http://www.dss.cahwnet.gov/research/res/pdf/BenefitModel.pdf>.

<sup>23</sup> A single parent with school-age children must work or engage in an approved work-related activity for thirty-two hours per week or lose his or her portion of the family’s total grant. For more on CalWORKs sanction policies and the families affected by them, see two publications from WPRP’s four-county sanctions study: (1) Bagdasaryan, Sofya Ruth Matthias, Paul Ong, and Douglas Houston. 2005. *CalWORKs Sanction Policies in Four Counties: Practices, Attitudes, and Knowledge.*; and (2) Ong, Paul and Douglas Houston. 2005. *CalWORKs Sanction Patterns in Four Counties: An Analysis of Administrative Data*. These reports are available at WPRP’s website: <http://wprp.ucop.edu/researchpublications1.asp>.

## ***Financial Stability***

Federal TANF policy generally terminates aid entirely to families in which able-bodied parents have received sixty months of federally funded cash assistance. By contrast, California continues paying reduced grants to eligible children after their parents have exhausted their time on cash aid.<sup>24</sup> (At this writing, these state-funded Safety Net grants count toward meeting California's MOE requirement. As the new provisions of the TANF reauthorization are implemented, however, this may change.)

To determine whether families who reach the time limit subsequently face greater difficulties making ends meet, we asked a number of questions designed to provide a baseline against which to compare responses from the second (post-time-limit) survey. Specifically, we asked respondents about their financial stability and whether they were able to pay for food, housing, and utilities, and to avoid homelessness. (We report these "material hardship" measures in Chapter 3.)

## ***Exemptions, Extensions, and Barriers to Employment***

Under federal and state law, recipients may be able to exempt certain months of cash aid so that they do not count toward the sixty-month time limit. The federal law permits four reasons for exempting months; California permits twelve.<sup>25</sup> In addition, both the federal and state laws permit recipients to extend their time on aid past sixty months in specific circumstances: TANF permits states to grant extensions to up to 20 percent of their caseloads for reasons of hardship, which states must specify.<sup>26</sup> CalWORKs recipients may extend their time on aid past sixty months for any of six reasons.

Some of the circumstances that qualify recipients for exemptions or extensions (old age, disability, caring for a disabled family member, or experiencing domestic violence) also impede recipients from working or engaging in activities designed to lead to work. Consequently, we asked recipients about these so-called barriers to employment, including problems with physical and mental health, substance abuse, and domestic violence. (We review their responses in Chapter 3.) In addition, administering certain exemptions and extensions is extremely difficult, particularly when county caseworkers must weigh a number of factors or overcome daunting bureaucratic hurdles.<sup>27</sup> Because of the inherent complexity, caseworkers may make errors.

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<sup>24</sup> The family's earnings are taken into account in this recalculation so, in some cases, the children may no longer qualify for cash assistance if their grant was small to begin with.

<sup>25</sup> Of the twelve reasons cited, ten are called exemptions by CalWORKs and two have the same effect but are not termed "exemptions."

<sup>26</sup> For an extensive discussion of exemptions and extensions, including California's unique exemption for court-ordered child support payments, see the first report from WPRP's time limit study: Crow, Sarah E. and Jacquelyn Anderson. 2006. *Working Against the Clock: The Implementation of Welfare Time Limits in California*. This report is available at WPRP's website: <http://wprp.ucop.edu/researchpublications2.asp>.

<sup>27</sup> See, for example, the discussion of the "unable to maintain employment" extension (pp. 63-65), and the discussion of California's unique child support exemption (pp. 18-20) in the first report from WPRP's time-limit study: Crow, Sarah E. and Jacquelyn Anderson. 2006. *Working Against the Clock: The Implementation of Welfare Time Limits in California*. This report is available at WPRP's website: <http://wprp.ucop.edu/researchpublications2.asp>.

If recipients do not receive the CalWORKs exemptions or extensions for which they qualify, their cash grants will be reduced prematurely. Such errors are less likely to occur if recipients know the circumstances under which they may qualify for exemptions and extensions. To test recipients' knowledge, we questioned them about time-limit policies generally, and about their understanding of exemptions and extensions in particular. (See Chapter 4 for an examination of their responses.)

### ***Linguistic and Racial/Ethnic Diversity***

The linguistic diversity of California's welfare population presents significant challenges to the state and county agencies responsible for implementing CalWORKs policies. State regulations require each county to provide bilingual staff for all languages spoken by at least five percent of the county's non-English-speaking welfare caseload. In addition, counties must provide written translations of written materials, regardless of the percentage of the caseload population that speaks a given language, if CDSS has provided the program documents in that language. For example, if *any* of a county's non-English-speaking recipients speak Tagalog, and written materials in Tagalog are available from CDSS, then the county must make those CDSS-translated materials routinely available.<sup>28</sup>

To help policymakers assess whether CalWORKs is meeting the needs of non-English speakers, we asked survey respondents whether they received information in their own languages. So as not to exclude any linguistic groups, we conducted the full survey in English, Spanish, and Vietnamese, and, using a simultaneous translation service, abbreviated interviews in any other language recipients requested. We have interviewed respondents in seventeen languages other than English, Spanish, and Vietnamese. The other languages most often requested were Armenian, Russian, Cantonese, Cambodian, and Farsi.

A simple comparison of the survey responses reveals a great deal about the implications of ethnic and linguistic diversity. These recipient characteristics varied markedly and accounted for a great deal of the cross-county variation we observed in outcomes of interest, including employment, reported barriers to employment, reported material hardships, and knowledge of time-limit policies. (We compare respondents based on their race/ethnicity and language spoken in Chapters 3 and 4.)

### ***Other Aspects of the Survey***

In the first wave of the recipient survey, we asked certain questions to create baseline measures against which we will later compare second-wave survey responses. Those questions—which are related to earnings, total household income, child care arrangements, and health insurance—are not addressed in this report, chiefly because CalWORKs recipients must meet earnings and income limits to remain on aid, and because they have access to child care subsidies and Medi-Cal while receiving aid. However, once adults time out of CalWORKs, their situations may change in important ways. In a subsequent report, we will explore changes in these baseline measures.

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<sup>28</sup> CDSS All County Letter No. 03-56, October 29, 2003.

## The CalWORKs Caseload Before and After the Time Limit

Consistent with the federal TANF statute, many states terminate aid to entire families when they reach the time limit, thereby reducing state welfare caseloads. In California, the effects of the time limit on caseload size and composition are more complex. Most children remain eligible for the Safety Net program once their parents exhaust sixty months of cash aid. While the parents were included in the CalWORKs grant calculation, they were required to work or engage in approved work-related activities. However, once they time out, these parents are no longer subject to work requirements, even though their children qualify for Safety Net grants.

In this section, we describe the caseload histories of the state and the six focus counties. The accompanying charts identify gross differences across counties and show the magnitude of changes occurring in the caseload after the imposition of the federal and CalWORKs time limits in 2001 and 2003, respectively. In this report, we do not conduct the statistical analyses that would be necessary to attribute any changes in the caseload to the implementation or imposition of the time limit. In a subsequent report, we will present a more detailed analysis of the caseload dynamics—statewide and in the six focus counties—associated with the imposition of the CalWORKs sixty-month time limit in January 2003.

Exhibit 2.1 charts the state's caseload, reporting the number of cases in four categories: (1) CalWORKs/TANF one- and two-parent cases, (2) cases that have timed out of TANF but continue to receive CalWORKs for the adults and children ("TANF timed out"),<sup>29</sup> (3) Safety Net cases, and (4) child-only cases.<sup>30</sup> (We replicate this first chart for each of the six focus counties.) Exhibit 2.2 reports the number of children and adults in the statewide caseload, rather than numbers of cases, and excludes child-only cases. We use data that counties reported monthly to CDSS on form CA237, from October 1999 through March 2006.<sup>31</sup>

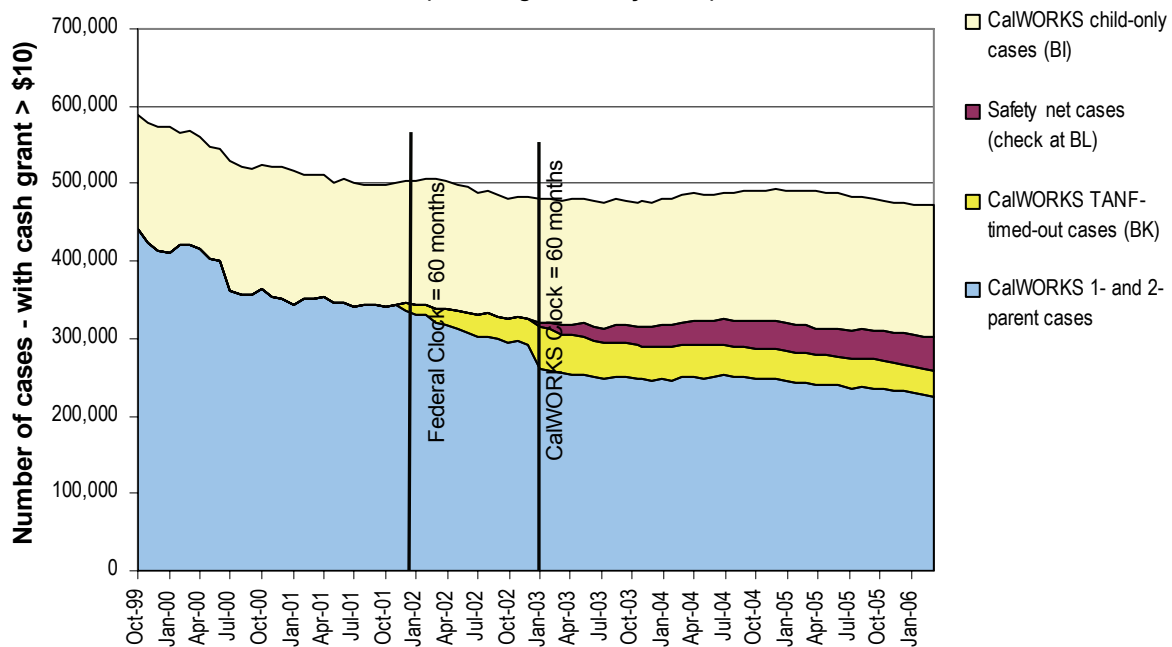
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<sup>29</sup> Because California passed and implemented CalWORKs about a year after the implementation of the federal TANF program, a portion of CalWORKs recipients have received sixty months of TANF but not yet reached the CalWORKs sixty-month limit. As time goes by there may be fewer cases in this situation. However, there are other reasons why CalWORKs recipients may reach the federal sixty-month limit before they reach California's sixty-month limit, since some exemptions stop the CalWORKs clock, but not the TANF clock.

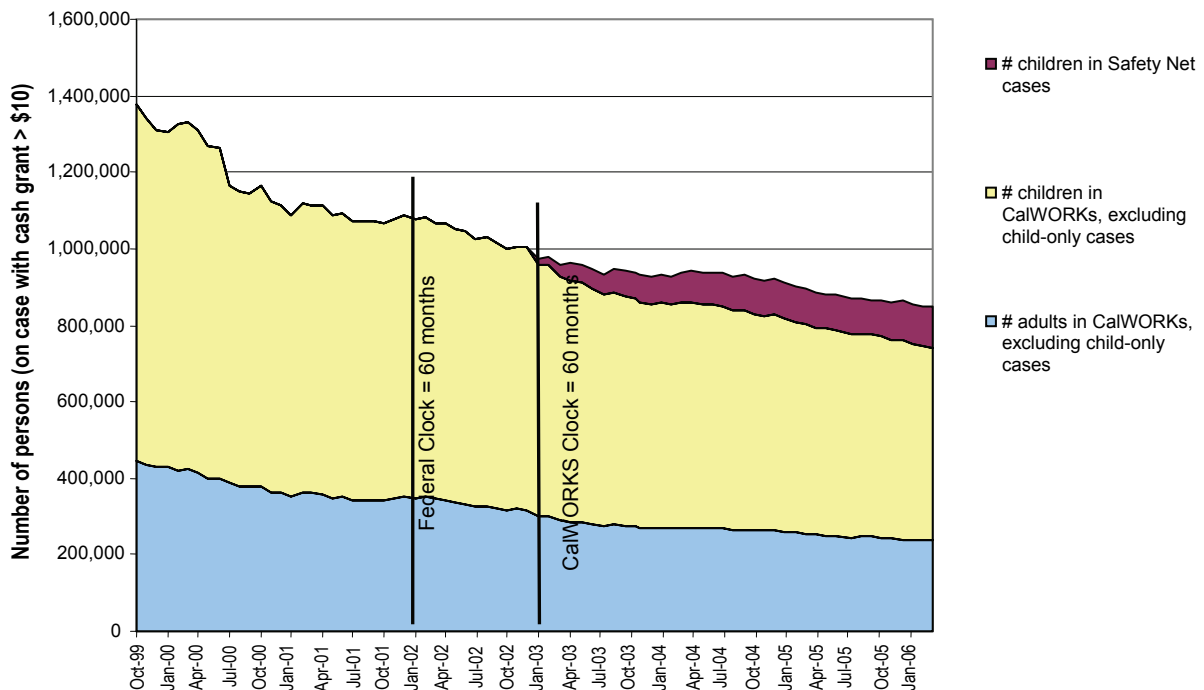
<sup>30</sup> Child-only cases are cases in which the children are eligible for CalWORKs benefits, but their parents or caretakers are not. Typically this occurs when the children are citizens or legal residents of the United States, but their parents are not. Persons not in the country legally are prohibited from receiving most public assistance benefits, with a few notable exceptions (e.g., pre-natal care and emergency medical care for life-threatening conditions). Safety Net cases also exclude parents and adult caretakers. In this instance, the adults have exhausted their time on aid, rather than being categorically ineligible as are undocumented adults.

<sup>31</sup> All caseload data are from the CA 237 reports at a web page maintained by the CDSS Research Branch, CalWORKs Cash Grant Caseload Movement Report: [http://www.dss.cahwnet.gov/research/CA237CW-Ca\\_389.htm](http://www.dss.cahwnet.gov/research/CA237CW-Ca_389.htm).

**Exhibit 2.1  
CalWORKS Caseload  
(including child-only cases)**



**Exhibit 2.2  
Children and Adults in Safety Net and CalWORKs  
(excluding child-only cases)**



As Exhibit 2.1 shows, the combined Safety Net and CalWORKs caseloads,<sup>32</sup> excluding child-only cases,<sup>33</sup> stayed fairly level between January 2003 (when the CalWORKs time limit took effect) and March 2006, although it had declined modestly in the two prior years. And although the total numbers of cases receiving CalWORKs and Safety Net benefits has remained roughly constant since 2003, the number of aided people, both children and adults (Exhibit 2.2), has fallen steadily.

We also analyzed the change in the number of Safety Net cases relative to all CalWORKs cases during the January 2003–March 2006 time period. The number of cases and rates we report here are averages of month-to-month changes across the time periods noted.

Because the Safety Net program has been in existence for only a short period of time since its inception in January 2003, it is not surprising that the caseload has not stabilized. As might be expected with a new program offering valuable benefits, the caseload grew very rapidly during its first nine months, rising 20.9 percent per month statewide (adding 2,384 Safety Net cases per month, on average), and reaching 24,415 cases by September 2003. Caseload growth was slower (3.2 percent per month), but still substantial, from October 2003 through September

<sup>32</sup> By “CalWORKs caseloads,” we mean the sum of the CalWORKs cases and TANF timed-out cases shown in the charts.

<sup>33</sup> The child-only portion of the caseload has grown both absolutely (by roughly 17 percent between 1999 and 2006) and as a fraction of the overall caseload; in March 2006 it comprised about 36 percent of the total caseload. Thus, it is a very important aspect of overall caseload dynamics but, because child-only cases are not subject to the time limit, we do not consider them further in this report.

2004. With cases added at an average rate of 921 per month during this period, there were 34,905 cases in the program by September 2004. In the following year, October 2004 through September 2005, caseload growth slowed to a crawl at three tenths of one percent (0.3 percent) per month, with 122 cases per month added, on average.

At this writing, the latest months for which we had data are October 2005 through March 2006. During this period, Safety Net caseload growth again accelerated to a rate of 2.4 percent per month, adding an average of 934 cases each month, and reaching 41,860 cases by March, 2006.

Since program inception, Safety Net cases have been a growing fraction of the CalWORKs caseload. In its first month, Safety Net cases were 1.7 percent of all CalWORKs cases. Nine months later, in September 2003, they were 7.7 percent. By September 2004, Safety Net cases were 10.8 percent of CalWORKs cases, by September 2005, 11.8 percent, and by March 2006, 13.9 percent of all CalWORKs cases.

We see variation in caseload trends across the six focus counties after the implementation of the time limit (see Exhibits 2.3 through 2.8). Two of the six focus counties—Los Angeles and Orange—showed caseload declines after CalWORKs was implemented in January 2003. In contrast, Alameda, Sacramento, and Tulare Counties all experienced increases in their caseloads after January 2003. In Riverside County, the caseload increased modestly in 2003 and early 2004, but fell between October 2004 and March 2006, returning to roughly its January 2003 level.

The proportion of Safety Net cases as a fraction of the CalWORKs caseload varied across counties during the period January 2003–March 2006. By March 2006, Safety Net cases were 13.9 percent of the CalWORKs caseload statewide, but were a smaller fraction of the caseload in three of our focus counties: 10.4 percent in Tulare, 10.5 percent in Riverside, and 11.4 percent in Orange. Safety Net cases made up 13 percent of the CalWORKs caseload in Alameda County, near the statewide average, but made up a much larger fraction of the CalWORKs caseload in the two remaining focus counties: 21.6 percent in Sacramento and 18.6 percent in Los Angeles. In March 2006, Los Angeles had 31 percent of the state's CalWORKs caseload, but 42 percent of the state's Safety Net cases.

## Summary

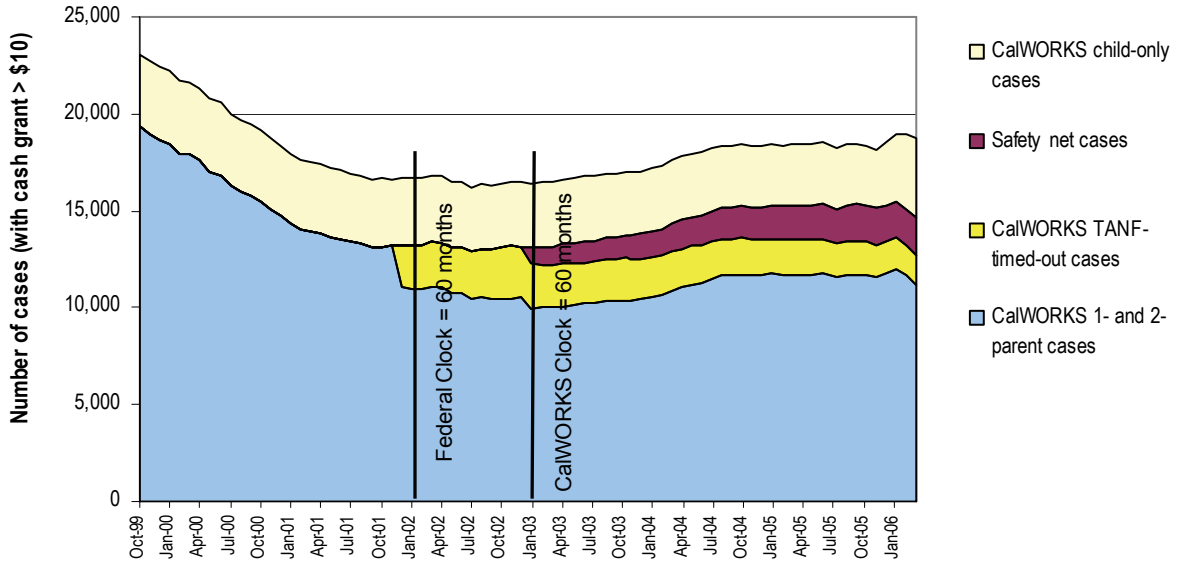
The state CalWORKs caseload declined between January 1998, the month in which the program was implemented, and March 2006. However, all the reduction occurred early in the period. Very little change occurred in caseload totals after the sixty-month time limit was first imposed in January 2003.<sup>34</sup> Between January 2003 and March 2006, the number of Safety Net cases grew to 13.9 percent of the state's caseload while other portions of the caseload declined modestly. As the charts below show, these statewide trends mask considerable variation across our six focus counties. Our next report will include a more detailed analysis of changes in the caseload and the number of people aided.

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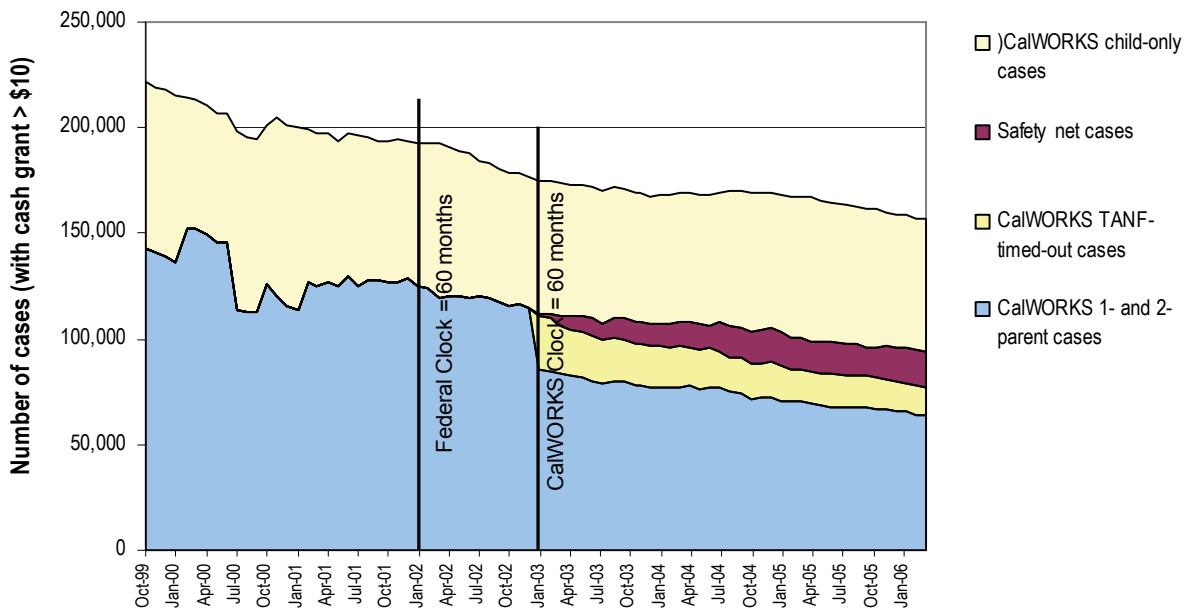
<sup>34</sup> California's caseload peaked during the recession in the mid-1990s and began declining several years before CalWORKs was created and implemented. Evaluators at RAND found that the caseload declined by over 25 percent between 1995 and late 1997, when counties began planning their CalWORKs programs. See Klerman et al., 2000. *Welfare Reform in California: State and County Implementation of CalWORKs in the Second Year*. Santa Monica, CA: RAND. CDSS caseload data show that the average monthly CalWORKs caseload dropped by 29 percent from state fiscal year 1995-1996 through state fiscal year 1998-1999. California Department of Social Services, CA 237 CW Master Caseload File, available at [http://www.dss.cahwnet.gov/research/CA237CW-Ca\\_389.htm](http://www.dss.cahwnet.gov/research/CA237CW-Ca_389.htm).



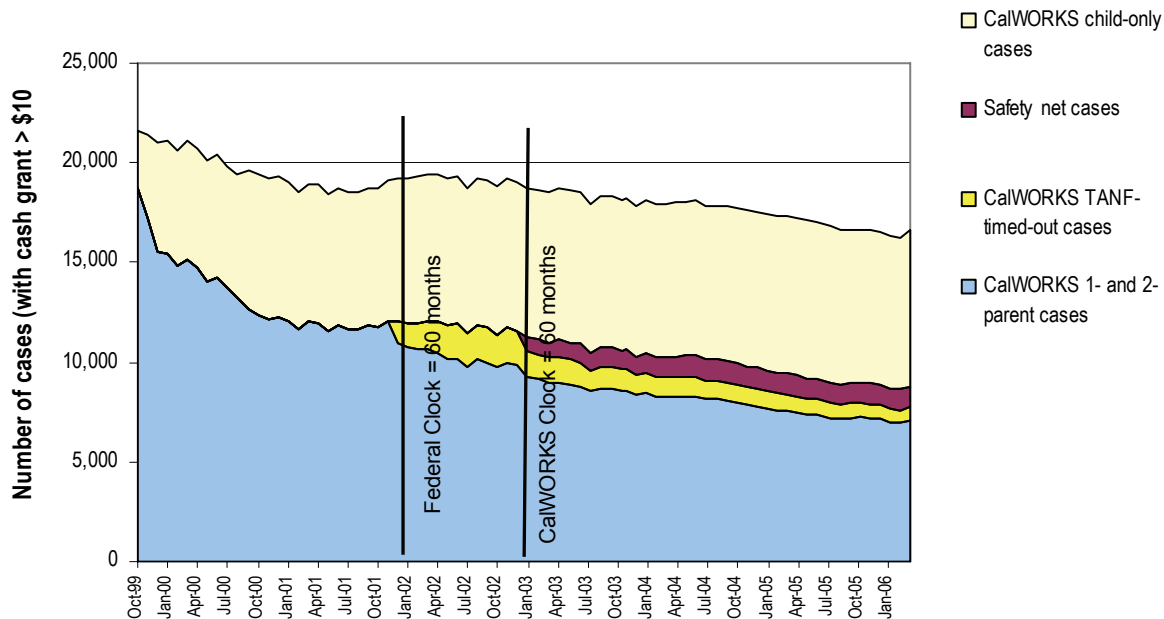
**Exhibit 2.3**  
**CalWORKS Caseload, Alameda County**  
 (including child-only cases)



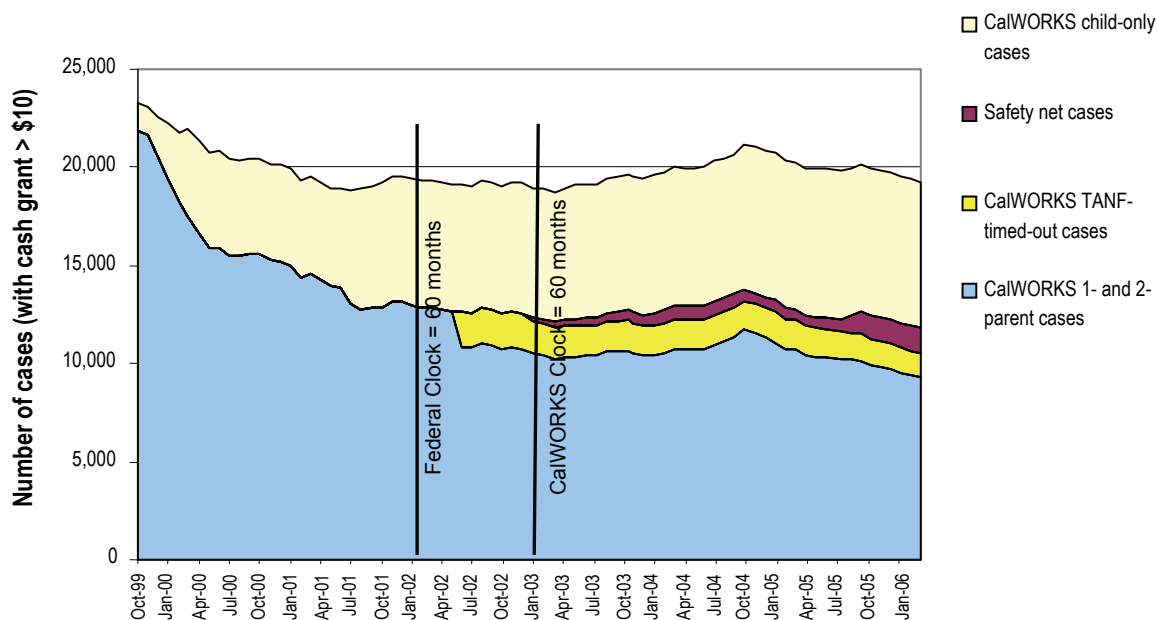
**Exhibit 2.4**  
**CalWORKS Caseload, Los Angeles County**  
 (including child-only cases)



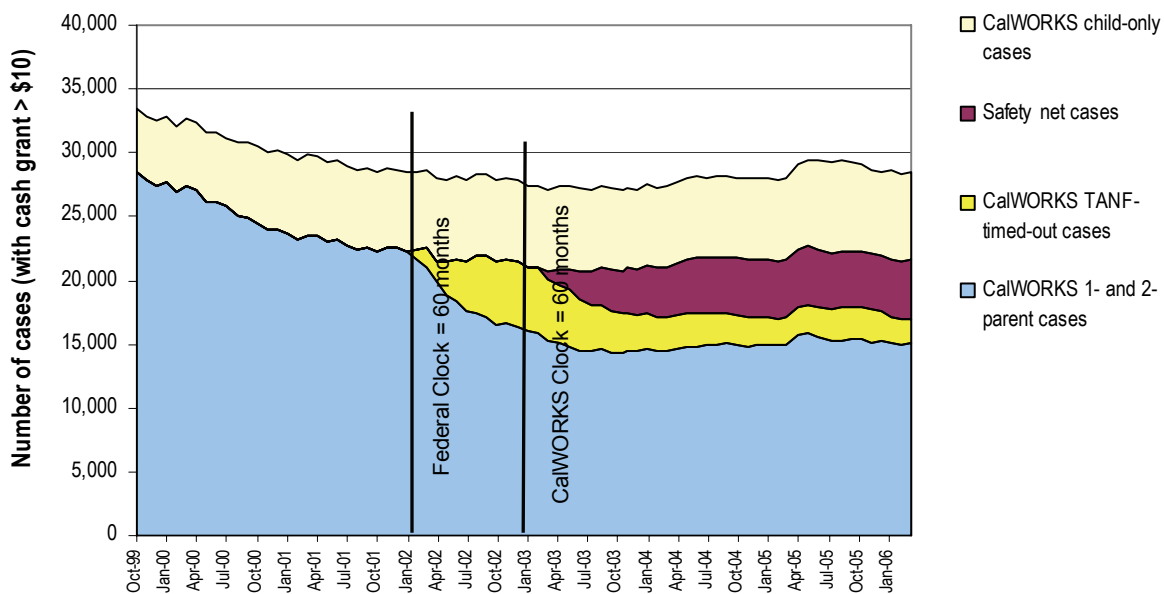
**Exhibit 2.5**  
**CalWORKS Caseload, Orange County**  
**(including child-only cases)**



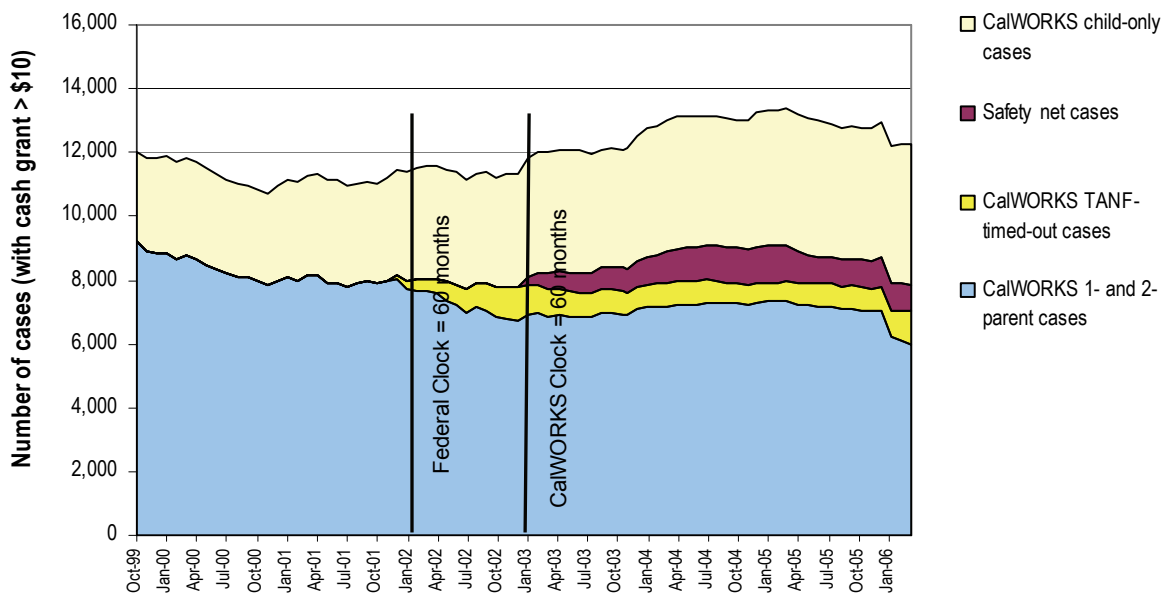
**Exhibit 2.6**  
**CalWORKs Caseload, Riverside County**  
**(including child-only cases)**



**Exhibit 2.7**  
**CalWORKS Caseload, Sacramento County**  
**(including child-only cases)**



**Exhibit 2.8**  
**CalWORKS Caseload, Tulare County**  
**(including child-only cases)**



### **3. SURVEY DESIGN AND CHARACTERISTICS OF FAMILIES NEARING THE SIXTY-MONTH CalWORKs TIME LIMIT IN THE SIX FOCUS COUNTIES**

#### **Survey Design Overview**

This report relies on data from a telephone survey of 1,797 respondents who, at the time we selected them from county administrative records, were receiving CalWORKs cash aid and were expected to reach the CalWORKs sixty-month time limit within six months of the projected date of their interview.<sup>35</sup> We interviewed one adult per case, and attempted to interview a woman if possible. Most interviews occurred within three months of the month in which the recipient had been expected to reach the sixty-month limit. By the time they were interviewed, a very small fraction had accumulated fifty-nine months of CalWORKs benefits. Ten percent were no longer receiving CalWORKs by the time we interviewed them. We intend to re-interview each respondent about one year after the initial survey, and will present results from this second survey in a subsequent report.

In order to capture the experiences of those close to reaching the time limit we intentionally selected recipients who faced the prospect of timing out between October 2004 and October 2005. We drew the sample from county welfare records on the basis of individuals' CalWORKs "clocks," which track the number of months that count toward the sixty-month time limit. Some months may not count because the recipients qualify for the child support or other allowable exemptions. Caseworkers adjust for exempted months retroactively, a process that can be seen in the administrative data. When a caseworker adjusts a recipient's clock to reflect one or more exempted months, that clock moves backward, registering fewer countable months. In other words, a recipient who is permitted to exempt months from counting toward the time limit gains additional time in which to receive CalWORKs cash benefits.

At the time we selected the sample, we relied on the number of months registered in each adult's clock, even though county caseworkers had not yet fully adjusted the clocks to reflect exempted months. Indeed, as the survey sample drew closer to reaching their time limits, many of the respondents' clocks gained months as county staff made adjustments to reflect child-support and other exemptions, just as the CalWORKs legislation intended.

We began interviewing in June 2004, eighteen months after the first cohort of CalWORKs recipients started reaching the time limit. Because the recipients in the sample were not the first to experience the CalWORKs sixty-month time limit, the group we surveyed may have learned from timed-out friends or neighbors how the time limit worked and, in any event, most likely had had interactions with county workers who were relatively experienced in applying the time limit. Moreover, all the survey respondents had entered their current welfare enrollments or spells after CalWORKs was implemented. Therefore, our survey captures the reactions of

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<sup>35</sup> Fifty-two interviews, or 3 percent of the total, were completed in-person by interviewers in the field. We abandoned in-person interviews, a strategy we employed initially to boost response rates, because it proved costly and ineffective.

recipients who have experienced roughly five years of a work-first, time-limited cash assistance program.

In order to include diverse ethnic and language groups, we conducted the full telephone survey in English, Spanish, and Vietnamese. With the use of a simultaneous-translation service and an abbreviated survey instrument, our team interviewed respondents who spoke none of these three languages in any other language they requested.<sup>36</sup>

To ensure that our sample was sufficiently diverse, we did not take a simple random sample of all “near-leavers” in a county, but rather used a stratified sample that would adequately represent less common, as well as more common, kinds of cases. We defined the sampling groups (known in sampling parlance as strata) along two dimensions, each with two levels. One dimension was whether the case had one or two parents. The other dimension was intended to over-represent numerically small ethnic and linguistic groups: Vietnamese households and households in which adult(s) spoke any language other than English or Spanish were selected at a different rate than Latino, English-speaking, and Spanish-speaking households. From each of these strata, we then selected a predefined fraction (a “sampling rate,” as reported in Appendix A) for interview. In addition, because of its large population, we sampled smaller proportions of cases from Los Angeles County than from the other five focus counties.

As is shown in Exhibit 3.1, the overall response rate for the survey was 60.9 percent. In other words, we interviewed nearly 61 percent of those selected for interview. This is the survey sample for this report.

We apply weights to all survey tabulations presented in this report so that results shown in the columns for an individual county can be generalized to those reaching the time limit in that county. More specifically, the weights permit us to generalize from each county’s survey sample to all cases in that county who were, at the time the sample was drawn, receiving CalWORKs cash aid and were expected to reach the sixty-month time limit within six months. This group constitutes the county’s “sampling frame.” Weighting the survey sample back to the sampling frame allows adjustment for the deliberate over-representation of certain strata in the survey, as well as for the percentage of each stratum successfully interviewed, and for the number of months of caseload data from which those nearing the time limit were sampled in a county. These weights are known as the “monthly weights.”

We used the monthly weights to create an “equal-probability” or “equal-treatment” weight, which is relevant only for the results reported in the “Total” column of each table. The equal-probability weight adjusts the monthly weights for each county so that the six focus counties

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<sup>36</sup> Because the simultaneous translations required additional time, we shortened the survey so that it took about the same amount of time as the full survey. Among the questions eliminated in the abbreviated survey were those asking about some of the barriers to employment, including anxiety, stress, and substance abuse. We also shortened the sections on earnings, childcare, and health needs. The abbreviated survey included the entire section asking about time-limit knowledge and experience. Please see Appendix D for an approximation of the full survey instrument (skip patterns and repeated questions are not included here); we highlight sections that were not used in the abbreviated survey. To view the complete survey instrument used in the first-wave interviews, please go to WPRP’s website: <http://wprp.ucop.edu/documents/bpacodebook30oct2006.pdf>.

appear to have the same number of cases nearing the time limit (whereas, in fact, the number of cases receiving aid and nearing the time limit vary greatly across the six focus counties). This approach means that the reported values in the “Total” columns (where we employed the equal-probability weight) are averages of the mean values for each of the six focus counties. The values are *not* averages that correspond to a welfare sample pooled across all six counties, which would predominantly reflect outcomes for Los Angeles and the other larger-than-average counties. (For a more detailed explanation of the sample weighting, see Appendix A.)

### ***Survey Response Rates***

Welfare recipients are a notoriously difficult population to survey, and the 61-percent response rate for this first-wave survey compares favorably with other similar surveys. A recent study of response rates in welfare reform studies across many states found telephone survey response rates to average 53 percent.<sup>37</sup> The surveys in that study occurred between 1999 and 2001. Since that time, response rates to surveys of all types have been falling as individuals replace (listed) land-line home telephones with (unlisted and frequently changing) cell phones.

Welfare recipients pose particular surveying challenges because they change residences more frequently than other groups do and they do not always have phone service. Strategies useful in locating more advantaged groups, such as tracking through the Department of Motor Vehicles, employment records, and credit bureaus, are relatively ineffective with very low-income and welfare populations. In addition, the barriers that may limit adult recipients’ participation in the labor market may also impede their participation in a survey. For example, welfare mothers typically have young children at home, so they may find it difficult to talk much on the telephone. The linguistic diversity of low-income families further complicates matters.

Exhibit 3.1 shows response rates for various subgroups of sample members, using characteristics available in administrative data. Response rates varied by language and race/ethnicity: Among those interviewed with the full survey, Spanish-speaking Latinos, African-Americans, and English-speaking whites had the highest response rates (72 percent, 70 percent, and 66 percent, respectively), while Vietnamese-speaking respondents had a lower response rate of 54 percent. Those who spoke languages other than English, Spanish, and Vietnamese, most of whom were interviewed with the abbreviated survey, had far lower response rates, averaging 37 percent across the other language categories shown in Exhibit 3.1.

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<sup>37</sup> Cantor, David and Patricia Cunningham. 2002. Methods for Obtaining High Response Rates in Telephone Surveys. In *Studies of Welfare Populations: Data Collection and Research Issues*. Edited by Michele Ver Ploeg, Robert. A. Moffitt, and Constance F. Citro. Washington, DC: Committee on National Statistics, National Research Council.

**Exhibit 3.1**  
**Survey Response Rates for Various Groups (%)**

	Survey Response Rate	Number of Survey Respondents
Overall	60.9	1,797
County ***		
Alameda	75.9	283
Los Angeles	50.9	438
Orange	58.1	190
Riverside	56.0	172
Sacramento	66.2	449
Tulare	64.6	265
Case Type ***		
One Parent/All Other Families	63.7	1,339
Two Parent	53.8	458
Race/Ethnicity ***		
White	54.7	468
African-American	70.4	557
Latino	65.3	526
Vietnamese	53.8	135
Other Southeast Asian	41.3	45
Other Asian	48.5	50
Other	40.0	16
Race/Ethnicity and Language ***		
White, English-Speaking	65.9	355
White, Non-English-Speaking	35.8	113
African-American, English-Speaking	70.4	557
Latino, English-Speaking	63.0	380
Latino, Spanish (Non-English) Speaking	71.9	146
Asian, English-Speaking	56.0	47
Asian, Vietnamese-Speaking	54.2	123
Asian, Other Southeast-Asian-Speaking	40.9	36
Asian, Other Language	37.5	24
Other, English-Speaking	43.3	13
Other, Non-English-Speaking	30.0	3

**Exhibit 3.1 (continued)**

	Survey Response Rate	Number of Survey Respondents
<b>Age ***</b>		
18–24	64.8	210
25–34	62.0	756
35–44	60.0	581
45 or Older	57.0	250
<b>Number of Children in the Assistance Unit ***</b>		
1	62.0	561
2	58.4	545
3 or more	61.2	691
<b>Age of Youngest Child ***</b>		
0–2	64.6	546
3–5	62.9	452
6–12	57.6	568
13 or older	57.2	231
<b>Longest Contiguous Employment Between July 1999 and June 2004 ***</b>		
No work at all	56.8	390
1–4 quarters	62.4	297
5–8 quarters	64.7	320
9–12 quarters	63.5	283
13–16 quarters	60.9	262
17–19 quarters	61.3	171
Worked continuously	52.1	74

**Notes:**

- (1) All data are from MEDS and the Unemployment Insurance Wage Records.
- (2) Statistically significant differences in response rates across categories are shown as follows: \*\*\* $p < .01$   
\*\* $p < .05$  \* $p < .10$ .

It is important to keep in mind that some of the subgroups listed in Exhibit 3.1 overlap. For instance, county response rates varied, at least in part because of the demographic characteristics of respondents in those counties: The response rate was highest in Alameda County, which had the highest concentration of African-Americans in our six focus counties, and was lowest in Los Angeles County, which had the largest population of non-English-speakers who speak languages other than Spanish and Vietnamese.

Survey response rates did not vary greatly by other characteristics. Response rates by age, number of children, age of youngest child, and employment history fell mostly within a range of 57 percent to 65 percent.

For more information on survey sampling and methodology, please refer to Appendix A. For further information on the validity of the survey, and the ability to generalize from it, including an analysis of the implications of nonresponse, see Appendix B. We have weighted the sample to match the sampling frame, and tabulations show that there are no significant differences



between the weighted sample and the six-county sampling frame, which consists of all those identified in a particular month as being within six months of timing out in those counties. Hence, the weighted tabulations presented in this report are representative of those approaching the time limit in the six counties we examined in depth.

### **Characteristics of the Families Nearing the Sixty-Month Time Limit**

In this section, we describe the characteristics of the survey sample of CalWORKs families nearing the sixty-month time limit in the six focus counties. We examine demographics, family employment, reported barriers to employment, and reported material hardships. We interpret the findings as representative of that population in each county in 2004–2005. Aggregated results are the average of findings across the six counties. All tabulations are weighted to correct for stratified sampling and differential response rates across population subgroups, and to weight less populous and more populous counties equally. Thus, figures reported in the “Total” columns are the average of the six county totals rather than the average of the total population pooled across the six counties.

Because this report describes families on the cusp of timing out in only six counties, two cautions should be kept in mind when interpreting the results. (For discussion in greater detail, see Appendix B.) First, the recipients in the sample are not exactly like recipients who have received CalWORKs cash aid for fewer months and are not close to timing out (see Appendix Exhibit B.3). Recipients close to timing out are older, have more children, have longer work histories, and are more likely to be African American than are other recipients. Second, although the focus counties accounted for more than half of the statewide caseload of one- and two-parent cases (and about 60 percent of those close to timing out) and represent different California regions, they do not represent the entire state.

A full investigation of how those nearing the sixty-month time limit in these six counties compare to their counterparts statewide is beyond the scope of this report, but Appendix B provides some relevant data. Compared to those who appeared to be close to reaching the CalWORKs time limit statewide in 2004, this survey sample has more African Americans, more non-English-speaking whites, and fewer English-speaking whites and Latinos. It also has a few more families with only one child and a few more respondents with any UI-covered employment in the past five years. However, in other respects the sample resembles the entire set of California families approaching the time limit surprisingly closely (see Appendix Exhibit B.2).<sup>38</sup> There are many characteristics—reported barriers to employment, for example, and education—for which we cannot compare respondents to the entire set of California families approaching the time limit because the information we collected in the survey is not available in state administrative data.

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<sup>38</sup> These data, maintained by the California Department of Health Services (CDHS), capture CalWORKs, Food Stamp, and Medi-Cal eligibility statewide.

## *Demographic Characteristics*

As is shown in Exhibit 3.2, 93 percent of the weighted survey sample are female, a natural consequence of our efforts to interview a female adult from cases in which there were two or more adults and the fact that 94 percent of single parents in the sample are mothers.<sup>39</sup> The variation in these percentages across counties is not great, with the exception being Tulare County, which has a higher proportion of male respondents than the other counties.<sup>40</sup> In Tulare, nearly half the sample (46 percent) is married or cohabiting, the highest fraction among the six focus counties.

Other respondent characteristics show more variation across the counties. For instance, Los Angeles and Orange Counties have relatively older respondents, while Sacramento and Tulare have somewhat younger ones. In Los Angeles and Orange Counties, just over 20 percent of respondents are age 45 or older, while Sacramento and Tulare have 10 percent to 11 percent in this age range. Across all the counties, the majority (75 percent) of the respondents nearing the sixty-month limit, most of them mothers, fall into the 25–44 age range, which one might expect. Younger women would be unlikely to have reached the five-year limit unless they had had a child at a very young age. Indeed, Appendix Exhibit B.3 shows that the women who are approaching the time limit are older than those in the overall caseload.

The population of adults nearing the CalWORKs time limit is diverse in many regards, including ethnicity. Statewide, about 30 percent of those nearing the time limit are African American, 29 percent are English-speaking Latinos, 21 percent are English-speaking whites, 10 percent are Spanish-speaking Latinos, 2 percent are Vietnamese-speaking, and many other groups are represented in small proportions, together comprising 8 percent of those nearing the sixty-month time limit (see Appendix Exhibit B.2).

The survey respondents from the six focus counties are even more diverse, with a higher proportion of Vietnamese-speaking respondents and other non-English-speakers than is present in the statewide population. As is shown in Exhibit 3.2, 60 percent of survey respondents are African American or Latino (roughly 30 percent each). Eighteen percent of the sample is white and English-speaking, 7 percent is Vietnamese interviewed in Vietnamese, and only 1 percent is Vietnamese or any other Asian ethnicity interviewed in English. Finally, 8 percent of the sample is English-speaking and of any ethnicity not classified as white, African American, Asian, or Latino, and 6 percent speak languages other than English, Spanish, or Vietnamese. These languages are (in order of prevalence): Armenian, Russian, Cantonese, Cambodian, Farsi, Hmong, Laotian, Mien, Arabic, and other languages. The concentration of these groups in particular counties varies tremendously. In Alameda County, for instance, more than half the respondents are African American (56 percent) and close to 10 percent are Latino, either English- or Spanish-speaking. In Tulare County, just 7 percent are African American, and about 54 percent are Latino.

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<sup>39</sup> We remind the reader that here, and in other tables where the equal-probability weight is used, a phrase such as “60 percent of respondents,” unless it pertains to a specific county, refers to the average of the percentages in each of the six focus counties—an average that gives equal weight to less populous and more populous counties. A percentage reported in the table for an individual county pertains to all recipients in that county who are within six months of the sixty-month time limit.

<sup>40</sup> Asterisks in the Exhibits represent characteristics for which there are significant differences across counties.

Overall, we interviewed 77 percent of respondents in English. White English-speaking respondents and African Americans are the largest English-speaking groups represented in the survey, followed by English-speaking Latinos. We interviewed two-thirds of Latino respondents in English, and one-third in Spanish, although in Los Angeles County, they were equally likely to be interviewed in English and Spanish. Orange County has a particularly large concentration of Vietnamese CalWORKs recipients, and in that county 27 percent of all respondents were interviewed in Vietnamese. Sacramento and Los Angeles Counties have the highest concentration of respondents who speak languages other than English, Spanish, and Vietnamese (12 percent and 8 percent, respectively).

A substantial minority of respondents was born outside the United States. Overall, 27 percent of respondents are immigrants, but this proportion is as high as 33 percent in Los Angeles County and 50 percent in Orange County.<sup>41</sup>

CalWORKs recipients on the verge of reaching the sixty-month time limit have very low levels of education. Forty percent of the survey sample had not completed high school. Nearly 36 percent had a high school diploma or GED, 23 percent had some college education, and fewer than 2 percent had completed college. Education levels also varied significantly across counties. The counties with the highest proportions of respondents who had not completed high school were Orange (50 percent), Alameda (44 percent), and Tulare (41 percent). Sacramento County had the fewest respondents without high school degrees (29 percent), and the highest proportion that had attended some college (30 percent). Overall, 1.4 percent of survey respondents were educated for at least eight years in a foreign country.

Although the large majority of welfare recipients are unmarried, 26 percent of those on the cusp of timing out in the six focus counties were married when we interviewed them, and another 10 percent were living with a partner (cohabiting). Almost half of our sample (48 percent) had never been married and 26 percent were divorced or separated (with each group including some cohabiters). Counties varied significantly in the proportions of their samples that were married. For instance, we found relatively high percentages of married respondents in Orange (31 percent) and Tulare (35 percent), but far fewer in Alameda (20 percent) and Riverside (19 percent).

Overall, nearly half the respondents had three or more children (46 percent), and this proportion was even higher in Riverside (51 percent), Sacramento (52 percent), and Tulare (55 percent) Counties. Many respondents who were approaching the time limit had very young children—30 percent of respondents' youngest children were age 2 or under. This figure too varied by county, with Riverside (34 percent), Sacramento (32 percent), and Tulare (38 percent) having higher shares of parents with very young children on the verge of reaching the time limit.

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<sup>41</sup> WPRP commissioned a study on immigrants' use of public assistance benefits. See the publications, *California's Immigrant Households and Public-Assistance Participation in the 1990s*, on WPRP's website: <http://wprp.ucop.edu/researchpublications1.asp>.

**Exhibit 3.2**  
**Demographic Characteristics of Survey Respondents (%)**

	Alameda	L.A.	Orange	Riverside	Sacramento	Tulare	Total
<b>Sex ***</b>							
Female	94.1	94.8	93.1	91.9	93.8	87.6	92.5
Male	5.9	5.2	6.9	9.1	6.2	12.5	7.6
<b>Age ***</b>							
18–24	9.2	10.7	4.3	8.0	11.7	14.3	9.7
25–34	41.0	37.5	33.3	47.6	48.1	45.9	42.2
35–44	36.6	31.3	41.6	29.8	30.2	28.5	33.0
45+	13.3	20.5	20.8	14.5	10.0	11.4	15.1
<b>Race/Ethnicity and Language ***</b>							
White, English-Speaking	7.8	6.3	18.1	24.2	22.0	29.4	18.0
African-American, English-Speaking	56.4	39.5	10.1	25.0	36.4	6.8	29.0
Latino, English-Speaking	6.3	17.9	22.0	30.8	11.4	37.1	20.9
Latino, Spanish-Speaking	3.3	17.6	14.3	7.1	1.4	16.4	10.0
Asian, English-Speaking	1.3	1.8	0.5	0.0	1.7	0.6	1.0
Vietnamese, Vietnamese-Speaking	8.4	3.1	26.9	1.5	2.6	0.0	7.1
Other Race/Ethnicity, English-Speaking	9.1	5.6	6.3	8.9	12.0	6.5	8.1
Any Race/Ethnicity Except Latino and Vietnamese, Non-English-Speaking	7.3	8.3	1.8	2.6	12.5	3.3	6.0
<b>Immigrant ***</b>	23.8	33.3	49.9	14.0	20.1	22.2	27.2
<b>Education ***</b>							
Less than High School	43.5	39.5	50.1	37.5	28.8	40.6	40.0
GED	2.4	4.1	3.5	2.6	6.4	6.5	4.3
High School	27.5	32.0	25.2	34.6	34.4	34.6	31.4
Some College	23.7	22.7	20.1	22.8	28.7	18.3	22.7
College Degree or more	2.8	1.7	1.1	2.6	1.7	0.0	1.6
8+ Years Foreign Education	0.9	2.3	0.9	1.2	3.0	0.0	1.4
<b>Marital Status ***</b>							
Never Married	60.5	55.4	36.5	50.8	49.6	33.9	47.8
Divorced or Separated	19.2	21.0	32.2	29.9	22.9	31.3	26.1
Married, Spouse Present	20.3	23.6	31.3	19.4	27.5	34.9	26.2
<b>Married or Cohabiting ***</b>	25.6	29.9	40.2	33.1	38.9	45.8	35.6
<b>Number of Children in the Assistance Unit ***</b>							
<=1	27.9	32.0	26.3	23.8	21.6	19.6	25.2
2	33.1	28.7	34.8	24.9	26.6	25.4	28.9
3 or more	39.0	39.3	38.9	51.3	51.8	55.0	45.9
<b>Age of Youngest Child ***</b>							
0–2	26.2	25.9	20.4	34.3	32.4	37.7	29.6
3–5	25.3	25.4	31.7	22.3	24.6	29.1	26.3
6–12	35.8	35.5	34.0	30.4	34.9	25.0	32.6
13 or older	12.7	13.3	13.9	13.0	8.1	8.2	11.5
<b>Sample Size (N)</b>	<b>283</b>	<b>438</b>	<b>190</b>	<b>172</b>	<b>449</b>	<b>265</b>	<b>1,797</b>

**Notes:**

(1) Tabulations are weighted using equal-probability weights.

(2) Statistically significant differences across counties are shown as follows: \*\*\*p<.01 \*\*p<.05 \*p<.10.

The children of CalWORKs recipients who are nearing the sixty-month time limit are an important group to study. The California-funded Safety Net program is likely to provide these children with reduced cash benefits after their parents reach the time limit. Exhibit 3.3 shows the average number of children and the age of the youngest child in these families by race/ethnicity and the respondent’s primary language.

Latino respondents, both English- and Spanish-speaking, had the largest number of children. Nearly 60 percent of Latinos had three or more of their own children age 17 or younger in their households at the time of the survey. They averaged one child more than Vietnamese-speaking respondents (3 compared to 2). “Other” foreign-language-speakers also tended to have more children, with nearly half (49 percent) having three or more children in their homes. The respondents with the fewest children were Vietnamese speakers (2.1 children, on average), white and Asian English-speakers (2.3 each), and African Americans (2.4).

**Exhibit 3.3**  
**Survey Respondents’ Children’s Characteristics by Race, Ethnicity, and Language (%)**

	White English Speaking	African American English Speaking	Latino English Speaking	Latino Spanish Speaking	Asian English Speaking	Asian Vietnamese Speaking	Other Race/Eth English Speaking	Any Race/Eth Other Language Speaking	Total
<b>Number of Children ***</b>									
1	28.5	29.2	18.3	19.4	32.7	33.6	25.0	18.9	25.2
2	34.9	29.9	21.1	24.2	31.4	39.6	25.6	32.4	28.9
3 or more	36.6	40.8	60.6	56.4	35.9	26.8	49.4	48.7	45.9
Average Number of Children	2.3	2.4	3.1	3.0	2.3	2.1	2.7	2.9	2.6
<b>Age of Youngest Child ***</b>									
0–2	25.0	30.3	39.5	27.0	31.5	9.3	35.7	23.2	29.6
3–5	25.8	26.5	29.2	23.5	16.0	30.3	24.1	21.8	26.3
7–12	34.4	34.0	25.2	38.1	27.3	35.7	29.9	38.6	32.6
13–17	14.8	9.2	6.1	11.4	25.2	24.7	10.3	16.4	11.5
Average Age of Youngest Child	6.5	5.7	4.6	6.9	6.8	8.4	5.7	7.3	6.0
<b>Sample Size (N)</b>	<b>307</b>	<b>524</b>	<b>340</b>	<b>171</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>128</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>158</b>	<b>1,797</b>

**Notes:**

(1) Tabulations are weighted using equal-probability weights.

(2) Statistically significant differences across race/ethnicity and language groups are shown as follows: \*\*\*p<.01 \*\*p<.05 \*p<.10.

The average age of the youngest child in households nearing the time limit was 6. If their parents cannot earn sufficient income to make them ineligible, these young children could qualify for state-funded Safety Net benefits for many years. The respondents with the youngest children were English-speaking Latinos (4.6 years, on average), African Americans (5.7 years), and English-speaking respondents of “other” races/ethnicities (also 5.7 years). Vietnamese-speaking respondents and those speaking foreign languages other than Spanish and Vietnamese had older children (8.4 years and 7.3 years, respectively).

In sum, the demographics of the survey sample indicate that CalWORKs recipients nearing the sixty-month time limit face a number of disadvantages. At the time of the interviews, they were disproportionately single parents, many with very young children at home. Few had completed high school, fewer still had attended college. One quarter of respondents either did not speak English or said they did not feel sufficiently proficient in English to be interviewed in that language. With the exception of Vietnamese-speakers, foreign-language-speakers had more children, on average, than did English-speakers. This population (CalWORKs recipients nearing the time limit) is likely to face substantial barriers in the labor market, as we discuss in more detail below.

### ***Individual and Spouse/Partner Employment***

One might expect CalWORKs recipients nearing the time limit to be employed or to be thinking about finding employment. As shown in Exhibit 3.4, 69 percent of single-parent respondents were employed at the time of their interviews or within the prior year in full-time or part-time jobs, or reported being or having been self-employed. In households with married or cohabiting parents, almost 82 percent reported having at least one adult who was working at the time of the interview or who had been working within the past year, and 25 percent included two working adults.

Full-time employment is likely to generate the most income for CalWORKs recipients who are nearing the time limit. In single-parent households, 42 percent of respondents worked full time; in married- or cohabiting-parent families, 53 percent included one or two parents who were working full-time.<sup>42</sup> These statistics show a substantial level of work effort among respondents, almost all of whom (89 percent) were receiving CalWORKs at the time we interviewed them. The implication is that these working parents earned very low wages relative to the size of their families. In a subsequent report, we will examine in greater detail the self-sufficiency of these sample members after they exhaust their CalWORKs cash aid, comparing their earnings and family income at the first wave of the survey to their earnings and income about one year later.

Self-employment was about as common among CalWORKs recipients nearing the sixty-month time limit in the six focus counties as it is for the general population nationally. Eight percent of single-parent respondents reported self-employment as their main job, a rate that falls between the nationwide self-employment rates for women (7 percent) and men (12 percent).<sup>43</sup>

In the six focus counties, the unemployment rate in 2004 varied from 4.3 percent to 11.7 percent. Orange County, which had the lowest unemployment rate of the six counties, had the highest employment rate for married or cohabiting couples in the survey (91 percent), as well as the highest full-time employment rate (54 percent) and lowest self-employment rate (5 percent) among single-parent families. Tulare County had the highest unemployment rate of the six counties and the lowest rate of employment among married or cohabiting survey

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<sup>42</sup> We asked respondents about multiple jobs, but for the purposes of the discussions of Exhibits 3.4 and 3.5, we report information on only one job in the following priority order: full-time, part-time, and self-employed. For instance, if a respondent reported working both full time and being self-employed, we categorized that individual as working full-time.

<sup>43</sup> Fairlie, Robert. 2005. Data provided on web page, calculated from the Current Population Survey. <http://econ.ucsc.edu/faculty/fairlie/serates/sesex7903.pdf>, accessed June 1, 2006.

respondents (74 percent). Tulare County's single-parent respondents were less likely to be employed (64 percent) than the six-county average (69 percent), but they did not have the lowest employment rate in the sample. Alameda County's single-parent respondents were the least likely to be employed (62 percent), and two-parent respondents were also less likely than average to report employment (76 percent with at least one adult employed, compared to the average of 82 percent). Even in counties with higher unemployment rates, however, well over half of the adults nearing the time limit were working, although well under half of the single parents were employed full time.

It appears that rates of respondent employment in the six focus counties may be correlated with the degree to which their CalWORKs caseworkers emphasize work. Recipients may be responsive to staff efforts, but staff in counties with higher unemployment rates may be less likely to encourage employment simply because they know that fewer jobs are available. As we noted in the first report in this series, *Working Against the Clock: The Implementation of Welfare Time Limits in California*, the staff in Orange and Sacramento Counties (which had the lowest county unemployment rates) were the most likely to respond affirmatively to the statement, "Because of the time limit, I am more likely to encourage recipients to go to work as soon as possible," (78 percent and 66 percent, respectively).<sup>44</sup> CalWORKs recipients in these two counties also had among the highest rates of employment. Staff in Riverside and Alameda Counties were the least likely to respond affirmatively to this question (both at 52 percent), and those counties had among the lowest rates of employment for married or cohabiting families. Alameda County also had the lowest employment rate for single-parent families (62 percent), although Riverside County single-parent households had the highest employment rate (78 percent) for that group among the six counties.

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<sup>44</sup> Crow, Sarah E. and Jacquelyn Anderson. 2006. *Working Against the Clock: The Implementation of Welfare Time Limits in California*. Information found in Exhibit 3.1, p. 29. This report is available at WPRP's website: <http://wprp.ucop.edu/researchpublications2.asp>.

**Exhibit 3.4**  
**Respondent and Spouse/Partner Self-Reported Employment (%)**

	Alameda	L.A.	Orange	Riverside	Sacramento	Tulare	Total
County Unemployment Rate 2004	6.0	6.6	4.3	5.8	5.2	11.7	
<b>SINGLE PARENT HOUSEHOLDS</b>							
Respondent Employment: Current or Past Year							
Ever Employed, Total ***	62.0	64.6	69.6	77.9	76.0	64.2	68.9
Full-time employed ***	25.3	37.5	53.6	49.5	47.0	40.5	41.6
Part-time employed ***	24.7	17.5	11.6	20.3	19.8	19.2	19.1
Self-employed ***	12.0	9.7	4.5	8.1	9.2	4.5	8.2
<i>Sample Size (N)</i>	<i>208</i>	<i>222</i>	<i>108</i>	<i>113</i>	<i>269</i>	<i>135</i>	<i>1,055</i>
<b>MARRIED OR COHABITING PARENT HOUSEHOLDS</b>							
Respondent and Spouse/Partner Employment: Current or Past Year							
Both Adults Employed, Total	19.5	19.6	22.6	34.2	28.4	23.4	24.8
Both full-time**	8.1	5.7	14.7	20.0	8.6	14.0	12.2
One full-time, one part-time or self-employed	7.8	5.9	7.9	12.5	13.4	7.3	9.2
Both part-time or self-employed ***	3.6	7.9	0.0	1.8	6.4	2.1	3.4
Only One Adult Employed, Total **	56.2	59.1	68.8	48.0	57.7	50.2	56.7
Employed full-time ***	29.3	38.5	62.4	38.2	38.4	32.0	40.4
Employed part-time	15.6	10.9	5.2	8.9	12.8	12.0	10.7
Self-employed ***	11.3	9.6	1.3	0.9	6.5	6.3	5.6
No Adult Employed ***	24.4	21.4	8.6	17.8	14.0	26.4	18.5
<i>Sample Size (N)</i>	<i>75</i>	<i>216</i>	<i>82</i>	<i>59</i>	<i>180</i>	<i>130</i>	<i>742</i>

**Notes:**

- (1) Where respondents reported multiple types of employment, they were categorized into one employment type in priority order as follows: full-time, part-time, and self-employed.
- (2) Tabulations are weighted using equal-probability weights.
- (3) Statistically significant differences across counties are shown as follows: \*\*\*p<.01 \*\*p<.05 \*p<.10.
- (4) County unemployment rate provided by the California Employment Development Department (2005).

Among single-parent households, the most likely to be employed were Vietnamese-speaking respondents (90 percent), African Americans (72 percent), and foreign- language-speakers other than Spanish and Vietnamese (71 percent). English speakers of all races/ethnicities other than African American were employed at rates slightly lower than African Americans. Least likely to be employed at the time of the interview or in the preceding year were Spanish-speaking Latinos (57 percent) and English-speaking Asians (51 percent, although the very small number in this subgroup make the estimate an unreliable indicator of employment for the entire group). Similarly, among married or cohabiting families, Vietnamese respondents and English-speakers other than African Americans, whites, or Latinos were the most likely to have



at least one parent employed. Latino Spanish- and English-speaking respondents and speakers of “other” foreign languages were the least likely to have at least one parent employed (Exhibit 3.5).

**Exhibit 3.5**  
**Respondent and Spouse/Partner Self-Reported Employment by Race/Ethnicity and Language (%)**

	White English Speaking	African American English Speaking	Latino English Speaking	Latino Spanish Speaking	Asian English Speaking	Asian Vietnamese Speaking	Other Race/Eth English Speaking	Any Race/Eth Other Language	Total
<b>SINGLE PARENT HOUSEHOLDS</b>									
Respondent Employment: Current or Past Year									
Ever Employed, Total ***	67.9	71.7	67.5	57.0	51.3	89.8	67.8	70.6	68.9
Full-time employed **	41.4	39.0	46.6	36.6	51.3	61.4	41.3	20.9	41.6
Part-time employed ***	19.5	21.2	16.0	13.6	0.0	23.0	17.7	39.3	19.1
Self-employed ****	7.0	11.5	4.87	6.7	0.0	5.4	8.8	10.3	8.2
<i>Sample Size (N)</i>	174	422	198	81	15	41	96	28	1,055
<b>MARRIED OR COHABITING PARENT HOUSEHOLDS</b>									
Respondent and Spouse/Partner Employment: Current or Past Year									
Both Adults Employed, Total *	25.6	30.7	31.6	16.3	16.9	14.4	25.6	25.3	24.8
Both full-time **	10.6	19.4	20.0	7.1	4.5	2.2	14.7	8.5	12.2
One full-time, one part-time or self-employed	10.7	7.9	9.2	7.7	4.5	8.7	9.0	10.6	9.2
Both part-time or self-employed	4.2	3.4	2.4	1.6	7.8	3.4	1.9	6.2	3.4
One Adult Employed, Total **	55.8	50.5	48.8	61.5	69.1	70.7	67.0	52.3	56.7
Employed full-time ***	38.0	32.1	37.4	43.2	57.0	60.3	44.0	32.2	40.4
Employed part-time **	9.2	8.5	8.3	8.0	0.0	9.6	22.9	17.0	10.7
Self-employed ***	8.7	10.0	3.1	10.3	12.1	0.8	0.0	3.2	5.6
No Adult Employed	18.6	18.7	19.6	22.2	14.0	14.9	7.5	22.4	18.5
<i>Sample Size (N)</i>	133	102	142	90	9	87	49	130	742

**Notes:**

- (1) Where respondents reported multiple types of employment, they were categorized into one employment type in priority order as follows: full-time, part-time, and self-employed.
- (2) Tabulations are weighted using equal-probability weights.
- (3) Statistically significant differences across race/ethnicity and language groups are shown as follows: \*\*\*p<.01 \*\*p<.05 \*p<.10.

Exhibit 3.6 shows employment characteristics for respondents who were working at the time of the survey (47 percent). It differs from Exhibits 3.4 and 3.5, which show employment reported at the time of the interview *or* within the prior year.<sup>45</sup> Among single-parent households, most

<sup>45</sup> Those who were employed previously, but not at the time of the survey, were not asked the set of questions upon which Exhibit 3.6 is based.

employed respondents (85 percent) reported having only one job, although a substantial minority (15 percent) reported holding two or more jobs. Most single parents nearing the time limit worked 31–40 hours per week (43 percent), and 8 percent reported working forty-one hours or more per week. Half reported working substantially less than full time: 20 percent worked twenty-one to thirty hours per week, and 30 percent worked half time or less (15 percent worked one to ten hours, and 15 percent worked eleven to twenty hours). The jobs that single parents obtained did not provide many benefits. Overall, 11 percent reported jobs that offered paid sick leave, 15 percent reported jobs that offered paid vacation leave, and 15 percent reported jobs that offered health insurance.

Married or cohabiting respondents reported more employment options than did single parents. Two-thirds of those married or cohabiting reported having at least one adult working at the time of the interview, and 13 percent reported having two adults working. The majority of married or cohabiting respondents reported having one job per couple (72 percent), but 28 percent reported having two or more jobs. Together, the adults in these families were most likely to work between sixty-one and eighty hours per week at all jobs (54 percent). Only 7 percent reported working twenty or fewer hours per week. Married or cohabiting adults were slightly more likely than single parents to report that at least one of them had a job with benefits. Sixteen percent reported having at least one job that offered sick leave, 19 percent reported at least one job with vacation leave, and 20 percent reported at least one job that offered health insurance.

Variations across counties mirror and reinforce those in Exhibit 3.4. In counties where more sample members were employed, those who had jobs worked longer hours than employed sample members in the counties where fewer were employed. Three-fourths of employed single parents in Orange County reported working at least thirty-one hours weekly, while 90 percent of two-parent families reported working (at all jobs) at least sixty hours weekly. By contrast, only 35 percent of Alameda’s employed single parents reported working at least thirty-one hours weekly, and 50 percent of two-parent families reported working (at all jobs) at least sixty hours per week.

In some cases, respondents who reported working full time or close to it were also more likely to be offered jobs with benefits. However, there were notable exceptions. Los Angeles and Orange Counties had the highest rates of single-parent respondents working at least thirty-one hours per week, but these workers were less likely to have jobs with health benefits than were workers in Riverside and Sacramento Counties. Similarly, workers in two-parent families in Orange County logged considerably more work hours per week (90 percent reported working sixty-one or more hours weekly) than their counterparts in the other focus counties, but they were less likely to report jobs with health benefits (21 percent) than were the Riverside two-parent families (33 percent).

**Exhibit 3.6**  
**Respondent and Spouse/Partner Self-Reported Employment Characteristics (%)**

	Alameda	L.A.	Orange	Riverside	Sacramento	Tulare	Total
County Unemployment Rate 2004	6.0	6.6	4.3	5.8	5.2	11.7	
<b>SINGLE PARENT HOUSEHOLDS</b>							
Employed at the time of the survey ***	41.4	46.3	48.6	54.9	53.3	38.4	47.2
Number of jobs currently held							
1	81.1	80.8	90.4	86.9	83.8	84.7	84.6
2	14.3	14.7	7.5	9.8	13.4	9.5	11.7
3 or more	4.6	4.5	2.1	3.2	2.9	5.8	3.7
Hours usually worked per week at all jobs ***							
1–10	29.8	11.4	7.7	16.8	11.5	9.7	14.7
11–20	19.9	15.4	7.7	11.6	19.3	17.4	15.1
21–30	15.1	22.3	8.0	23.4	20.9	28.9	19.6
31–40	30.2	47.3	69.1	36.6	36.0	34.4	42.5
41 or more	5.0	3.6	7.5	11.7	12.2	9.6	8.3
Main job offers sick leave **	6.3	8.4	13.6	12.4	16.0	9.5	10.8
Main job offers vacation leave ***	10.2	12.8	19.2	20.3	19.9	8.0	15.1
Main job offers health insurance ***	10.5	13.2	15.2	18.6	21.7	9.4	14.7
<i>Sample Size (N)</i>	208	222	108	113	269	135	1,055
<b>MARRIED OR COHABITING PARENT HOUSEHOLDS</b>							
Employed at the time of the survey							
Both adults	15.8	11.2	13.1	17.6	13.5	8.9	13.0
One adult **	45.5	56.6	66.4	50.4	56.6	50.4	54.8
Neither adult **	38.7	32.3	20.5	32.0	29.9	40.7	32.2
If at least one adult employed:							
Number of jobs currently employed (combined both adults) **							
1	63.9	78.0	78.8	63.7	71.0	74.3	72.4
2	28.1	20.0	21.2	33.7	21.0	17.6	23.0
3 or more	8.0	2.1	0.0	2.6	8.1	8.1	4.6
Hours usually worked per week at all jobs (combined both adults) ***							
1–20	11.6	4.2	0.0	13.1	9.3	8.4	7.3
21–40	21.9	18.4	1.4	10.5	14.8	11.1	11.7
41–60	16.5	22.8	8.9	18.0	17.3	21.1	17.0
61–80	38.0	50.4	81.7	50.6	47.9	45.0	54.4
81 or more	11.9	4.2	8.1	7.9	10.8	14.3	9.6
At least one main job offers sick leave **	11.3	11.4	26.2	19.1	11.9	14.1	16.0
At least one main job offers vacation leave **	10.8	14.8	28.5	21.7	18.5	18.2	19.4
At least one main job offers health insurance ***	9.7	11.3	20.7	32.6	20.7	19.7	19.7
<i>Sample Size (N)</i>	75	216	82	59	180	130	742

**Notes:**

(1) Tabulations are weighted using equal-probability weights.

(2) Statistically significant differences across counties are shown as follows: \*\*\*p<.01 \*\*p<.05 \*p<.10.

Most CalWORKs respondents reported working in jobs without benefits, but this does not appear to be a consequence of county caseworkers urging recipients to take the first jobs offered. When surveyed for this study's first report, one-quarter or fewer staff in each county answered yes to the following question: "Because of the time limit, I am more likely to encourage recipients to take jobs that have low pay or unfavorable conditions."<sup>46</sup> Rather, the lack of work-related benefits is likely a result of the types of jobs available to low-skilled workers, many of whom have poor education and limited English skills.

An analysis of employment using Unemployment Insurance (UI) wage records also yielded interesting results. These administrative data differ from self-reported employment information in that they are not affected by recall error (a respondent's ability to remember correctly). However, UI wage records, which the state maintains to document employment covered by the Unemployment Insurance program, do not track all types of employment. Notably, these data exclude self-employment, under-the-table employment (that is, employment not reported in order to avoid taxes), federal government jobs, railroad employment, work done as an independent contractor, and others.<sup>47</sup> Exhibit 3.7 depicts respondents' employment histories between 1999 and 2004, a five-year period during which most of the recipients we interviewed were receiving CalWORKs cash aid all the time, or nearly all the time.

During this five-year period, 26 percent of single-parent respondents and 32 percent of respondents in two-parent families had earnings in at least thirteen of the twenty quarters we examined. Another 35 percent of single parents and 32 percent of respondents in two-parent families had between five and twelve quarters of employment. One-third of respondents with at least five quarters of employment worked continuously over the period (that is, all their employment was in adjacent quarters).

However, more than one-fifth of the sample (21 percent of single parents and 24 percent of two-parent families) had no UI-covered employment at all during the entire five years. It is possible that these families included employed adults whose jobs were not captured by the UI wage records. For example, the self-employment reported by sample respondents would not appear in the UI records. Alternatively, the adults may have been engaged in welfare-to-work activities other than unsubsidized employment, or they may have been exempt from work-related activities as a result of personal hardships.

This striking diversity in recipients' five-year employment histories, as recorded in UI administrative records, reinforces the pattern we observed in recipients' survey responses: A substantial portion of those nearing the sixty-month time limit had a long-standing and fairly strong connection to the labor market, while another fraction, almost as large, had no formal labor market experience for many years.

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<sup>46</sup> Crow, Sarah E. and Jacquelyn Anderson. 2006. *Working Against the Clock: The Implementation of Welfare Time Limits in California*. Information found in Exhibit 3.1, p. 29. This report is available at WPRP's website: <http://wprp.ucop.edu/researchpublications2.asp>.

<sup>47</sup> Hotz, V. Joseph and John Karl Scholz. 2000. *Measuring Employment and Income for Low-Income Populations with Administrative and Survey Data*. Institute for Research on Poverty Discussion Paper no. 1224-01. Madison: University of Wisconsin, Institute for Research on Poverty.

**Exhibit 3.7**

**Employment History from Unemployment Insurance Wage Records (%)**

	Alameda	L.A.	Orange	Riverside	Sacramento	Tulare	Total
<b>SINGLE PARENT HOUSEHOLDS</b>							
Number of Quarters Employed Between July 1999 and June 2004 **							
No work at all	24.5	23.3	20.2	16.8	16.7	22.3	20.7
1–4 quarters	14.1	23.1	12.4	19.5	17.3	24.6	18.4
5–8 quarters	19.2	18.4	18.3	15.0	17.4	20.0	18.0
9–12 quarters	16.2	14.8	22.2	20.4	17.9	7.9	16.7
13–16 quarters	16.2	11.7	14.8	18.6	16.3	18.5	15.9
17–19 quarters	7.8	6.6	6.1	8.0	10.6	4.5	7.3
20 quarters	1.9	2.0	6.1	1.8	3.8	2.2	2.9
<i>Sample Size (N)</i>	<i>208</i>	<i>222</i>	<i>108</i>	<i>113</i>	<i>269</i>	<i>135</i>	<i>1,055</i>
<b>MARRIED OR COHABITING PARENT HOUSEHOLDS</b>							
Number of Quarters Employed Between July 1999 and June 2004 *** (Respondent and Spouse/Partner Employment Combined)							
No work at all	28.8	30.2	16.1	32.6	16.6	23.7	23.9
1–4 quarters	14.3	18.5	6.0	11.1	12.5	16.2	12.9
5–8 quarters	20.3	23.2	13.1	7.1	22.3	14.5	16.4
9–12 quarters	10.1	9.0	13.0	17.8	18.1	19.3	15.1
13–16 quarters	8.3	7.6	21.8	12.2	11.9	15.0	13.5
17–19 quarters	13.0	8.4	19.1	16.7	11.3	8.5	12.8
20 quarters	5.3	3.0	11.0	2.4	7.3	2.7	5.4
<i>Sample Size (N)</i>	<i>75</i>	<i>216</i>	<i>82</i>	<i>59</i>	<i>180</i>	<i>130</i>	<i>742</i>

**Notes:**

- (1) Tabulations are weighted using equal-probability weights.
- (2) Statistically significant differences across counties are shown as follows: \*\*\*p<.01 \*\*p<.05 \*p<.10.

## ***Barriers to Employment***

CalWORKs recipients may not be employed for a variety of reasons, including demand-side issues having to do with the robustness of the local economy and labor market, and supply-side issues having to do with recipients' education, job skills, and any personal conditions that make it difficult to obtain or keep jobs, attend school or job training, or care for their children.

It is to these so-called barriers to employment that we now turn. Certain barriers qualify recipients for exemptions from, or extensions to, the time limit. Given their cumulative time on aid, we would expect recipients nearing the sixty-month time limit to report higher rates of these barriers than the CalWORKs population at large, although survey data for the entire CalWORKs population are not available to test this hypothesis.<sup>48</sup>

In Exhibit 3.8, we consider seven barriers: depression, anxiety, a stressful event (possibly signaling post-traumatic stress syndrome), alcohol use, drug use, domestic violence, and health conditions that limit work.<sup>49</sup>

We did not include all of these questions in the abbreviated interviews with respondents who speak foreign languages other than Spanish and Vietnamese, so those respondents are not included in the analyses of barriers to employment. We omitted these questions to shorten the interview to accommodate the simultaneous translation process. Also, while the questions relating to depression and anxiety have been validated for diagnostic purposes when asked in English or Spanish, they have not necessarily been validated in other languages.<sup>50</sup>

Of the barriers respondents reported, anxiety was the most common: 59 percent of respondents reported that they had had anxiety-related symptoms in the past year.<sup>51</sup> Depression was the next most commonly reported condition, with 50 percent of respondents reporting that they had experienced depression in the past year.<sup>52</sup> These respondents did not necessarily meet diagnostic criteria for depression or anxiety, but they reported feeling depressed or anxious for

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<sup>48</sup> For more on barriers to employment, see WPRP's related study: Norris, Jean and Richard Spiegelman. 2005. *Assessing Barriers to Work Among CalWORKs Participants in San Joaquin County: Final Report*. This report is available at WPRP's website at <http://wprp.ucop.edu/researchpublications2.asp>.

<sup>49</sup> The survey did not ask about other employment barriers, such as whether the respondent had a prior felony conviction. A 2000 study of welfare recipients in Alameda County showed that 10 percent had been convicted of a felony since age 18. See Green, Rex S., Lynn Fujiwara, Jean Norris, Shanthi Kappagoda, Anne Driscoll, and Richard Spiegelman. 2000. *Alameda County CalWORKs Needs Assessment: Barriers to Working and Summaries of Baseline Status*. Berkeley, CA: Public Health Institute.

<sup>50</sup> The other barrier questions, including those about post-traumatic stress and domestic violence, were not validated for diagnostic purposes. Please see Appendix D for an approximation of the full survey instrument (skip patterns and repeated questions are not included here); we highlight sections that were not used in the abbreviated survey. To view the complete survey instrument used in the first-wave interviews, please go to WPRP's website: <http://wprp.ucop.edu/documents/bpocodebook30oct2006.pdf>.

<sup>51</sup> For this measure, the respondent answered affirmatively to either: "During the past 12 months, did you ever have a time lasting one month or longer when most of the time you felt worried, tense, or anxious?" or to, "People differ a lot in how much they worry about things. Did you have a time in the past 12 months when you worried a lot more than most people would in your situation?"

<sup>52</sup> For this measure, the respondent answered affirmatively to either: "During the past 12 months, was there ever a time when you felt sad, blue, or depressed for two weeks or more in a row?" or to, "During the past 12 months, was there ever a time lasting two weeks or more when you lost interest in most things like taking care of your kids or home, work, or activities that usually give you pleasure?"

prolonged periods in the previous year. To determine whether the reported conditions impeded employment, we asked about the impact of each on daily functioning: whether anxiety or depression had interfered (or still interfered) with the respondent's work, school, or child rearing. One in five respondents (21 percent) reported that depression had interfered with their daily responsibilities, and the same fraction (21 percent) reported levels of anxiety sufficient to interfere with work, school, or child rearing. Nearly one-quarter of respondents (23 percent) said they had experienced stressful events that interfered with their work, school, or child rearing.<sup>53</sup>

Forty-four percent of respondents reported suffering domestic violence at the hands of a spouse or partner in their lifetimes, and 11 percent reported that such violence had occurred in the past year.

Nearly one-third (31 percent) of respondents reported employment-limiting illnesses or disabilities. Among those married or cohabiting, 19 percent reported spouses with limiting illnesses or disabilities. Twenty-eight percent of respondents reported that one or more of their children had chronic illnesses or disabilities (such as asthma, developmental delays, and hyperactivity), including conditions that limited the child's ability to function independently.<sup>54</sup>

Consistent with other studies of self-reported drug and alcohol use, we found that 2 percent to 3 percent of respondents reported that their use of drugs or alcohol impaired their ability to work, attend school, or care for their children. Nearly 13 percent reported illegal drug use in the past year, and 5 percent reported drinking alcohol three or more times per week. Users of drugs and alcohol notoriously underestimate and underreport their level of substance use and the degree to which this use interferes with daily activities. We expect similar under-reporting of these barriers in this sample.

In sum, we found that a substantial percentage of CalWORKs recipients close to reaching the sixty-month time limit reported barriers to employment. Although not all of the reported problems are necessarily barriers to employment, 51 percent of respondents reported having one or more barriers to employment that impeded their ability to work, go to school or job training, or look after their children. Twenty-eight percent reported having two or more such barriers (bottom panel of Exhibit 3.8). Some of these barriers, such as domestic violence, are possible reasons to exempt months of aid from counting toward the sixty-month time limit or to extend time on aid past sixty months. (For further consideration of this topic, see Chapter 4.)

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<sup>53</sup> For the purpose of this survey, stressful events did not include childbirth or marital dissolution.

<sup>54</sup> There were a total of 23 respondents whose children needed help with activities of daily living (eating, toileting, or getting around). In all cases where a child's condition required help for these activities of daily living, the respondent was the primary caregiver for the child. Because the health problems of family members would not necessarily limit the respondent's employment, they were not counted among the employment barriers.

**Exhibit 3.8**  
**Barriers to Employment Among Survey Respondents (%)**

	Alameda	L.A.	Orange	Riverside	Sacramento	Tulare	Total
<b>Depression</b>							
Self-report depression in past year *	58.1	49.7	48.0	49.9	45.5	50.3	50.2
Self-report interferes with work, home or school *	26.2	16.6	21.6	23.8	21.6	18.5	21.4
<b>Anxiety</b>							
Self-report anxiety in past year	61.8	59.5	53.9	63.5	58.6	56.9	59.0
Self-report interferes with work, home or school ***	24.1	13.0	20.4	26.4	22.0	18.8	20.8
<b>Stressful Event</b>							
Self-report interferes with work, home or School ***	24.4	16.0	22.9	31.1	23.7	22.1	23.4
<b>Alcohol</b>							
Drink alcohol 3 or more times/wk *	7.3	3.0	2.8	4.8	6.9	5.8	5.1
Self-report interferes with work, home or School ***	2.7	0.5	0.0	3.2	2.0	3.9	2.1
<b>Drugs</b>							
Used illegal drugs in past year ***	16.4	9.0	6.6	15.8	18.3	11.4	12.8
Self-report interferes with work, home or School *	0.8	1.6	1.7	4.3	2.7	4.2	2.6
<b>Domestic Violence by Spouse/Partner</b>							
Past Year **	14.9	7.9	7.6	12.7	8.7	12.9	10.8
Ever ***	45.8	32.8	38.8	54.6	44.2	47.3	44.0
<b>Limiting Illness or Disability</b>							
Own	33.9	27.7	30.3	35.3	26.9	28.2	30.5
Spouse	4.9	4.8	6.7	5.0	6.2	9.1	6.1
Own and Spouse	1.5	2.0	3.2	2.6	2.7	3.0	2.5
Child(ren) **	28.5	29.0	20.6	32.7	26.4	31.0	28.0
<b>Total number barriers that interfere with work, home, or school (of 7) ***</b>							
0	43.6	53.1	53.0	41.2	53.7	51.0	49.2
1	22.5	28.0	21.4	21.9	17.4	23.2	22.4
2 or more	33.9	18.9	25.6	36.9	28.9	25.8	28.4
<b>Sample Size (N)</b>	<b>265</b>	<b>360</b>	<b>187</b>	<b>168</b>	<b>401</b>	<b>260</b>	<b>1,641</b>

**Notes:**

- (1) Barriers are defined as the following: (a) depression; (b) anxiety; (c) a stressful event; (d) alcohol use or (e) drug use that (in each case) interfered with the respondent's ability to work, go to school, or care for children; (f) domestic violence if it occurred in the preceding year; and (g) a health problem that limited the respondent's ability to work.
- (2) Tabulations include English-, Spanish-, and Vietnamese-speaking respondents.
- (3) Tabulations are weighted using equal-probability weights.
- (4) Statistically significant differences across counties are shown as follows: \*\*\*p<.01 \*\*p<.05 \*p<.10.



The prevalence of barriers varied across counties, as shown in Exhibit 3.8. With respect to barriers that interfered with obligations at work, school, or in the home, 59 percent of respondents in Riverside County and 56 percent of respondents in Alameda County reported at least one such barrier, and more than one-third reported at least two. In contrast, fewer than half (47 percent to 49 percent) of the respondents in the other four counties reported any such barriers, and 19 percent to 29 percent reported two or more.

The cross-county variation is due in part to striking differences in the rates of barriers reported by different ethnic and language groups (Exhibit 3.9). White and “other race/ethnicity” English-speakers were most likely to report mental health problems (depression, anxiety, and stressful events) and limiting illnesses or disabilities. For example, 26 percent of white English-speakers and 33 percent of “other race/ethnicity” English-speakers reported depression that interfered with work, school, or child rearing. Overall, they also reported the highest rates of two or more barriers that interfered with work, school, or child-rearing (36 percent and 37 percent, respectively).

By contrast, Asians who speak either English or Vietnamese reported the fewest barriers overall, and only 17 percent reported two or more barriers that interfered with their daily responsibilities. They also reported the lowest rates of limiting illnesses or disabilities. Vietnamese speakers reported very low rates of depression (15 percent) and stressful events (10 percent) that interfered with work, school, or child rearing.

It is possible that cultural factors influenced respondents’ attitudes and responses to questions about these very personal issues. In particular, the Vietnamese translation may not have fully conveyed the intended questions. (As noted earlier, the questions relating to depression and anxiety were validated only in English and Spanish.)

**Exhibit 3.9**  
**Barriers to Employment Among Survey Respondents by Race, Ethnicity and Language (%)**

	White English Speaking	African American English Speaking	Latino English Speaking	Latino Spanish Speaking	Asian English Speaking	Asian Vietnamese Speaking	Other Race/Eth English Speaking	Total
<b>Depression</b>								
Self-report depression in past year ***	56.3	50.7	48.9	46.7	44.5	35.1	57.9	50.3
Self-report interferes with work, home or school ***	26.4	20.4	16.6	20.9	21.1	14.7	33.2	21.4
<b>Anxiety</b>								
Self-report anxiety in past year ***	63.8	62.7	57.1	52.5	61.4	39.4	64.6	59.0
Self-report interferes with work, home or school ***	26.4	19.0	18.1	16.2	18.7	18.7	30.2	20.8
<b>Stressful Event</b>								
Self-report interferes with work, home or school ***	31.8	24.6	20.8	14.6	10.9	10.4	32.2	23.4
<b>Alcohol Use</b>								
Drink alcohol 3 or more times/wk ***	6.8	7.4	4.6	0.7	2.4	0.0	4.4	5.1
Self-report interferes with work, home or school *	2.7	3.3	2.0	0.0	4.0	0.0	0.7	2.1
<b>Drug Use</b>								
Used illegal drugs in past year ***	18.2	15.7	10.6	4.0	7.8	3.2	16.5	12.8
Self-report interferes with work, home or school	4.3	2.3	3.1	1.3	0.0	0.0	2.2	2.6
<b>Domestic Violence by Spouse/Partner</b>								
Past Year ***	11.5	11.9	13.5	7.3	0.0	1.2	12.8	10.8
Ever ***	62.3	41.0	45.8	36.0	26.1	7.9	52.7	44.0
<b>Limiting Illness or Disability</b>								
Own ***	41.1	31.8	23.9	26.4	8.9	21.5	35.1	30.5
Spouse ***	7.6	2.9	6.0	7.4	10.7	11.6	7.7	6.1
Own and Spouse *	4.3	1.3	2.2	1.9	2.8	5.1	2.1	2.5
Child(ren) ***	28.9	37.9	25.7	20.4	3.7	11.6	24.6	28.1
<b>Total Number Barriers that interfere with work, home, or school (of 7) ***</b>								
0	39.5	47.1	53.4	54.5	73.5	66.4	41.9	49.1
1	24.6	24.2	22.1	21.0	9.2	16.6	20.9	22.5
2 or more	35.9	28.7	24.5	24.5	17.3	17.0	37.2	28.4
<b>Sample Size (N)</b>	<b>307</b>	<b>524</b>	<b>340</b>	<b>171</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>128</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>1,639</b>

**Notes:**

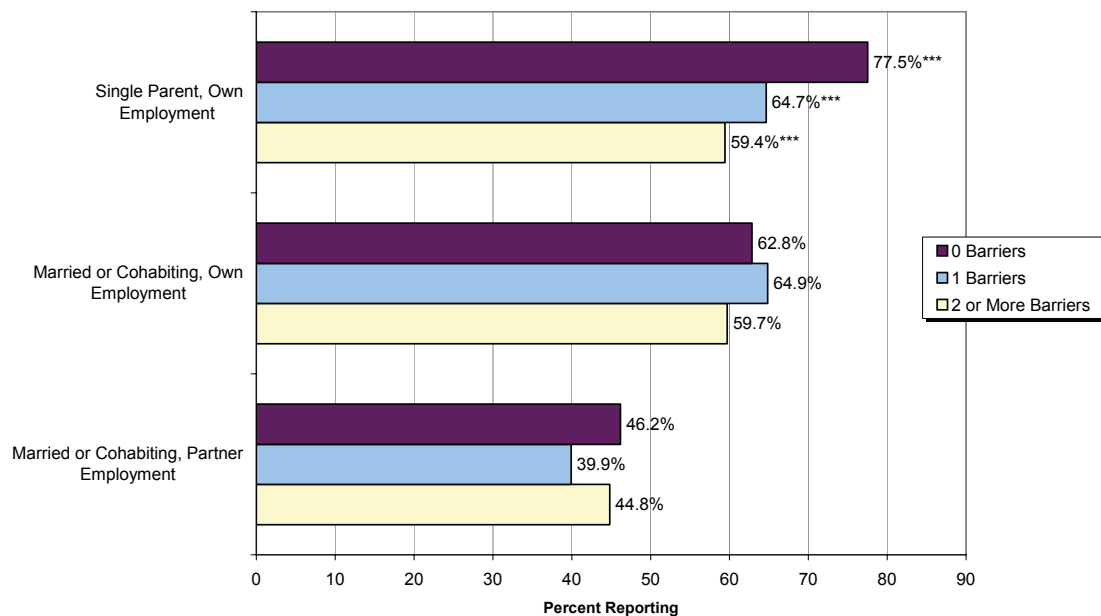
- (1) Barriers are defined as: (a) depression; (b) anxiety; (c) a stressful event; (d) alcohol use or (e) drug use that (in each case) interfered with the respondent's ability to work, go to school, or care for children; (f) domestic violence if it occurred within the preceding year; and (g) a health problem that limited the respondent's ability to work.
- (2) Tabulations include English-, Spanish-, and Vietnamese-speaking respondents.
- (3) Tabulations are weighted using equal-probability weights.
- (4) Statistically significant differences across race/ethnicity and language groups are shown as follows: \*\*\*p<.01 \*\*p<.05 \*p<.10.

Not surprisingly, the more barriers to employment one experiences, the lower one's rate of employment is likely to be. This was especially true among single parents, as is shown in Exhibit 3.10. Seventy-eight percent of single parents with no reported barriers were employed in the current or previous year, compared to 65 percent of those reporting one barrier and 59 percent of those reporting two or more barriers.

This pattern did not hold for married and cohabiting adults. There were no significant employment differences between respondents reporting zero (63 percent), one (65 percent), or two or more barriers (60 percent). Nor were there significant differences in the rates that their partners were employed, although partners of respondents reporting no barriers appear to be employed at a slightly higher rate than those reporting one, or two or more barriers (46 percent versus 40 percent and 45 percent).

We will revisit the issue of barriers to employment after the second wave of the recipient survey. In particular, we will examine whether these reported barriers make it harder for recipients to make ends meet after they have exhausted their sixty months of CalWORKs cash aid.

**Exhibit 3.10**  
**Employment Rate by Respondent's Total Number of Reported Barriers\* that Interfere with Work, Home or School**



**Notes:**

- (1) We asked respondents about seven potential barriers.
- (2) Statistically significant differences across groupings are shown as follows: \*\*\*p<.01 \*\*p<.05 \*p<.10.

## ***Material Hardship***

A family's material well-being depends on many variables, including adequate shelter, sufficient food, access to medical care, and other basic goods and services. If breadwinners earn enough money, they will be able to afford all these necessities for their families.

By definition, the survey respondents did not have sufficient income to manage adequately on their own. At the point we selected our sample, everyone included had income sufficiently low to be eligible for CalWORKs cash aid, although the majority of adults were working or had recently worked. As they neared the sixty-month time limit, we asked these respondents whether, in the preceding year, they had had trouble obtaining or affording housing, utilities, health care, sufficient food, transportation, or other necessities.

“Doing without” and “chronic shortages” create real hardships for poor families—hardships that compound the problems associated with low incomes. For instance, more frequent family moves have been associated with poorer child outcomes simply because of frequent changes of environment.<sup>55</sup> Irregular health care is associated with poorer health,<sup>56</sup> and food insufficiency can result in a host of developmental and educational delays.<sup>57</sup>

Not surprisingly, the very low-income parents who were nearing the sixty-month CalWORKs time limit reported substantial material hardships (Exhibit 3.11). Overall, 43 percent of the respondents reported that they were unable to afford rent in the past year.<sup>58</sup> Twenty percent reported having moved within the year. Of those who moved, 35 percent reported moving in with friends or family, indicating an inability to afford housing on their own. Some families suffered even greater hardship—7 percent reported moving to homeless shelters. At the time of the interview, 20 percent of the sample said they were presently sharing housing with family or friends in order to save money.

Given that 43 percent of respondents reported problems with paying rent, it is not surprising that 54 percent also reported having problems paying their utility bills in the past year. Indeed, 25 percent reported having a utility turned off as a result of nonpayment. Respondents most commonly reported losing phone service (64 percent), followed by electricity (52 percent) and gas (32 percent).

In theory, CalWORKs recipients should have access to medical care because they qualify for Medi-Cal. Even so, 15 percent of survey respondents reported that family members had not received needed medical care in the past year, although 72 percent did eventually obtain the care they needed. Among those who did not get needed care, 46 percent were the respondents themselves, and 30 percent were children.

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<sup>55</sup> Astone, Nan Marie and Sara S. McLanahan. 1994. Family Structure, Residential Mobility, and School Dropout: A Research Note. *Demography* 31(4) 575-584.

<sup>56</sup> Schoen, Cathy and Catherine DesRoches. 2000. Uninsured and Unstably Insured: The Importance of Continuous Insurance Coverage. *Health Services Research* 35(1): 187-206. Sudano, Joseph J. and David W. Baker. 2003. Intermittent Lack of Health Insurance Coverage and Use of Preventive Services. *American Journal of Public Health* 93(1): 130-138.

<sup>57</sup> Alaimo, Katherine, Christine M. Olson, and Edward A. Frongillo, Jr. 2001. Food Insufficiency and American School-Aged Children's Cognitive, Academic, and Psychosocial Development. *Pediatrics* 108(1): 44-53.

<sup>58</sup> In data not presented in Exhibit 3.11, just 1 percent of respondents reported being evicted.

Perhaps the most basic measure of a family's health and well-being is its ability to provide sufficient food for all family members. As with Medi-Cal, CalWORKs recipients are categorically eligible for the federal Food Stamp Program, and their school-age children are eligible for the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs. Nevertheless, 39 percent of respondents reported that they had had problems affording food in the past year. Forty percent of respondents said they had visited food banks in the past year, and 10 percent reported receiving meals from soup kitchens.

Finally, 19 percent of respondents reported having a car repossessed in the past year, indicating an overall inability to pay bills. Indeed, many respondents said that they simply did not have enough money to subsist—and this was true in both higher- and lower-cost-of-living counties. When asked whether they had enough money “to buy the basic things you need,” 47 percent of respondents reported that they did not. A total of 57 percent said they had borrowed money from family or friends in the past year. We did not ask whether these loans were repaid.

Results are remarkably similar across counties despite differing economic conditions and the varying demographic characteristics of the populations. Between 40 percent and 46 percent of respondents in each county reported having problems with housing. Between 13 percent and 18 percent reported not receiving needed medical care, and 33 percent to 47 percent reported having problems affording food.

**Exhibit 3.11**  
**Material Hardship Among Survey Respondents (%)**

	Alameda	L.A.	Orange	Riverside	Sacramento	Tulare	Total
<b>Housing</b>							
Could not afford rent in past year	43.4	40.8	45.6	41.1	42.6	45.9	43.1
Share housing to save money	16.3	18.8	22.0	19.2	22.4	23.8	20.4
Moved in past year **	15.4	19.1	19.7	15.6	20.7	26.1	19.5
After move:***							
Found new home	43.4	31.6	66.4	30.2	26.7	36.8	39.1
Went to family member's or friend's home	23.0	42.2	13.8	32.1	45.0	46.1	34.9
Went to homeless shelter	9.2	7.6	6.1	15.1	4.0	2.6	6.8
Other	24.3	18.7	13.7	22.6	24.3	14.5	19.2
<b>Utilities</b>							
Could not afford utilities in past year ***	53.5	49.2	46.7	52.8	57.0	62.0	53.6
Utilities turned off in past year	22.6	23.7	22.5	27.1	24.7	29.5	25.0
if yes, which turned off							
Phone ***	76.1	69.7	49.6	58.3	73.0	59.9	64.2
Electricity *	49.7	43.3	60.2	59.7	40.6	56.4	51.8
Gas	36.5	31.6	27.0	30.5	25.4	38.3	31.8
<b>Health</b>							
Did not get needed medical care past yr (Among those reporting yes)	17.8	13.2	13.1	15.9	17.6	14.8	15.4
Care was eventually received	74.3	57.3	87.7	69.9	72.2	71.6	72.2
Who did not get care							
Respondent	48.4	47.7	60.6	44.9	35.6	41.3	45.9
Respondent's child	35.8	29.9	16.5	26.0	32.4	36.0	29.7
Respondent's spouse or partner	2.0	2.8	4.7	47.4	8.9	9.8	6.0
Someone else	13.8	19.7	18.3	21.7	23.1	13.9	18.4
<b>Food</b>							
Could not afford food in past year **	46.7	33.3	39.8	35.8	36.8	40.4	38.8
Use food bank in past year ***	46.6	25.6	36.4	41.3	46.2	44.6	40.1
Use soup kitchen in past year*	14.0	8.2	10.2	7.6	10.6	8.4	9.8
<b>Transportation</b>							
Car repossessed in past year *	18.7	13.6	18.5	17.8	23.7	20.2	18.7
<b>Other Hardships</b>							
Not enough money generally in past year **	38.2	47.2	45.9	52.1	49.2	48.2	46.8
Borrow money from family in past year	57.4	53.4	58.3	57.9	59.5	55.8	56.9
<b>Sample Size (N)</b>	<b>283</b>	<b>438</b>	<b>190</b>	<b>172</b>	<b>449</b>	<b>265</b>	<b>1,797</b>

**Notes:**

- (1) Tabulations are weighted using equal-probability weights.
- (2) Statistically significant differences across counties are shown as follows: \*\*\*p<.01 \*\*p<.05 \*p<.10.

Although reported material hardships were relatively comparable across counties, respondents' perceptions of material hardship varied considerably across race/ethnicity and language groups, as shown in Exhibit 3.12. Most striking is the finding that Vietnamese-speaking respondents reported far fewer material hardships than any other group. None reported going to homeless shelters, none reported delays in obtaining needed health care, and only 3 percent reported having utilities shut off. They were considerably less likely than other groups to report problems with paying for rent or food, or making car payments. Because Vietnamese respondents had one of the highest rates of employment, it is possible that they were less materially disadvantaged than other ethnic/language groups.

White English-speakers, African Americans, Latinos, and "other race/ethnicity" English-speakers all reported substantial levels of material hardship: At least once in the past year, 40–58 percent reported difficulties in paying for rent, 52–69 percent reported problems paying their utilities, and 39–42 percent reported not being able to afford sufficient food. They were also the most likely to have cars repossessed in the past year (16–25 percent), but may also have been the most likely to have had cars.<sup>59</sup>

These same groups relied more than most on family and on community supports. More than 60 percent of the English-speaking whites, African Americans, Spanish-speakers and "other race/ethnicity" English-speakers had borrowed money from their families in the preceding year. Excluding Latinos, about half of these groups used food banks, and more than 10 percent used soup kitchens, suggesting the importance of these community resources to needy families.

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<sup>59</sup> We did not ask whether people owned cars, so we cannot exclude those who were not car owners from the calculation.

**Exhibit 3.12**

**Material Hardship Among Survey Respondents by Race/Ethnicity and Language (%)**

	White English Speaking	African American English Speaking	Latino English Speaking	Latino Spanish Speaking	Asian English Speaking	Asian Vietnamese Speaking	Other Race/Eth English Speaking	Any Race/Eth Other Language	Total
<b>Housing</b>									
Could not afford rent in past year ***	43.6	46.5	39.7	58.0	29.6	23.0	46.6	33.4	43.1
Share housing to save money	30.1	15.8	27.3	14.4	25.1	13.3	18.1	10.3	20.4
Moved in past year **	23.0	20.1	19.8	21.6	19.5	11.9	26.3	1.1	19.5
After move:***									
Found new home	30.6	35.5	28.5	70.7	12.0	89.6	35.1	76.3	39.1
Went to family member's or friend's home	43.7	32.9	42.0	17.8	46.1	10.5	36.6	0.0	34.9
Went to homeless shelter	11.0	7.3	3.5	5.8	0.0	0.0	8.2	0.0	6.8
Other	14.7	24.3	25.9	5.7	41.9	0.0	20.1	23.7	19.2
<b>Utilities</b>									
Could not afford utilities in past year ***	53.0	61.2	52.0	69.4	27.3	17.3	62.1	32.9	53.6
Utilities turned off in past year ***	25.8	31.3	25.4	23.8	12.1	3.0	36.0	6.6	25.0
if yes, which turned off									
Phone	61.7	66.9	62.3	60.3	100.0	57.9	62.7	84.5	64.2
Electricity	50.2	49.9	50.2	54.6	64.5	42.1	59.9	36.5	51.8
Gas	34.0	30.5	27.1	47.1	64.5	0.0	26.4	49.2	31.8
<b>Health</b>									
Did not get needed medical care past year ***	24.3	17.7	12.5	6.1	11.3	0.0	22.6	12.0	15.4
<i>(Among those reporting yes)</i>									
Care was eventually received***	77.5	72.6	74.3	88.4	85.3	0.0	67.9	24.4	72.2
Who did not get care									
Respondent	47.0	50.9	31.2	74.2	45.8	0.0	36.9	54.3	45.9
Respondent's child	31.1	26.8	33.5	9.8	39.5	0.0	34.7	32.1	29.7
Respondent's spouse or partner	7.3	2.7	7.3	1.8	0.0	0.0	8.8	13.6	6.0
Someone else	14.7	19.6	28.0	14.2	14.7	0.0	19.7	0.0	18.4
<b>Food</b>									
Could not afford food in past year **	41.6	42.4	38.5	39.9	26.1	25.5	38.2	30.9	38.8
Use food bank in past year ***	54.0	44.9	41.5	27.4	7.5	11.5	49.3	18.6	40.1
Use soup kitchen in past year***	10.6	12.8	7.9	7.9	0.0	1.2	17.2	5.3	9.8
<b>Transportation</b>									
Car repossessed in past year ***	23.2	21.4	15.8	16.6	8.7	8.5	25.0	11.7	18.7
<b>Other Hardships</b>									
Not enough money generally in past year ***	41.0	43.6	53.9	36.5	63.4	56.1	45.2	60.0	46.8
Borrow money from family in past year ***	60.2	62.9	54.5	65.0	37.9	29.0	65.3	36.9	56.9
<i>Sample Size (N)</i>	<i>307</i>	<i>524</i>	<i>340</i>	<i>171</i>	<i>24</i>	<i>128</i>	<i>145</i>	<i>158</i>	<i>1,797</i>

**Notes:**

- (1) Tabulations are weighted using equal-probability weights.
- (2) Statistically significant differences across race/ethnicity and language groups are shown as follows: \*\*\*p<.01 \*\*p<.05 \*p<.10.



## **Summary**

In this chapter, we examined the characteristics of recipients who were nearing the CalWORKs sixty-month time limit in six focus counties: Alameda, Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, Sacramento and Tulare. The sample included parents, usually mothers, in one- and two-parent households, who were within six months of reaching the limit. The two-wave recipient survey covers a great deal of material; here we focus on respondents' demographic characteristics, employment, barriers to employment, and material hardships. We will discuss additional topics in a subsequent report.

### ***Demographics***

The population we interviewed—and will interview again in the second wave—is ethnically and linguistically diverse. Overall, 31 percent are Latino (one-third of whom are Spanish-speaking), 29 percent are African American, 18 percent are English-speaking whites, 7 percent are Vietnamese-speaking, 8 percent are “other race/ethnicity” and English-speaking, and 6 percent are “other race/ethnicity” and non-English-speaking. Population demographics varied markedly across counties: For instance, 27 percent of Orange County’s respondents are Vietnamese-speaking and 10 percent are African American. By contrast, 56 percent of Alameda County’s respondents are African American, but only 8 percent are Vietnamese-speaking. Los Angeles, Tulare, and Orange Counties have higher than average concentrations of Spanish-speaking Latinos. Race/ethnicity correlated with many of the employment, employment-barrier, and material-hardship factors we examined.

CalWORKs recipients who are on the verge of reaching the sixty-month time limit had very low levels of education—40 percent of the survey sample had not completed high school, and 36 percent had completed either a GED or high school but had no further education.

A relatively high proportion of those on the cusp of timing out in the six focus counties were married (26 percent) and an additional 10 percent were cohabiting with a partner. Marriage was more common among Vietnamese and other immigrant populations than among African Americans and whites. Nearly half the families (46 percent) had three or more children; among Latino respondents 59 percent had three or more. The average age of the youngest child in these households was six. These very young children may qualify for many years of state-funded Safety Net Program benefits after their parents exhaust sixty countable months of CalWORKs cash aid.

### ***Respondent and Spouse/Partner Employment***

According to the survey data, 69 percent of single parents were employed at the time we interviewed them or had been within the past year. In the same timeframe, 82 percent of respondents in married or cohabiting families reported at least one adult who was working, and 25 percent reported two working adults. Forty-one percent of single parents were working full time, and 53 percent of two-adult families included at least one full-time working adult. In general, Vietnamese-speaking respondents, African American single parents, and foreign-language-speakers (other than Spanish and Vietnamese) were the most likely to be employed.

Among single-parent households who were employed at the time of the survey, 51 percent reported working 31 or more hours per week. Similarly, among two-adult households, 64 percent reported that their combined work hours exceeded 60 hours per week.

Despite this level of work effort, the jobs respondents held were not very likely to offer benefits. Eleven percent of working single parents reported having jobs that offered paid sick leave, and 16 percent of respondents in two-adult households reported having such jobs. Roughly 15 percent of single parents reported jobs that offered health insurance, and 20 percent of two-adult families reported at least one job that offered health insurance.

### ***Barriers to Employment***

We asked respondents about seven potential barriers to employment that could impede their efforts to get and keep jobs: depression, anxiety, a stressful event (possibly signaling post-traumatic stress syndrome), alcohol use, drug use, domestic violence, and health limitations. We did not ask respondents speaking languages other than English, Spanish, or Vietnamese about anxiety, stress or substance abuse, and these respondents are not included in this portion of the analysis.

Of these barriers, anxiety was the most common, with 59 percent of respondents reporting symptoms associated with anxiety and 21 percent reporting that these symptoms interfered with their ability to complete tasks at work, in school, or at home. Next most common was depression, with 50 percent of respondents reporting a period of depression and 21 percent reporting that depression interfered with their obligations at work, school, or home. Consistent with other surveys, relatively few respondents reported that drugs or alcohol interfered with their work, school, or home lives (2 percent to 3 percent). It is very likely that respondents underreported their use of alcohol and drugs.

Eleven percent of respondents reported domestic violence by a spouse or partner in the past year, and 44 percent reported having experienced such violence at some time in the past. Almost a third (31 percent) of respondents reported having health conditions that limited their ability to work.

In sum, half (51 percent) of the survey respondents reported at least one barrier that interfered with their obligations at work, school, or home. Twenty-eight percent reported having two or more such barriers. Not surprisingly, more self-reported employment barriers correlated with lower rates of employment, particularly for single parents.

### ***Material Hardship***

The very low-income parents who were nearing the sixty-month CalWORKs time limit reported substantial material hardships. Overall, 43 percent reported having problems paying rent, 20 percent reported sharing housing with family or friends, and 20 percent had moved within the past year. Of those who had moved, 35 percent said they moved in with family or friends, and 7 percent said they went to homeless shelters.

Although most parents interviewed were eligible for Medi-Cal, 15 percent reported that family members had not received needed medical care in the past year. Similarly, although most

respondents were eligible for and receiving food stamps, 39 percent reported having problems affording food. Forty percent reported using food banks, and 10 percent reported receiving meals from soup kitchens.

Just over half of all respondents (54 percent) reported problems paying their utility bills, and just under half (47 percent) reported not having enough money “to buy the basic things you need.” Fifty-seven percent reported borrowing from friends or family in the past year.

Results were quite similar across counties but differed markedly by race/ethnic group. Vietnamese-speaking respondents reported far fewer material hardships than did white English-speakers, African Americans, Latinos, and “other race/ethnicity” English-speakers.

## 4. CalWORKs RECIPIENTS' KNOWLEDGE OF THE TIME LIMIT

As we documented in the first report from this study, the CalWORKs sixty-month time-limit policy is complex and potentially confusing to CalWORKs recipients and other program stakeholders. Even CalWORKs staff trained in implementing the policy find some aspects of it difficult to grasp.<sup>60</sup> Nevertheless, it is important that CalWORKs recipients understand how the time limit works so that they can prepare for the reduction in cash assistance when it comes or, perhaps, take steps to forestall reaching the time limit altogether.

In this chapter, we examine how sample respondents in the six focus counties learned about the time limit policy, how well they understood it, and how, if at all, they have responded to it. We also consider personal characteristics and other factors that may affect respondents' understanding of pertinent aspects of the policy. In general, the findings from this survey are consistent with the findings from the CalWORKs recipient focus groups that we conducted in 2003 and discussed in the first report.

The data we report in this chapter are based on interviews with 1,797 current and former CalWORKs recipients in six focus counties (Alameda, Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, Sacramento, and Tulare). When sampled, the recipients were within three to six months of reaching the time limit. (Chapter 3 and Appendix A detail survey sampling and methodology.) The sample did not include the first group of CalWORKs recipients to reach the time limit in January 2003. Rather, we intended that the sample include only recipients who expected to exhaust sixty months of cash aid between October 2004 and October 2005, roughly two or more years after county staff began imposing the sixty-month time limit. Therefore, the experiences of the recipients we surveyed reflect county policies and administrative practices that most likely have been refined over time. Moreover, the recipients in this sample have experienced only a work-first, time-limited cash assistance program.

### How Respondents Learned About the Time Limit

Exhibit 4.1 details the ways in which our sample respondents learned about the time limit. Respondents could report receiving information from more than one source. Just over half the respondents (54 percent) reported speaking with CalWORKs caseworkers or other staff about the time limit. Among those who spoke with CalWORKs staff, 55 percent reported that the first such exchange occurred several years prior to the survey. That is, over half said county workers informed them about the time limit when they still had several years remaining to prepare for it. Thirty-six percent of respondents said that they first spoke with CalWORKs staff about the time limit in the year prior to the survey.

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<sup>60</sup> Crow, Sarah E. and Jacquelyn Anderson. 2006. *Working Against the Clock: The Implementation of Welfare Time Limits in California*. This report is available at WPRP's website: <http://wprp.ucop.edu/researchpublications2.asp>.

These data, while interesting, do not necessarily mean that county staff failed to discuss the sixty-month limit in a timely fashion with all of the respondents. Memory lapses can lead to underreporting of events, and such lapses are more likely for distant events and for events that were not salient to the respondent at the time. In addition, respondents may not accurately remember when they received information. Telescoping—believing an event was more recent than it was—is common. In the same vein, respondents who heard about the time limit multiple times from county caseworkers may be more likely to remember the most recent time they heard about it rather than the first time.

The bottom panel of Exhibit 4.1 shows the other ways that this group of CalWORKs recipients reported receiving information about the time limit: 56 percent reported receiving informational letters from county welfare offices, and 31 percent cited county CalWORKs office brochures or pamphlets. Smaller percentages of respondents reported obtaining information from family or friends (16 percent), and even fewer mentioned the newspaper, radio, or television (6 percent).

It is noteworthy that survey respondents identified written materials provided by their CalWORKs offices as important sources of information about the time limit. Respondents were at least as likely to remember receiving letters with time-limit information as they were to recall conversations about the time limit with their caseworkers.

Across counties there is tremendous variation in how respondents reported learning about the time limit. For instance, more than 60 percent of respondents in Orange and Sacramento Counties reported having spoken to CalWORKs staff about the time limit, while 39 percent of Los Angeles County respondents reported such communications. Among those who spoke to CalWORKs staff, respondents in Riverside County were the most likely to report that such conversations first occurred more than two years prior to the survey (67 percent), while Alameda County respondents were the most likely to say they had occurred within the past year (45 percent).

As noted in Chapter 3, demographic characteristics—particularly ethnicity and language spoken—help explain the cross-county variation we observed. Although not shown in Exhibit 4.1, tabulations indicate that some ethnic/language groups were more likely than others to recall speaking to staff or receiving written materials. In general, among our eight ethnic/language groups, African Americans, and Latinos who speak English or Spanish were the least likely to recall speaking to county staff about the time limit (52 percent, 48 percent, and 44 percent, respectively). Vietnamese respondents and those who speak foreign languages other than Spanish and Vietnamese were the least likely to recall receiving letters (36 percent and 41 percent, respectively), while African Americans were the most likely to recall receiving letters (64 percent). English-speaking Latinos were less likely to report receiving letters (51 percent) than Spanish-speaking Latinos (61 percent). Across the six focus counties, of the Spanish- and Vietnamese-speaking respondents who recalled receiving informational letters at their homes, 75 percent reported that these letters were in their primary languages.<sup>61</sup> People who did not recall receiving letters or other written materials in their primary languages were unlikely to identify written materials as sources of information.

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<sup>61</sup> Sample size for these questions was 168 respondents.

Other factors may also come into play, including other recipient characteristics, county policies and practices, and additional economic, social, and political factors. As discussed in Chapter 3, many CalWORKs recipients who were nearing the time limit reported physical and mental health problems and other barriers to employment. Compared to other, more job-ready recipients, this group most likely included people who needed more information about the time limit and needed this information to be repeated. Later in this chapter, we report findings from multivariate analyses that examine how some of these factors affected survey respondents' knowledge and understanding of the time-limit policy.

**Exhibit 4.1**  
**How Survey Respondents Learned About the Time Limit (%)**

	Alameda	L.A.	Orange	Riverside	Sacramento	Tulare	Total
Respondent has spoken to a caseworker about the CalWORKs time limit ***	54.2	39.3	64.8	53.9	59.6	48.7	53.5
<i>If yes, the first time was: ***</i>							
Two or more years ago	40.8	52.0	53.4	66.8	58.2	60.2	55.4
Within the past year	45.5	41.9	39.2	26.1	31.2	32.6	35.8
Other/Don't Know	13.7	6.1	7.5	7.1	10.6	7.3	8.8
Other ways respondent has gotten information about the							
Letter ***	62.5	70.9	52.0	52.8	47.9	47.9	55.6
Brochures ***	37.4	29.5	21.2	36.7	34.2	29.8	31.3
Other recipients	22.9	14.9	15.9	13.6	18.3	17.2	17.1
Family or friends **	19.1	14.9	11.4	9.5	19.6	19.7	15.6
Media	8.4	5.1	3.7	5.8	7.9	3.7	5.8
Other	21.9	19.7	20.0	28.3	24.2	21.1	22.8
<i>Sample Size (N)</i>	<i>239</i>	<i>369</i>	<i>171</i>	<i>159</i>	<i>399</i>	<i>228</i>	<i>1,565</i>

**Notes:**

- (1) Tabulations are weighted using equal-probability weights.
- (2) Statistically significant differences across counties are shown as follows: \*\*\*p<.01 \*\*p<.05 \*p<.10.
- (3) Tabulations include respondents who were aware of the time limit

## What Recipients Knew About the Time Limit

The overwhelming majority of recipients surveyed (89 percent) knew that CalWORKs has a lifetime limit on cash aid (Exhibit 4.2). Of those respondents who knew about the time limit, 88 percent understood that this time limit applies to parents, but only 53 percent correctly said that the CalWORKs time limit does not apply to children. Of those who knew about the time limit, 23 percent said it does apply to children, and 24 percent were unsure. More than three-fifths of respondents (61 percent) correctly identified sixty months as the duration of CalWORKs cash assistance, and an even higher proportion (70 percent) knew that a parent's earnings can affect the grant after the parent times out. Hence, the main area of confusion in respondents' understanding is whether the time limit applies to children. In fact, otherwise eligible children are not subject to the sixty-month time limit; they may continue to receive state-funded Safety Net benefits after their parents time out. If this important feature of the

CalWORKs program were better understood, it could reduce recipients' anxiety about the time limit.

We next asked respondents what they thought happened to families when they reached the time limit.<sup>62</sup> Respondents overwhelmingly viewed the time limit as an impetus to go to work. Sixty percent reported that when parents reach the time limit, they must go to work.<sup>63</sup> The technically correct answer is that the CalWORKs grant is reduced (assuming that a parent's earnings are sufficiently low to ensure his or her children's continued eligibility for these state-funded Safety Net benefits). However, just 9 percent of respondents selected this response. Slightly more (12 percent) said that CalWORKs will be cancelled when parents reach the time limit. Seventeen percent said they did not know what would happen, or had another response.

These responses provide evidence that the recipients we interviewed roughly understood how the time-limit policy would affect their own grants, but they did not necessarily understand how the policy would affect their children. Respondents better understood that their incomes would continue to affect their grants after they reached the time limit. It may be that this aspect is better understood because parents' earnings also affect grant amounts prior to reaching the time limit.

**Exhibit 4.2**  
**Survey Respondents' Knowledge of Time Limit Policy (%)**

	Alameda	L.A.	Orange	Riverside	Sacramento	Tulare	Total
There is a lifetime limit on CalWORKs receipt ***	84.9	89.1	90.3	92.6	88.5	85.6	88.5
<b>AMONG THOSE WHO KNOW ABOUT THE TIME LIMIT</b>							
This time limit applies to parents ***	86.8	80.6	88.3	89.8	92.1	90.7	88.1
This time limit does not apply to children**	60.9	52.2	53.7	43.1	57.9	52.3	53.2
Time limit is sixty months ***	60.6	66.7	72.0	51.7	58.0	54.7	60.6
Parents' earnings affect grant after time limit ***	70.3	58.2	65.9	76.2	76.1	71.6	69.7
<b>What happens to a family's CalWORKs grant when they reach the time limit? ***</b>							
CalWORKs is cancelled	8.7	9.3	13.8	18.2	11.0	11.0	12.1
CalWORKs is reduced	12.0	7.0	9.3	10.8	6.7	8.8	9.1
Parent must work	63.4	57.4	53.2	54.9	64.9	66.7	59.9
No change	1.3	1.5	2.2	3.2	0.6	1.0	1.6
Other/Don't Know	14.6	24.9	21.7	13.0	16.9	12.6	17.3
<b>Sample Size (N)</b>	<b>283</b>	<b>438</b>	<b>190</b>	<b>172</b>	<b>449</b>	<b>265</b>	<b>1,797</b>

**Notes:**

- (1) Tabulations are weighted using equal-probability weights.
- (2) Statistically significant differences across counties are shown as follows: \*\*\*p<.01 \*\*p<.05 \*p<.10.

<sup>62</sup> The first three response options shown in Exhibit 4.2 were randomly ordered so that their sequence did not drive the results.

<sup>63</sup> If respondents referenced the eighteen- or twenty-four-month CalWORKs time limit, which triggers the mandatory work requirement, they were probed for an additional response about the sixty-month time limit.

## What Recipients Knew About Their Remaining Months of CalWORKs

The time-limit policy assumes that limiting months of aid will encourage welfare recipients to anticipate the time limit and pursue alternatives to welfare, including obtaining employment, working more hours, getting a better job, or getting married. However, the time limit can only motivate CalWORKs recipients if county staff have made them aware of how much time on aid remains available to them. Exhibit 4.3 shows the extent to which respondents knew how much time remained to them, and how close their estimates were to the figures in the counties' administrative data.

The top panel of Exhibit 4.3 shows that 57 percent of survey respondents reported knowing how many CalWORKs months they had remaining. Stated conversely, 43 percent of respondents did not know how many months they had remaining. This proportion is substantial for a group that was presumably within six months of timing out. This lack of knowledge about remaining months may stem, in part, from the difficulties caseworkers have in tracking months of aid in their own and other counties, particularly when they review cases for possible exemptions and extensions. As noted in the first report in this series, only 44 percent of the county staff surveyed in the six focus counties told us that the counts of time on aid in the statewide WDTIP system were accurate. In addition, about half of California's counties (twenty-eight out of fifty-four counties that responded to this question in our first All County Survey) reported voluntarily restoring CalWORKs cash aid to adult recipients because of county errors in calculating their countable time on aid.<sup>64</sup>

On a more positive note, about 65 percent of the respondents who reported knowing the number of CalWORKs months remaining to them were fairly accurate or erred on the side of caution: Nearly 29 percent underestimated the number of months remaining—that is, county records indicated they had more time left than they thought. Another 37 percent overestimated, but were within one month of county administrative records. Sixteen percent overestimated what county records showed by two to three months, and 6 percent were within four to six months. Only 13 percent were off by seven or more months.

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<sup>64</sup> See p. 48 in our first report: Crow, Sarah E. and Jacquelyn Anderson. 2006. *Working Against the Clock: The Implementation of Welfare Time Limits in California*. This report is available at WPRP's website: <http://wprp.ucop.edu/researchpublications2.asp>.



**Exhibit 4.3**  
**Survey Respondents' Knowledge of Their Remaining Time on CalWORKs (%)**

	Alameda	L.A.	Orange	Riverside	Sacramento	Tulare	Total
Respondent said he or she knows how many months he or she has left before reaching the CalWORKs time limit ***	59.0	54.3	63.6	49.3	58.5	56.7	56.8
<b>Among those who reported knowing:</b>							
Amount by which respondents mis-estimated the number of months remaining: ***							
Underestimated months	39.1	28.5	29.1	26.0	17.0	33.1	28.7
Overestimated by 0–1 months	45.1	24.5	34.0	35.9	39.2	41.1	36.7
Overestimated by 2–3 months	4.4	21.6	13.6	21.1	22.2	11.1	15.6
Overestimated by 4–6 months	2.3	9.9	7.5	2.9	10.1	3.6	6.1
Overestimated by 7 or more months	9.2	15.5	15.9	14.2	11.5	11.1	12.9
<b>Sample Size (N)</b>	<b>239</b>	<b>369</b>	<b>171</b>	<b>159</b>	<b>397</b>	<b>227</b>	<b>1,552</b>

**Notes:**

- (1) Tabulations are weighted using equal-probability weights.
- (2) Statistically significant differences across counties are shown as follows: \*\*\*p<.01 \*\*p<.05 \*p<.10.

### What Recipients Knew About Time-Limit Exemptions and Extensions

A variety of conditions allow CalWORKs recipients to exempt months of aid from counting toward the sixty-month time limit and to extend aid past sixty months.<sup>65</sup> We asked respondents about recipients' eligibility for these CalWORKs exemptions and extensions. We posed these questions in plain language, so they did not reflect the technical details of the written regulations, but they were designed to reveal whether recipients understood enough to talk to their caseworkers about applying for relevant exemptions or extensions.

It is important that CalWORKs recipients understand the basic reasons that might permit them to exempt or extend their time on aid. Caseworkers may be unaware of certain qualifying problems (such as domestic violence or caring for a disabled family member) and recipients may not know enough to volunteer the information to the caseworkers. In such instances, recipients could use up their sixty months of cash aid without successfully preparing for or entering the workforce, or they could fail to fully comply with the work requirements, which would likely trigger fiscal sanctions. In either event, the recipients may fail to obtain services that might help them with their underlying problems.

Exhibit 4.4 shows what survey respondents knew about CalWORKs exemptions and extensions. To simplify the questions, we did not differentiate between exemptions (not counting certain months on aid toward the sixty-month limit) and extensions (allowing aid to

<sup>65</sup> For a detailed description of county and state exemption and extension policies, see pp. 17-22 and pp. 53-65 in: Crow, Sarah E. and Jacquelyn Anderson. 2006. *Working Against the Clock: The Implementation of Welfare Time Limits in California*. This report is available at WPRP's website: <http://wprp.ucop.edu/researchpublications2.asp>.

continue past sixty countable months). Rather, we asked respondents whether there are reasons that would permit a parent to receive CalWORKs benefits after reaching the time limit.

Overall, only 31 percent of respondents agreed that there are any reasons that might allow a CalWORKs recipient to continue receiving aid after reaching the time limit. This result suggests that over two thirds (69 percent) of respondents were unaware of any possible reasons for exemption or extension, which strikes us as worrisome.

We continued questioning those respondents who said there are reasons that permit CalWORKs parents to receive cash assistance past sixty months. We provided them with a list of possible reasons, five of which were legitimate and four of which were not. We included these bogus items intentionally. We then asked respondents to say whether each of these conditions would permit a parent to receive CalWORKs benefits after reaching the time limit. Correct answers are in parentheses in the leftmost column of Exhibit 4.4.<sup>66</sup>

Of the 31 percent who knew that there are reasons that allow a parent to receive cash aid past sixty months, 84 percent correctly identified being “sick or disabled,” and 71 percent correctly identified “caring for a sick or disabled family member.” However, only 52 percent correctly identified “domestic violence,” a troublesome finding given that such abuse is often hidden. Caseworkers are unlikely to know about domestic violence unless recipients volunteer the information. Only 49 percent correctly identified being “over age 60” as a reason a parent might receive cash aid past sixty months. This latter finding is less worrisome because a recipient’s age is included in county case records and can be easily determined without a recipient telling his or her caseworker about it. It is worth noting that another 45 percent (incorrectly) selected “over age 55,” possibly reflecting their understanding that parents nearing retirement age are exempt from the time limit.

It is noteworthy that California’s unique “child support” exemption was least often recognized, with only 26 percent of the respondents identifying it as a reason for qualifying for CalWORKs cash aid past the time limit. Given the difficulties county staff have encountered in merging relevant child support and CalWORKs data, and the potential for errors, it would be helpful if recipients better understood the value and role of child support in determining their continued eligibility for CalWORKs assistance.<sup>67</sup>

Respondents did a reasonably good job of detecting the four bogus reasons included in the list. Between 68 percent and 84 percent of our sample respondents correctly rejected three of these “ringers.” They erred most often by selecting “over age 55” as a reason for exemption or extension. This mistake is less consequential than others given that a parent over age 60 can qualify for an exemption or extension.

Not surprisingly, the exemptions and extensions most familiar to recipients were also the ones most familiar to county CalWORKs staff. In our first survey of CalWORKs staff, we asked the

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<sup>66</sup> Note that in the lower panel of Exhibit 4.4, the Total column is not the simple average of the county averages. This is because the “equal-probability weight” used to calculate the Total weights the sample based on full sample characteristics. The lower panel calculations are based on respondents who both knew that the time limit existed and that there were conditions that would allow them to continue receiving cash aid past sixty months (497 respondents).

<sup>67</sup> Ibid, pp. 18-20, and pp. 59-63.

county workers to identify five valid reasons for exemptions or extensions: 92 percent correctly identified “illness or disability,” and 84 percent correctly identified caring for a “sick or disabled family member.” These are the two reasons that CalWORKs recipients most recognized. County caseworkers were less likely to correctly identify “age 60 or over” (73 percent), “domestic abuse” (71 percent), and “child support” (67 percent), as were recipients.<sup>1</sup>

It is also not surprising that recipients knew more about the time limit in general than they knew about exemptions and extensions, given the timing and nature of the information communicated to them by county CalWORKs staff. In our earlier survey of county caseworkers, 65 percent told us they explained the existence of the time limit to recipients at their first meetings, and 53 percent said they regularly discussed recipients’ remaining time on aid at redetermination meetings. By contrast, 40 percent of the staff said they discussed exemptions at first meetings with recipients, and 35 percent said that they discussed exemptions at redetermination meetings. Even fewer said they discussed extensions: 30 percent at first meetings, and 25 percent at redetermination meetings.<sup>2</sup>

**Exhibit 4.4**  
**Survey Respondents’ Knowledge About Time-Limit Exemptions and Extensions (%)**

(Correct answer shown in parentheses)

	Alameda	L.A.	Orange	Riverside	Sacramento	Tulare	Total
Are there reasons why a parent might be allowed to continue to receive CalWORKs after reaching the time limit? (Yes) ***	35.8	31.2	26.2	35.7	37.7	20.8	31.3
Which conditions allow a parent to receive CalWORKs past the time limit?							
Over age 60 (Yes)	49.1	51.2	47.6	46.8	47.7	51.7	48.8
Over age 55 (No) **	38.7	43.5	50.5	58.6	38.8	39.5	45.2
Sick or disabled (Yes)	85.7	81.4	85.8	82.0	82.7	85.9	83.7
Caring for sick or disabled family member (Yes)	77.3	71.1	79.3	67.6	64.8	70.3	71.4
No car to get to work (No) **	80.2	81.5	86.2	91.0	87.5	70.5	83.8
No child care (No) ***	72.0	62.5	61.6	78.4	68.1	58.1	67.9
No job (No) **	65.0	59.3	79.9	76.6	76.5	75.4	71.9
Victim of domestic violence (Yes) ***	53.7	62.4	55.5	53.1	44.2	41.2	52.1
Absent parent paid child support (Yes)	22.2	33.3	23.2	23.4	28.5	26.9	26.1
<b>Sample Size (N)</b>	<b>239</b>	<b>369</b>	<b>171</b>	<b>158</b>	<b>399</b>	<b>228</b>	<b>1,564</b>

**Notes:**

- (1) Tabulations are weighted using equal-probability weights.
- (2) Statistically significant differences across counties are shown as follows: \*\*\*p<.01 \*\*p<.05 \*p<.10.
- (3) Tabulations show the percent of respondents providing the correct answer, which is shown in parentheses in each row.
- (4) Tabulations include respondents who were aware of the time limit.

<sup>1</sup> Ibid, p. 41.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid, pp. 34-35.

We thought it possible that those who reported having any of the conditions that permit extra time on aid might be more knowledgeable about exemptions and extensions. To test this idea, we looked specifically at the responses provided by people reporting three of the potentially qualifying conditions: they had health problems or disabilities that interfered with employment; they were caring for sick or disabled family members; or they had experienced domestic violence.

Exhibit 4.5 provides the results. Most of the respondents reporting these conditions were not aware that these situations might permit recipients to receive CalWORKs benefits after reaching the time limit. Of those who reported being sick or disabled, only one in three knew that the condition might qualify recipients for CalWORKs benefits past sixty months. Of those who reported caring for sick or disabled family members or experiencing domestic violence, only one in five knew that these conditions might qualify recipients for time on aid past sixty months.

However, recipients reporting these conditions were somewhat more knowledgeable than other respondents about the possibility of exemption or extension. For example, of the 523 people who reported being sick or disabled, one-third knew that such circumstances might allow recipients to receive CalWORKs benefits beyond the time limit. By contrast, only 19 percent of the 1,274 respondents who did not report being sick or disabled understood this to be the case. Of the 169 who reported experiencing domestic violence, nearly 21 percent knew that such a situation might qualify recipients for time on aid past sixty months, compared to 14 percent of the 1,628 respondents who did not report domestic violence.

**Exhibit 4.5**  
**Survey Respondents with Self-Reported Barriers to Employment and Their Knowledge of Exemptions and Extensions (%)**

	Respondents Knew Conditions Might Permit Recipients to Receive CalWORKs Benefits After Reaching the Time Limit	
	Respondents Reporting Condition	Respondents Not Reporting Condition
Sick or disabled	32.8	18.9
<i>Sample Size (N)</i>	523	1,274
Caring for sick or disabled family member	21.0	19.1
<i>Sample Size (N)</i>	573	1,224
Victim of domestic violence	20.5	13.6
<i>Sample Size (N)</i>	169	1,628

**Note:** Tabulations are weighted using equal-probability weights.

Recipients with these problems are among the most vulnerable of the CalWORKs population. CalWORKs exemption and extension provisions are intended to help such adults because their problems or conditions limit their ability to work. The data we reported in Chapter 3 affirm this view: Recipients reporting these barriers to employment are less likely to work than those who

do not report them.<sup>70</sup> Yet, according to this analysis, relatively few of the respondents who reported such barriers *and* were close to the sixty-month limit were aware of the policies that might enable them to extend their time on aid past sixty months.<sup>71</sup>

Taken together, the data in these tables suggest that even if county staff do provide recipients with clear and complete written materials explaining exemptions and extensions, the rules are sufficiently complicated that caseworkers probably need to supplement these documents with verbal instructions, especially for foreign-language- speakers.

## **Knowledge About Post-Time-Limit Services<sup>72</sup>**

Although Congress imposed time limits on federal TANF benefits, it deliberately did not place time limits on other key federal public assistance programs, including food stamps, Medicaid (Medi-Cal in California), and subsidized housing. CalWORKs imposes time limits on cash benefits, but it guarantees timed-out recipients child care subsidies for two years after they leave cash aid and longer if they remain income eligible (and the legislature continues to appropriate sufficient funds for “stage three” child care). Thus, once they exhaust sixty countable months of CalWORKs benefits, former recipients who meet the relevant income and asset tests may continue to participate in the Food Stamp, Medi-Cal, child care, and subsidized housing programs.

These non-time-limited benefits and services can become crucial to households in which the adults have reached the CalWORKs time limit, especially if their family circumstances remain unchanged, but their incomes decline because of grant reductions. It is important, therefore, that CalWORKs recipients close to timing out be aware of their continued eligibility for these other assistance programs.

Exhibit 4.6 shows what survey respondents knew about the post-time-limit benefits and services available to them and their children. They knew much more about the programs available to their children: 88 percent correctly said that children would retain Medi-Cal eligibility, and 75 percent knew that children would retain food-stamp eligibility after their parents reached the time limit.

Respondents were less clear about their own continued eligibility: 70 percent knew they could remain eligible for Medi-Cal, 54 percent knew they could still qualify for child care subsidies,

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<sup>70</sup> For additional information on how barriers to employment affect work effort, see the final report from WPRP’s related study: Norris, Jean and Richard Speigman. 2005. *Assessing Barriers to Work Among CalWORKs Participants in San Joaquin County*. This report is available at WPRP’s website:

<http://wprp.ucop.edu/researchpublications2.asp>.

<sup>71</sup> In a future report, we will be able to report the proportion of survey respondents who reported conditions that might qualify for exemptions or extensions and whether they did, in fact, have their time on aid exempted or extended.

<sup>72</sup> For additional information on the rate at which “welfare leavers” participate in three non-time-limited programs, see the presentation slides from WPRP’s Policymaker Forum on *Program Take-Up Among Welfare Leavers: Medi-Cal, Food Stamps, and the EITC*: <http://wprp.ucop.edu/PMSRAND13NOV2003.pdf>. The report upon which this presentation is based will be available at WPRP’s website in spring 2007:

<http://wprp.ucop.edu/researchpublications1.asp>.

but fewer than half knew they could still qualify for food stamps (46 percent) or housing assistance (45 percent).

If parents nearing the time limit better understood the benefits and services still available to them, they might be less anxious about their futures, be better able to plan, and have more confidence in their ability to make ends meet by relying on their earnings, child support payments (if available), and non-time-limited assistance.

**Exhibit 4.6**  
**Survey Respondents' Knowledge About Post-Time-Limit Benefits and Services (%)**  
 (Correct answer is yes to all)

	Alameda	L.A.	Orange	Riverside	Sacramento	Tulare	Total
<i>Can adult continue to receive the following after time limit?</i>							
Child care assistance ***	49.4	49.4	54.8	56.6	67.8	48.0	54.4
Medi-Cal ***	63.4	66.4	82.9	68.2	72.7	67.1	70.2
Food Stamps **	36.5	47.6	48.5	46.1	43.5	55.3	46.3
Housing Assistance ***	47.8	39.9	56.3	45.6	39.1	39.9	44.8
<i>Can child continue to receive the following after time limit?</i>							
Medi-Cal	86.9	86.9	88.3	86.0	91.7	87.0	87.8
Food Stamps	77.1	72.4	71.5	70.4	78.0	79.6	74.7
<i>Sample Size (N)</i>	239	369	171	159	399	228	1,565

**Notes:**

- (1) Tabulations are weighted using equal-probability weights.
- (2) Statistically significant differences across counties are shown as follows: \*\*\*p<.01 \*\*p<.05 \*p<.10.
- (3) Tabulations include respondents who were aware of the time limit.

## How Recipients Prepared for the Time Limit

When recipients enroll in CalWORKs, they can react to the time limit in three ways. They can do nothing; they can try to conserve, or “bank,” months of cash aid for the future when they may be in greater need; and they can take steps to secure income from other (non-CalWORKs) sources.

To find out how, if at all, our survey respondents were preparing for the time limit, we first asked whether they had ever considered banking months and, if so, whether they had, in fact, forgone aid in order to save it for a time of greater need in the future. Such banking might occur, for instance, in months when recipients are earning more and, therefore, receiving smaller CalWORKs benefit payments.

In general, if recipients have considered banking months, they probably have a pretty sophisticated grasp of the time-limit policy and its associated financial incentives (earnings disregards that encourage work) and disincentives (the reduction or termination of cash aid when the recipient reaches the time limit). In states that terminate the TANF cash grant to the entire family when the parent exhausts his or her sixty months of cash aid, banking months may be a more significant incentive than it is in California, which generally reduces, but does not terminate, the grant when a parent reaches the time limit.<sup>73</sup>

Exhibit 4.7 shows that 36 percent of the survey respondents reported considering banking months for the future. Of those who considered banking, 46 percent (or, 17 percent of the entire sample) reported doing so. This result suggests that respondents who understood the policy well enough to consider it were fairly likely to act on it.

We next asked all of the respondents an open-ended question about what they were doing to prepare for the time limit. We coded their responses into the eleven categories reported in the bottom panel of Exhibit 4.7. Respondents could report engaging in multiple activities.

The most common responses were employment-related: Twenty-five percent reported looking for work, 23 percent reported working, and 23 percent reported going to school or getting professional licenses. Only 5 percent said they were planning to upgrade their jobs or were participating in job-preparation or job-search activities through CalWORKs. Four percent were seeking assistance for their own or a family member's mental health or substance abuse problems, a low rate when one considers that more than 20 percent of respondents reported experiencing depression, anxiety, or stressful events that interfered with their obligations at work, school, or at home (see Exhibit 3.8). Very few (roughly 3 percent for each item) said they were budgeting to save money, were relying on a spouse, or were pursuing applications for Supplemental Security Income (SSI) or other disability programs. Only 1 percent of respondents said they were looking for less expensive housing.

These reported activities reflect the "work first" emphasis of the CalWORKs program. However, it is important to note that one in five respondents (21 percent) reported doing "nothing" to prepare for the coming time limit.<sup>74</sup> Among those who gave that response, 22 percent reported having three or more barriers to employment. Among those who said they were preparing for the time limit, 16 percent reported three or more barriers. Moreover, those not preparing were somewhat more likely to report certain conditions that might qualify for exemptions or extensions.<sup>75</sup> For example, 39 percent of those who reported doing nothing to prepare for the time limit also reported that they were sick or disabled, compared to 29 percent of those who reported taking steps to prepare. Similarly, 37 percent of those doing nothing said they were caring for sick or disabled family members, compared to 31 percent who said they

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<sup>73</sup> There is not much evidence on the degree to which recipients "bank" months. In a 1999 MDRC overview of research on welfare time limits in seven states, Dan Bloom wrote, "Surveys and focus groups suggest that many recipients see time limits as a distant concern . . . they are more likely to focus on day-to-day concerns. . . Almost no one discussed the need to "bank" months of assistance, perhaps because most people seemed fairly optimistic about their future prospects." See Bloom, Dan. 1999. *Welfare Time Limits: An Interim Report Card*. New York: MDRC.

<sup>74</sup> These respondents stated they were doing "nothing" in their answers (not to be confused with respondents who did not respond to the question).

<sup>75</sup> These respondents did not report that they were seeking exemptions or extensions.

were taking measures to prepare. These findings suggest that, among the 21 percent of CalWORKs recipients nearing the time limit who reportedly were not preparing for time-limit-triggered grant reductions, a substantial fraction may have conditions that warrant exemptions or extensions but do not know it.

**Exhibit 4.7**

**Respondents' Reported Activities in Preparation for the Time Limit (%)**

Respondent has ever considered not getting CalWORKs in order to save CalWORKs months for some future time	35.8
<i>(If yes to above)</i>	
Did you ever do that?	45.7
<i>Sample Size (N)</i>	<i>1,795</i>
What if anything have you done to prepare for the time limit?	
Nothing	20.9
Looking for work	24.6
Working	23.4
Going to school or getting training or professional license	22.6
Job preparation, job search assistance, or intent to work	5.3
Looking to upgrade current job (i.e. higher paying, more stable, more hours, 2 <sup>nd</sup> job)	5.3
Cope with self/spouse/child mental health or substance abuse problem	3.5
Budgeting (saving money, cutting expenses, borrowing)	3.1
Rely on spouse employment/schooling	2.7
Self/spouse/child SSI or disability application	2.6
Housing (moving to/looking for cheaper housing, shelter, finding roommate)	1.1
Other	2.6
<i>Sample Size (N)</i>	<i>1,657</i>
<i>Number of Responses</i>	<i>1,951</i>
<b>Note:</b> Activities in preparation for the time limit were reported verbatim and post-coded to create this list. Responses do not sum to 100% because respondents could report in engaging in multiple activities.	



### ***Factors Associated with Recipients' Knowledge of the Time Limit***

To determine which survey respondents best understood the time limit, we created three indices and examined the association of various respondent and county traits with these scaled measures. Exhibits 4.8–4.14 present the results. The indices are defined as follows.

- “*Time-limit knowledge*” index—sum of 0/1 responses to the following questions, with 1 signifying a correct answer (maximum possible score is 5):
  - Knowledge that CalWORKs time limit exists.
  - Knowledge that time limit applies to parents.
  - Knowledge that time limit does not apply to children.
  - Knowledge that length of time limit is exactly sixty months (or five years).
  - Knowledge that a parent’s earnings reduce grant after time limit.
- “*Months-on-aid knowledge*” index (maximum possible score is 3):
  - Score of 0 if respondent does not know months remaining on aid, if estimated months differ more than six months from administrative data, or if respondent does not know that time limit exists.
  - Score of 1 if estimated months remaining are between four and six months more than administrative data.
  - Score of 2 if estimated months remaining are between two and three months more than administrative data
  - Score of 3 if estimated months remaining are between zero and one month more than administrative data, or if respondent believes she has fewer months left than reported in administrative data.
- “*Banking months*” (maximum possible value is 1):
  - Score of 0 if respondent did not consider saving months, 1 if respondent did consider saving months for the future.

We present the distributions and average scores for these indices in Exhibit 4.8. The “time-limit knowledge” index had a maximum possible score of 5, indicating correct answers to each of the five questions. On average, respondents correctly answered 3.38 of these questions, with the majority correctly answering three or more of the questions.<sup>76</sup> The “months-on-aid knowledge” index had a maximum possible score of 3 if respondents were able to accurately identify (to within one month) the number of months on aid remaining to them. Only 31 percent of respondents were this accurate. The average score for this index was 1.15—lower than the midpoint of the range—chiefly because so few respondents knew how much time they had left. Finally, 36 percent of respondents told us they had considered banking months of aid for the future, which generates an average score of 0.36 on the “considered banking months” measure.

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<sup>76</sup> Note that the mean includes people who were unable to answer any of the questions correctly (zeros).

**Exhibit 4.8**  
**Distributions and Average Scores of Time Limit Indices**

	Time-Limit Knowledge Index (%)	Months-On-Aid Knowledge Index (%)	Considered Banking Months (%)
Score			
0	7.6	56.7	64.1
1	5.2	2.5	35.9
2	8.4	10.2	
3	21.9	30.7	
4	33.9		
5	22.9		
Weighted mean	3.38	1.15	0.36
<i>Sample Size (N)</i>	1,793	1,791	1,791

**Notes:**

- (1) Samples are those used in the regression models shown in Exhibits 4.9–4.14.
- (2) Tabulations are weighted using equal-probability weights.

We conducted multivariate analyses (using ordinary least squares regressions) to determine the extent to which respondents’ “time-limit knowledge,” “months-on-aid knowledge,” and consideration of “banking months” (as depicted in Exhibit 4.8) were affected by key individual and county characteristics.

In the models, we included individual characteristics grouped by sex, race/ethnicity, language, immigrant status, education level, marital status, number of children, and the age of the respondent’s youngest child. We also included four barriers to employment that survey respondents reported had interfered with their ability to work, go to school, or care for their children: depression, anxiety, alcohol use, and drug use, and two additional barriers—domestic violence within the past year, and physical illness or disability.

In the first two models (“time-limit knowledge” and “months-on-aid knowledge”) we included two measures of CalWORKs participation—whether respondents were getting CalWORKs benefits at the time of the survey and whether they had accumulated fifty-eight or more months at the time of the survey. We excluded these two participation measures from the third model (“banking months”) because those who reported banking months were less likely than those who did not to have accumulated fifty-eight months of aid and to be receiving CalWORKs benefits at the time of the survey.<sup>77</sup>

In all three models we included measures for the respondent’s county of residence and, in separate regression models, we also included the nature of county communications regarding the CalWORKs time limit.

The next six exhibits (4.9–4.14) summarize regression analyses in which we determined how the weighted means reported in Exhibit 4.8 varied when we tested the importance of a given

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<sup>77</sup> In this case, including these measures would have biased the other coefficient estimates.

individual or county characteristic, holding the other characteristics (or variables) constant.<sup>78</sup> The asterisks indicate statistically significant differences among the characteristics (e.g., white, African American, Latino, Asian, “other”) within each category (e.g., ethnicity). For example, asterisks attached to sets of bars in the ethnicity category indicate that the groups of respondents (whites, African Americans, Latinos, Asians, and “others”) were not equally knowledgeable. Sets of bars that do not have asterisks may look unequal, but the differences did not prove to be statistically significant.

Exhibits 4.9 and 4.10 present the regression-adjusted means for the “time-limit knowledge” index by individual and county characteristics. If respondents answered all five questions about the time limit correctly, they could achieve a maximum possible score of 5. The overall weighted mean score was 3.38—that is, on average, respondents answered 3.38 of the five questions correctly.

The regression analysis in Exhibit 4.9 shows how this average score (3.38) varied by individual characteristics, holding all others constant (the regression-adjusted means). Several characteristics stand out as significant predictors of respondents’ knowledge about the time limit. First, immigrant status played an important role: Respondents who were not immigrants answered, on average, 3.57 of the five questions correctly, while immigrants answered only 2.88 of the questions correctly.

Having a high school diploma also proved important: On average, respondents with a high school diploma answered 3.52 of the questions correctly, relative to those without a high school diploma (including those with a GED), who answered 3.16 questions correctly, on average.

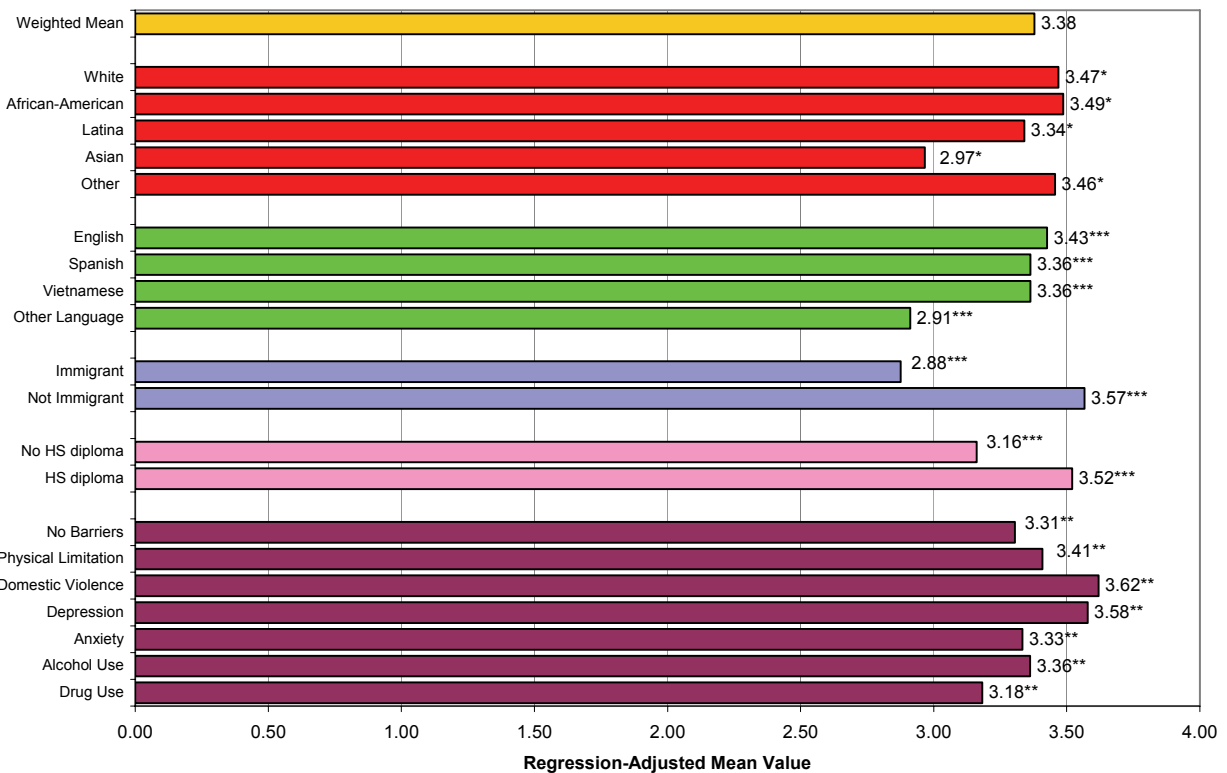
Ethnicity and language also mattered. Asian respondents understood the least about the time limit (2.97), and Latinos (3.34) lagged African Americans (3.49), whites (3.47) and “others” (3.46). Those in the “other language” category understood less about the time limit (2.91) than did Vietnamese-speakers and Spanish-speakers (both 3.36), and considerably less than English-speakers (3.43).

The barriers to employment that respondents reported caused less variation in the measure of time-limit knowledge. Those reporting no barriers answered, on average, 3.31 of the five questions correctly. Those reporting any of six barriers answered, on average, between 3.18 and 3.62 questions correctly.

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<sup>78</sup> The regression-adjusted means in Exhibits 4.9–4.14 are scaled as in Exhibit 4.8, but are adjusted for the other characteristics included in the regression equations. See Appendix C, Exhibits C.1–C.3, for regression coefficients, and Exhibit C.4 for regression means and standard deviations.

**Exhibit 4.9**  
**How Time-Limit Knowledge Varied by Individual Characteristics (0–5 Scale)**  
**Regression-Adjusted Means**

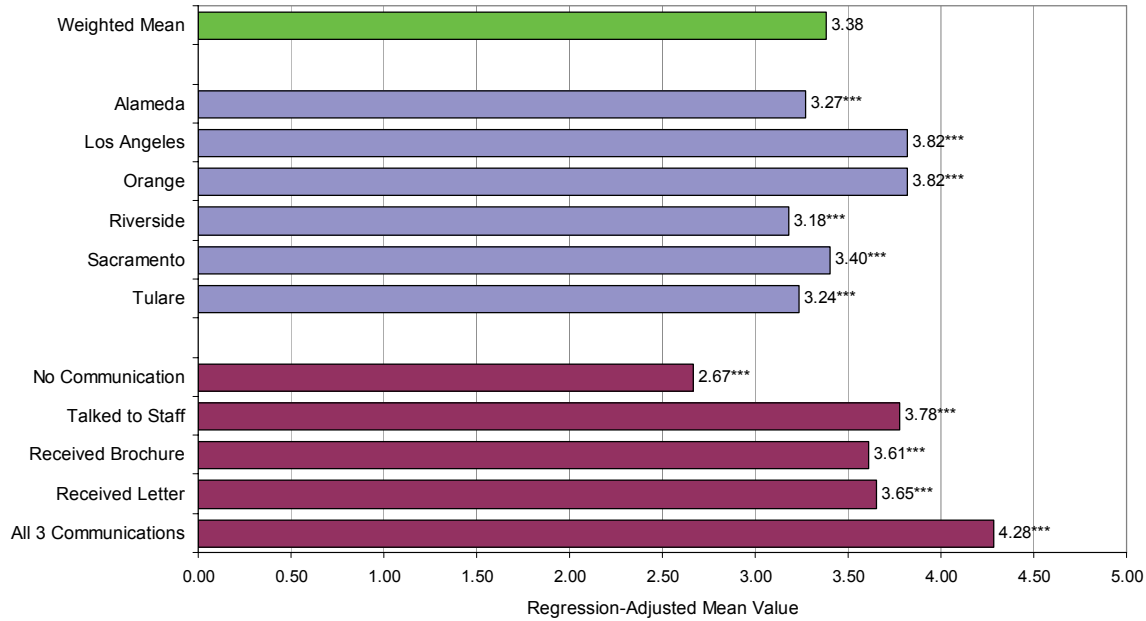


**Note:** Statistically significant differences within categories are shown as follows: \*\*\*p<.01, \*\*p<.05, \*p<.10

County of residence also affected respondents’ knowledge about the time limit (Exhibit 4.10). Controlling for the other characteristics, such as language and ethnicity, Orange and Los Angeles County respondents understood the most (answering, on average, 3.82 of the five questions correctly), followed by Sacramento (3.40), Alameda (3.27), Tulare (3.24), and Riverside (3.18). It is impressive that respondents from Orange and Los Angeles Counties scored 14 percent higher on the “time-limit knowledge” index than the average of respondents in the other four focus counties. That the other four counties clustered between 3.18 and 3.40 suggests that, despite their geographic diversity, counties were providing recipients with consistent information, a very important aspect of program implementation.

The bottom part of Exhibit 4.10 shows the regression-adjusted means by the nature of the county CalWORKs-related communications respondents reported. Our data show a clear effect: Those who reported no communications answered, on average, only 2.67 of the five questions correctly. Those who reported receiving brochures scored 3.61, those reporting letters scored 3.65, and those who reported talking with county staff scored 3.78. Respondents who reported all three forms of communication outperformed everyone, scoring an impressive 4.28–1.61 points (or 60 percent) better than those reporting no communication.

**Exhibit 4.10**  
**How Time-Limit Knowledge Varied by County and by Communication Experiences (0–5 Scale)**  
**Regression-Adjusted Means**

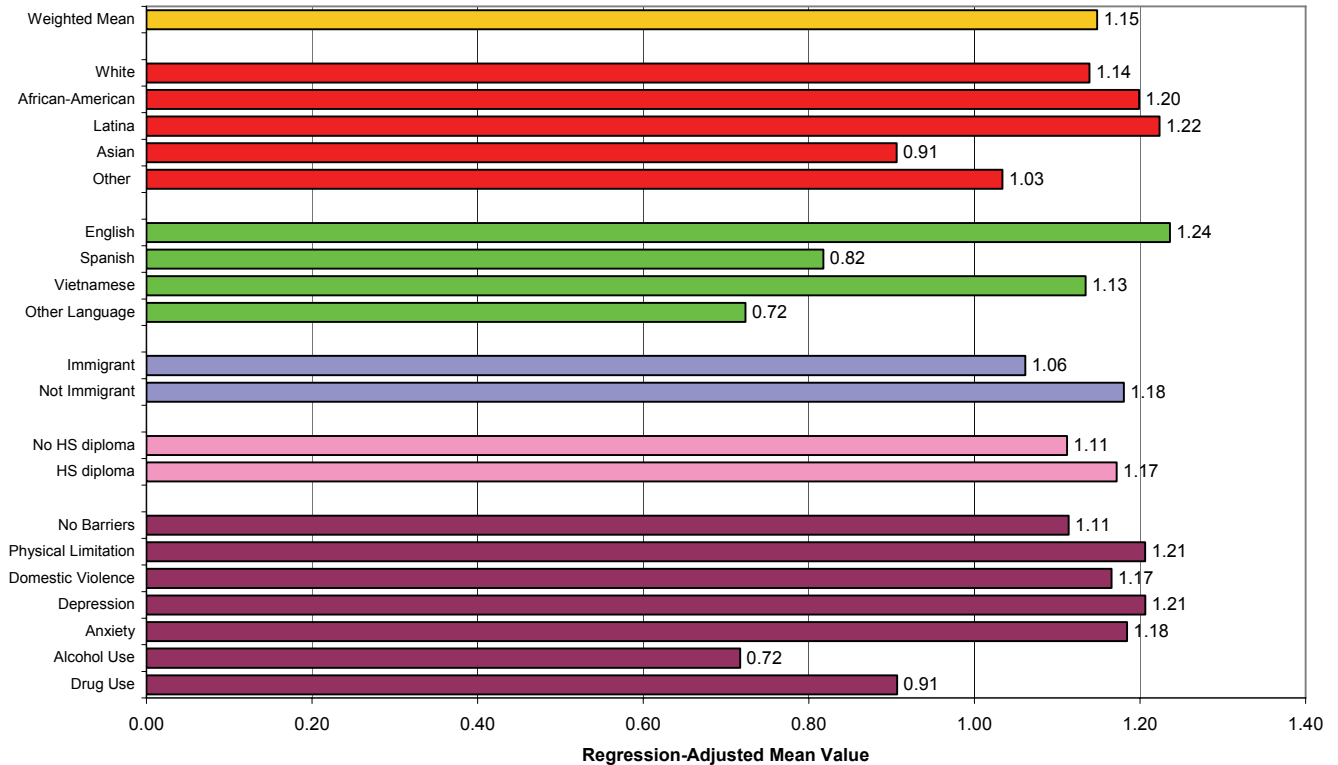


**Note:** Statistically significant differences within categories are shown as follows: \*\*\* $p < .01$ , \*\* $p < .05$ , \* $p < .10$

Exhibits 4.11 and 4.12 present the regression-adjusted means for the “months-on-aid knowledge” index by individual and county characteristics. This index had a maximum possible score of 3 points if respondents were able to accurately identify the number of months on aid remaining to them. The overall weighted mean score is only 1.15 (Exhibit 4.11). Although none of the findings reported in this graph were statistically significant within categories, some of the variation is noteworthy.

**Exhibit 4.11**

**How Respondents' Knowledge of Remaining Months Varied by Individual Characteristics (0–3 Scale)  
Regression-Adjusted Means**



**Note:** Statistically significant differences within categories are shown as follows: \*\*\* $p < .01$ , \*\* $p < .05$ , \* $p < .10$

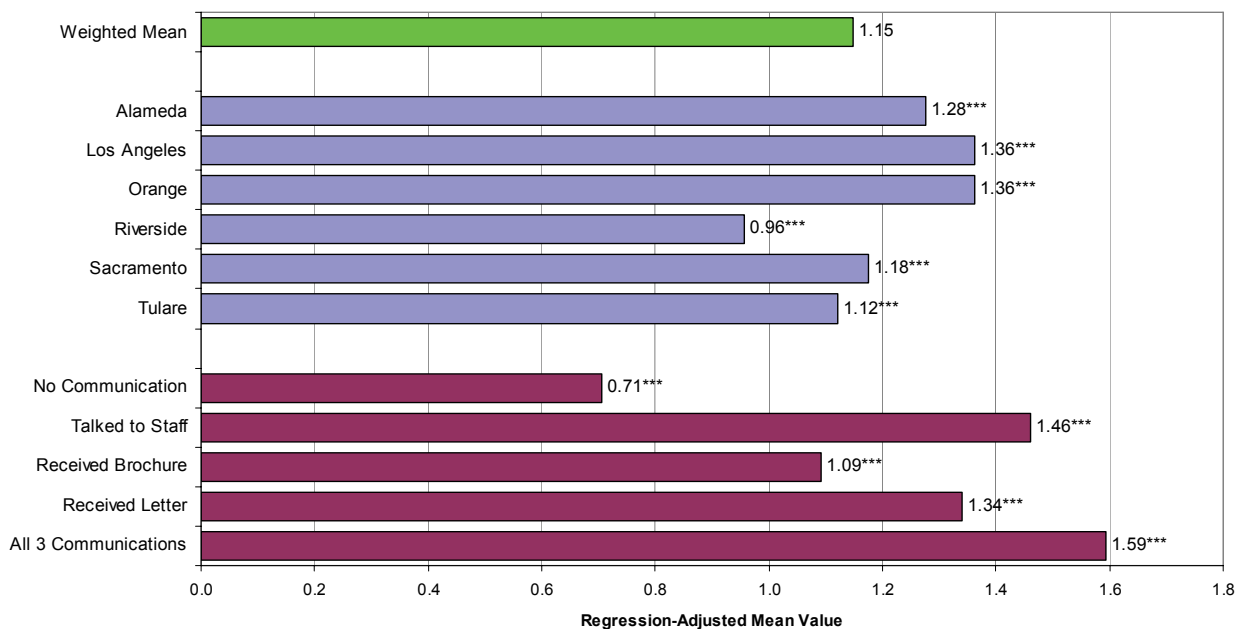
For example, the accuracy with which respondents reported the number of CalWORKs months still available to them varied considerably by language, even though these findings were not statistically different from each other.<sup>79</sup> Spanish-speakers (0.82) and speakers of “other languages” (0.72) scored substantially lower on this index than did English-speakers (1.24) and Vietnamese-speakers (1.13). The regression results (reported in Appendix C, Exhibit C.2) show that speaking Spanish is associated with a statistically significant decrease in this index of 0.34 points.

Similarly, scores by race/ethnicity also varied markedly, but not significantly: On average, Latinos scored the best on this “months-on-aid knowledge” index (1.22), followed by African Americans (1.20), whites (1.14), and “other” races/ethnicities (1.03). Asians scored the lowest (0.91).

<sup>79</sup> In the regression model, the language categories were not statistically significant as a group in explaining how accurately respondents estimated their number of remaining aid months.

Immigration status and whether the respondent had a high school diploma were not statistically significant and did not vary that much. Classifying respondents by whether they reported specific barriers to employment also was not associated with statistically significant differences in knowledge about remaining time on aid.

**Exhibit 4.12**  
**How Respondents' Knowledge of Remaining Months Varied**  
**by County and by Communication Experiences (0–3 Scale)**  
**Regression-Adjusted Means**



**Note:** Statistically significant differences within categories are shown as follows: \*\*\*p<.01, \*\*p<.05, \*p<.10

In much the same way that county of residence affected respondents' knowledge about the time limit (Exhibit 4.10), this variable also affected the accuracy with which respondents reported the number of CalWORKs months still available to them (Exhibit 4.12). Controlling for all the other variables, respondents in Orange and Los Angeles Counties were the most accurate (scoring, on average, 1.36 out of 3 points), followed by respondents in Alameda (1.28), Sacramento (1.18), Tulare (1.12), and Riverside (0.96).

The form of communication used by the county to inform recipients about CalWORKs played an even bigger role: Respondents who reported no communication fared worst, scoring, on average, only 0.71 (out of a possible score of 3). Respondents who reported talking to county staff about the time limit were more knowledgeable about their remaining months on aid (1.46) than were those who reported receiving letters (1.34) or brochures (1.09). Once again, those

who reported all three forms of communication were the most knowledgeable (1.59). This pattern is identical to the pattern we observed in how county communication affects recipients' knowledge about the time limit (Exhibit 4.10).

The final two exhibits examine the regression-adjusted means for respondents who reported they had considered banking months of CalWORKs aid for the future. Recipients who have other sources of income might opt to forgo their current benefits in order to save or “bank” them for a time when they might be in greater need of assistance. Respondents who consider banking months grasp two key features of the time-limit policy: first, that CalWORKs staff will enforce the sixty-month time limit and, second, that months in which adults do not receive aid do not count toward the limit.

As we showed in Exhibit 4.8, respondents could opt to consider banking months (scoring one point) or not (scoring zero points). On average, 36 percent of our survey respondents reported thinking about banking months (a weighted mean of 0.36).<sup>80</sup> As Exhibit 4.13 shows, this weighted mean varied significantly by language and barriers to employment. Ethnicity, immigrant status, and having a high school diploma were not statistically significant.

English-speakers were the most likely to consider banking months (0.38), followed by Spanish-speakers (0.30), and Vietnamese-speakers (0.27). “Other” language-speakers were the least likely to consider banking months (0.25).

Barriers to employment also had a modest effect. Respondents who reported alcohol use were the most likely to consider banking months (0.48), followed by those who reported recent domestic violence (0.45) and drug use (0.44). Those who reported struggling with anxiety or depression (0.37 each) or physical health problems (0.34) were somewhat less likely to consider banking months. It is interesting that those who reported no barriers to employment were the least likely to think about banking months (0.34). Perhaps these respondents viewed their employment prospects more favorably than those who reported barriers and were, therefore, less likely to be concerned about saving months for the future.

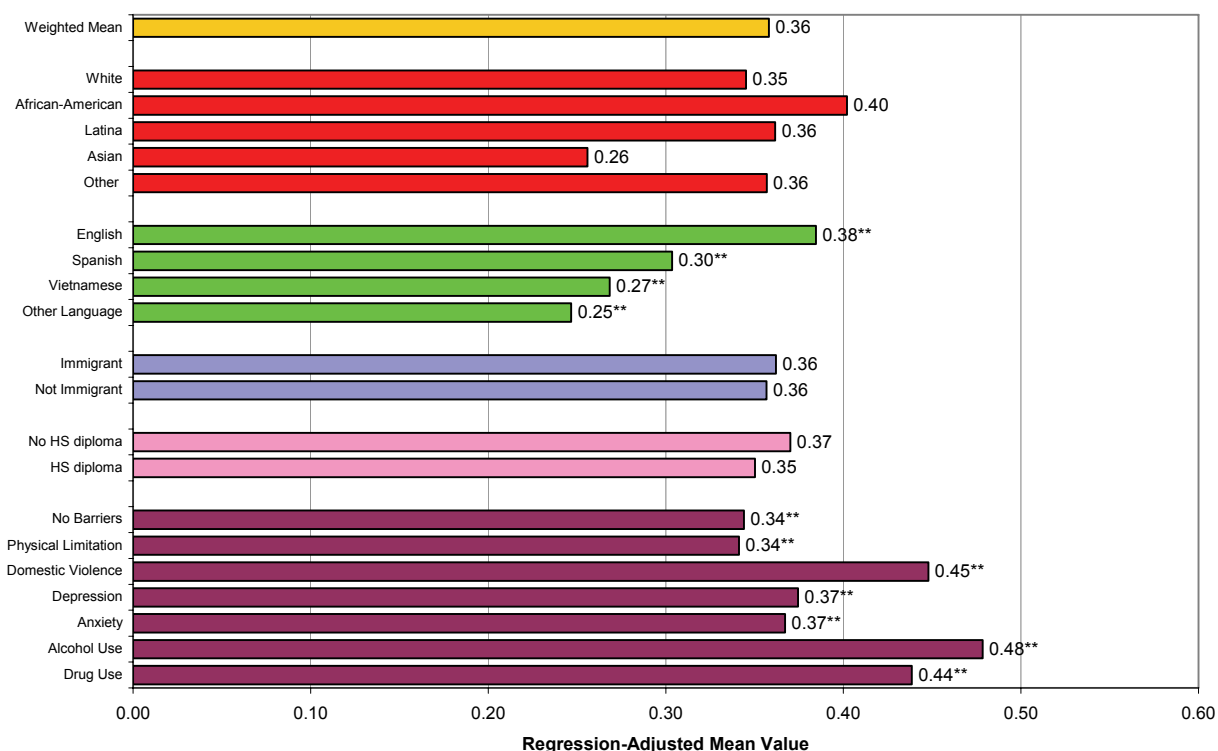
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<sup>80</sup> In the regression, respondents who reported they had considered banking months were coded with one point, and those who did not were coded with zero points.



**Exhibit 4.13**

**How Respondents' Consideration of Banking Months Varied by Individual Characteristics (0–1 Scale)  
Regression-Adjusted Means**



**Note:** Statistically significant differences within categories are shown as follows: \*\*\* $p < .01$ , \*\* $p < .05$ , \* $p < .10$

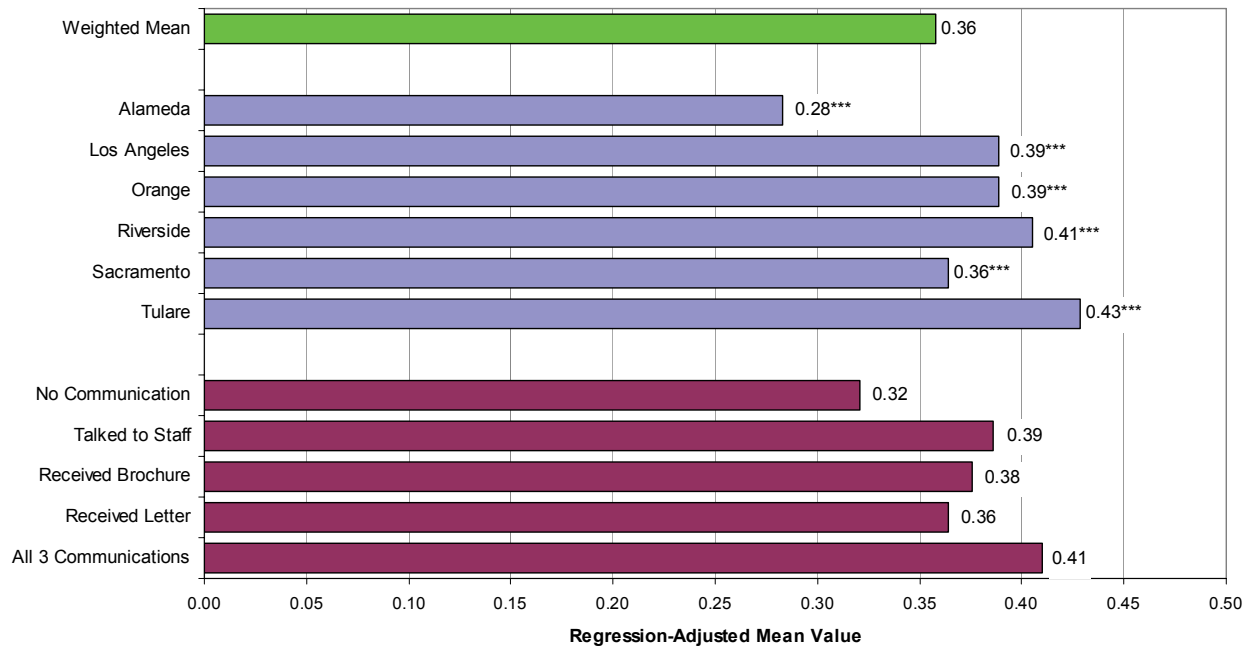
As shown in Exhibit 4.14, county of residence had a modest effect in determining who considered banking months of aid for the future. Holding the other factors in the model constant, respondents in Tulare (0.43), Riverside (0.41), Orange and Los Angeles (0.39 each), and Sacramento (0.36) were more likely to consider banking months than were respondents in Alameda (0.28).

County practices may help to explain these cross-county differences. In our first report, we found tremendous variation in the extent to which CalWORKs staff in the six focus counties encouraged recipients to bank months for the future.<sup>81</sup> Sixty-one percent of the CalWORKs staff in Tulare reported encouraging recipients with relatively low grants to bank months, followed by 58 percent of the staff in Orange, 47 percent in Riverside, 39 percent in Los Angeles, and 32 percent in Sacramento. Alameda staff were less likely to do so (25 percent). This pattern roughly corresponds to respondents' reported willingness to consider banking months, by county of residence.

<sup>81</sup> See Exhibit 3.2, p. 31 in: Crow, Sarah E. and Jacquelyn Anderson. 2006. *Working Against the Clock: The Implementation of Welfare Time Limits in California*. This report is available at WPRP's website: <http://wprp.ucop.edu/researchpublications2.asp>.

Finally, the form of county CalWORKs communication had a negligible effect on respondents' reported willingness to consider banking months: At the low end were those who reported no communication (0.32), followed by those who reported getting letters (0.36), brochures (0.38), and talking with staff (0.39). Those who reported all three forms of communication were only marginally more inclined to consider banking months (0.41).

**Exhibit 4.14**  
**How Respondents' Consideration of Banking Months Varied**  
**by County and by Communication Experiences (0–1 Scale)**  
**Regression-Adjusted Means**



**Note:** Statistically significant differences within are shown as follows: \*\*\*p<.01, \*\*p<.05, \*p<.10

## Summary

In the first wave of the survey of CalWORKs recipients nearing the sixty-month time limit in six focus counties, we collected a great deal of data, only a portion of which we discuss in this report. Among other things, we examined respondents' knowledge of relevant time-limit policies. Although most respondents had a good grasp of the fundamentals, there were clearly gaps in what they knew: First, most respondents knew there was a time limit; only 12 said they did not know. However, of those who knew about the time limit, 41 percent thought it applied to children as well as to their parents. That is, a sizable portion of recipients close to timing out did not know that otherwise eligible children can continue to receive some cash aid.

Second, 43 percent of respondents said they did not know how many months of cash aid were still available to them, a surprisingly high percentage for a group that was within six months of

timing out. Moreover, of the 57 percent who said they did know how much time on aid remained to them, nearly one in five (19 percent) overestimated their remaining time by four or more months. Thirteen percent were off by seven or more months.

Third, only 31 percent of respondents knew that there were some circumstances or situations that permit parents to exempt or extend their time on aid. Even the respondents who reported having conditions that might exempt or extend their own time on aid were not very knowledgeable about these policies. Of those who reported being sick or disabled, roughly one in three knew that such health problems might qualify recipients for CalWORKs benefits past sixty months. Of those who reported caring for sick or disabled family members or experiencing domestic violence, only one in five knew that these conditions might qualify recipients for time on aid past sixty months.

Fourth, respondents were not uniformly informed about the benefits and services for which they could retain eligibility after reaching the time limit: 70 percent were aware of their continued eligibility for Medi-Cal, but many fewer realized that they could retain child care subsidies (54 percent), food stamps (46 percent), or housing assistance (45 percent). They were more knowledgeable about the post-time-limit benefits for which their children would retain eligibility: 88 percent knew about Medi-Cal and 75 percent knew about food stamps.

Finally, certain groups of respondents were consistently less knowledgeable about key aspects of the CalWORKs time-limit policy—particularly those who did not have a high school diploma, immigrants, Asians, and foreign-language-speakers (especially those speaking languages other than Spanish or Vietnamese).

## 5. CONCLUSION

The 1996 Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (PRWORA) made sweeping changes to public assistance programs in the United States. Among other things, the Act replaced Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) with Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF), a program that limits federally funded benefits for poor families with children to a lifetime total of sixty months.

In 1997, to comply with the new federal law, the California legislature created the California Work Opportunities and Responsibilities to Kids (CalWORKs) program. Like TANF, CalWORKs limits cash assistance for poor, able-bodied parents to sixty months. However, California lawmakers opted to create an additional Safety Net program, so that otherwise eligible children can continue to receive their portion of the cash assistance grants after their parents reach the sixty-month time limit. Safety Net benefits are funded entirely with state dollars.

In this report, we focus on CalWORKs recipients on the cusp of reaching the sixty-month time limit—those who had accumulated fifty-four or more months of cash aid. We analyze data from the first wave of a two-wave telephone survey of 1,797 respondents, which we conducted between June 2004 and August 2005. We drew the sample from county administrative records in six focus counties that comprise over half of the CalWORKs caseload: Alameda, Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, Sacramento, and Tulare. We will re-interview these same recipients about one year later and will document their post-time-limit experiences in a subsequent report.

The first wave of the survey collected a great deal of information, including the demographic characteristics of families in which the adults were nearing the time limit. We also gathered information about adult respondents' understanding of relevant aspects of the time-limit policy, their activities in preparation for the time-limit-triggered grant reductions, their employment histories and employment characteristics, and any barriers to employment they reported. We asked about children's well being and any material hardships the families may have experienced.

In chapter 1, we provided an overview of the WPRP-commissioned time-limits study and this report, the second in a series.<sup>82</sup> In chapter 2, we described CalWORKs time-limit policies and caseload trends. In chapter 3, we described our survey and the characteristics of families in which the adults were nearing the sixty-month time limit. In chapter 4, we examined respondents' understanding of relevant time-limit policies, including how accurately they knew the number of months of aid that remained available to them. In this final chapter, we summarize five key findings that emerged from our analysis of recipients' first-wave survey responses.

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<sup>82</sup> The first report is: Crow, Sarah E. and Jacquelyn Anderson. 2006. *Working Against the Clock: The Implementation of Welfare Time Limits in California*. This report is available online at WPRP's website: <http://wprp.ucop.edu/researchpublications2.asp>.

## **The CalWORKs population nearing the time limit is ethnically and linguistically diverse.**

Nearly all of our analyses of the survey data demonstrated that, to understand the CalWORKs caseload, one must consider its ethnic and linguistic diversity. Differences in respondent and programmatic outcomes are shaped by tremendous variation across counties in the ethnicity and languages spoken by CalWORKs recipients. This diversity is important for a variety of reasons. Serving a population that speaks many different languages is a challenge for county offices, which strive to offer verbal and written communications in the primary languages of their non-English-speaking recipients. Beyond this practical concern of communicating effectively, language and cultural factors influence CalWORKs recipients' attitudes toward work, family size, and relationships. Language and culture may also affect recipients' grasp of—and response to—time-limit policies.

We found, for instance, that 29 percent of Tulare County's CalWORKs recipients nearing the time limit were English-speaking whites, but in Los Angeles and Alameda Counties, fewer than 8 percent were English-speaking whites. Spanish-speaking Latinos constituted between 14 percent and 18 percent of recipients nearing the time limit in Los Angeles, Orange, and Tulare Counties, but fewer than 4 percent in Alameda and Sacramento Counties. Twenty-seven percent of Orange County survey respondents were Vietnamese-speaking; the county with the second highest concentration of Vietnamese-speakers was Alameda, with 8 percent. As previous chapters make clear, ethnicity and language profoundly shape the experiences and needs of welfare recipients as they approach the time limit. Taking these differences into account is of central importance in documenting the effects of the sixty-month time limit on these vulnerable families' lives.

## **Recipients close to reaching the time limit focus on employment, but their earnings are low, and their job-related benefits are limited.**

Policymakers and CalWORKs staff emphasize that, for those who are able to work, employment is crucial to achieving self-sufficiency. CalWORKs recipients in the focus counties also viewed work as the logical alternative to welfare. When asked about any activities they were undertaking as they neared the time limit, 25 percent of the respondents reported they were looking for work, 23 percent were already working, 23 percent were attending school or training, 5 percent were taking other steps to prepare for or look for employment, and 5 percent were seeking better jobs. However, nearly 21 percent said they were doing “nothing” to prepare for reaching the time limit.<sup>83</sup> The respondents who reported “doing nothing” were also more likely than others to report having conditions that might qualify them for exemptions or extensions. Over time, we should be able to determine if they qualified for exemptions or extensions.

Nevertheless, employment approached the norm among the CalWORKs families in the sample, whether they were single-parent, married, or cohabiting households. The workforce connection we documented in the first wave of the recipient survey indicates that many CalWORKs parents will be able to obtain or maintain employment once they exhaust their sixty months of

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<sup>83</sup> These respondents stated “nothing” in their answers (not to be confused with respondents who did not respond to the question).

cash aid. Forty-two percent of single parents reported that they were working full time when we interviewed them or within the past year, 19 percent reported working part time, and 8 percent said their principal job was self-employment. Among married and cohabiting families, 82 percent reported at least one working spouse or partner. Forty percent of two-parent families reported one adult working full time and the other not working. Another 21 percent reported two parents working, at least one of whom worked full time. The remaining 20 percent reported more tenuous connections to the labor market, working either part time, or being self-employed.

Even with this reported level of employment, these families earned so little that they still qualified for CalWORKs cash benefits when we selected the survey sample and, in most cases, when we interviewed them.<sup>84</sup> Why might this be? If they had many children, their wages may have been insufficient to meet the demands of their larger households. Alternatively, they may have been working at very low wages, or working too few hours each week to accumulate sufficient income. They could have been employed seasonally or temporarily, barely maintaining or losing cash assistance in months they were working and receiving larger benefits in months they were not. It is also possible that adults intentionally decided to hold down earnings in order to retain their eligibility for CalWORKs and ancillary benefits, such as housing subsidies, with plans to increase work effort once they reach the time limit.<sup>85</sup>

Even those adults who reported working full time did not generally hold “good” jobs with benefits. Single parents reported that their primary jobs offered little more than a paycheck: Only 15 percent of the jobs offered paid vacation leave, 15 percent offered health insurance, and 11 percent offered sick leave. Among two-parent households, respondents reported that only 19 percent of their jobs offered vacation leave, 20 percent offered health insurance, and 16 percent offered sick leave.

### **Barriers to employment were pervasive among those approaching the time-limit, yet few recipients realized they might qualify for exemptions or extensions.**

In the survey, we asked CalWORKs recipients about seven conditions that make obtaining or keeping a job, attending school, or caring for children difficult: depression, anxiety, a stressful event (possibly signaling post-traumatic stress syndrome), alcohol use, drug use, domestic violence, and health limitations.<sup>86</sup> We found these so-called barriers to employment were

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<sup>84</sup> Eighty-nine percent of survey respondents reported receiving CalWORKs cash aid in the month preceding the interview. After we complete our analysis of county administrative data, we should be able to determine who was receiving CalWORKs when they were interviewed.

<sup>85</sup> The second wave of the recipient survey will allow us to examine sources of income in more detail. In a subsequent report, we will focus more specifically on survey respondents’ workforce participation and earnings and their total household incomes.

<sup>86</sup> We conducted abbreviated interviews that were simultaneously translated with respondents who speak foreign languages other than Spanish and Vietnamese. Because the simultaneous translations required additional time, we shortened the survey so that it took about the same amount of time as the full survey. Among the questions eliminated were those asking about anxiety, stress, and substance abuse, so “other foreign language” speakers are not included in the analysis of barriers to employment. The abbreviated survey included the entire section asking about time-limit knowledge and experience. Please see Appendix D for an approximation of the full survey instrument (skip patterns and repeated questions are not included here); sections that were not used in the abbreviated survey are highlighted. To view the complete survey instrument used in the first-wave interviews, please go to WPRP’s website: <http://wprp.ucop.edu/documents/bpacodebook.pdf>.

prevalent among the CalWORKs population nearing the time limit.<sup>87</sup> Just over half (51 percent) of the survey respondents reported one or more barriers, and 28 percent reported two or more. Adult recipients experiencing such chronic problems might seek to qualify for time-limit exemptions or extensions. However, we found that many recipients did not understand that these options were available to them, even when they reported circumstances that might qualify.

Mental health problems were the most commonly cited by CalWORKs recipients nearing the time limit: At the time we interviewed them or within the past year, 59 percent reported anxiety-related problems, and 50 percent reported depression.<sup>88</sup> About one-fifth of respondents reported that anxiety or depression interfered with work, school, or child rearing (both 21 percent). Nearly one-quarter of respondents (23 percent) reported stressful events that still interfered with their work, school, or home lives.<sup>89</sup>

Domestic violence was quite prevalent among this population, with 44 percent reporting domestic violence at the hands of a spouse or partner in their lifetimes, and 11 percent reporting such violence within the past year.

Health limitations were also problematic for respondents and their families. Nearly one-third of respondents (31 percent) reported health conditions that limited their ability to work. Six percent of respondents reported spouses with limiting conditions (19 percent among those married or cohabiting). In addition, 28 percent of all respondents reported that one or more of their children had chronic illnesses or disabilities (such as asthma, developmental delays, and hyperactivity), including conditions that limited the child's ability to function independently.<sup>90</sup>

Survey respondents typically underreport alcohol and drug use, which is likely to be the case here. Only 2 percent to 3 percent of respondents told us that problems with alcohol or drugs impaired their ability to work, attend school, or care for children.

We observed some differences across ethnic and language groups in the incidence of reported barriers to employment that may stem from cultural or linguistic differences rather than reflecting true differences in prevalence. Cultural norms may have influenced recipients' attitudes and responses to questions about these very personal issues. Equally, the Spanish and Vietnamese translations may not have fully captured some nuances in meaning, despite efforts to protect the integrity of the instrument through back-translation. White and "other race/ethnicity" English-speakers were more likely than other groups to report barriers to employment, while Asian respondents, including those interviewed in Vietnamese, were the least likely to report barriers. Indeed, just 1 percent of Vietnamese respondents reported domestic violence in the past year, compared to 11 percent for all respondents. It may be that

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<sup>87</sup> For more on barriers to employment, see WPRP's related study: Norris, Jean and Richard Speigman. 2005. *Assessing Barriers to Work Among CalWORKs Participants in San Joaquin County: Final Report*. This report is available online at WPRP's website: <http://wprp.ucop.edu/researchpublications2.asp>.

<sup>88</sup> These percentages are not the proportions who meet the full set of diagnostic criteria for depression or anxiety, but the percentages who affirmatively answered the first screening question for these two diagnostic scales. These screening questions have been validated for diagnostic purposes only in English and Spanish.

<sup>89</sup> For the purpose of this survey, these stressful events did not include divorce or childbirth.

<sup>90</sup> Because the health problems of family members would not necessarily limit the respondent's employment, they were not counted among the employment barriers.

Vietnamese families are less violent than the other families in our sample, or it may be that Vietnamese respondents are less likely to report family violence to interviewers.

These linguistic and ethnic differences help explain the cross-county variation we observed in the prevalence of reported barriers. For example, respondents in the predominantly English-speaking counties of Riverside and Alameda were much more likely to report two or more barriers (37 percent and 34 percent, respectively) than were residents of Los Angeles (19 percent), Orange (26), and Tulare (26) Counties, more of whom spoke Spanish or Vietnamese.

Regardless of ethnicity, barriers to employment were strongly associated with respondents' reported work effort. As expected, fewer barriers improved the odds of working; more barriers correlated to less work. This relationship was especially true for single-parent households: 78 percent of those reporting no barriers were employed, compared to 65 percent reporting one barrier, and 59 percent reporting two or more barriers. Even 59 percent is a relatively high employment rate for people reporting multiple obstacles to employment.

By contrast, employment rates among respondents in two-adult families did not vary greatly with reported barriers. Those respondents reporting one barrier were more likely to work (65 percent) than those reporting two or more barriers (60 percent) but they were also more likely to be employed than those reporting no barriers (63 percent). Respondents who reported no barriers were more likely to have spouses or partners who worked (46 percent) than those who reported one barrier (40 percent). We will explore this issue in greater detail in the second wave of the survey by considering how two-adult families combine household responsibilities and the extent to which spousal employment can provide family support when respondents are unable to work.

Given the prevalence of reported barriers to employment, adult recipients experiencing chronic problems *and* nearing the time limit might seek to qualify for exemptions or extensions to the time limit. Because county caseworkers may be unaware of these problems (prolonged bouts of depression, domestic violence, or caring for sick or disabled family members, for example), it is important that recipients know that such situations might warrant exemptions or extensions. To test their knowledge, we first asked respondents whether there were any circumstances that would permit parents to receive CalWORKs benefits after reaching the time limit. Overall, only 31 percent of respondents agreed that some situations might permit continued eligibility for cash aid, suggesting that over two-thirds of respondents were unaware of any possible reasons for exempting or extending time on aid.

We thought it possible that those who reported having any of the conditions that permit extra time on aid might be more knowledgeable about exemptions and extensions. To test this idea, we looked specifically at the responses provided by people reporting three of the potentially qualifying conditions: health problems or disabilities that interfered with employment, caring for sick or disabled family members, or suffering domestic violence.

Most of the respondents reporting these conditions were not aware that these situations might permit recipients to receive CalWORKs benefits after reaching the time limit. However, recipients reporting these conditions were somewhat more knowledgeable than other respondents. For example, of the 523 people who reported being sick or disabled, one-third knew that such circumstances might allow recipients to receive CalWORKs benefits after



reaching the time limit. By contrast, only 19 percent of the 1,274 respondents who did not report being sick or disabled understood this to be the case. Of the 169 who reported experiencing domestic violence, nearly 21 percent knew such a situation might qualify recipients for time on aid past sixty months, compared to 14 percent of the 1,628 respondents who did not report domestic violence.

**More than half of the CalWORKs families nearing the time limit have very young children, many of whom will qualify for state-funded Safety Net benefits.**

Much of the national discussion of welfare reform has focused on the characteristics of adults. However, in California, the characteristics of the children whose parents are nearing the time limit are also very important because some, perhaps most, of these children will enter the state-funded Safety Net program.

When parents time out, most of their children will retain eligibility for reduced Safety Net grants, at least initially. It is not possible to identify exactly who will qualify for such aid because the continued eligibility of the children depends on their parents' earnings, which may change once parents time out. Still, the characteristics of children whose parents were nearing the sixty-month time limit did at least provide some clues as to the future composition of the Safety Net program.

CalWORKs parents who were nearing the time limit in our six focus counties had an average of 2.6 children. Forty-six percent of survey respondents had three or more children under age 18 at home. Latino respondents, both English- and Spanish-speaking, had the largest families, while Asians, especially Vietnamese-speaking respondents, and whites were the least likely to have three or more children.

For 30 percent of our respondents, the youngest child in the household was under two years of age; for 26 percent of respondents, the youngest child was between three and five years of age. Hence, more than half the CalWORKs families with adults nearing the time limit in our six focus counties had children under the age of six. These very young children could remain in the Safety Net program for thirteen or more years if their parents do not earn enough to make their children ineligible for aid. English-speaking Latino parents were the most likely to have children age five or younger (69 percent), followed by English-speaking respondents of "other races/ethnicities" (60 percent), and African Americans (57 percent).

Taken together, these statistics suggest that the future Safety Net caseload may be predominantly Latino, although not necessarily Spanish-speaking. These tabulations point to a Safety Net caseload that may be less ethnically diverse than the CalWORKs caseload nearing the time limit in the six focus counties.

**Recipients' grasp of time-limit policies varies widely, but understanding improves when counties employ varied and frequent communications.**

We asked survey respondents a number of questions about the verbal and written information they received from county CalWORKs staff. We inquired about the timing and type of

information they received, and we also asked more specific questions about pertinent CalWORKs policies.

Some of the respondents said they did not recall receiving various communications, but in fact they may have received them. This kind of recall bias is fairly common when people are interviewed about past events. However, respondents who recalled receiving communications from their welfare offices were more knowledgeable about time-limit-related policies than those who could not recall such communications.

Nearly 89 percent of survey respondents were aware that a CalWORKs time limit exists. Of those, 88 percent knew that the time limit applies to parents. Fewer (53 percent) knew that the time limit does not apply to children. Three-fifths of respondents (61 percent) correctly identified the duration of CalWORKs cash aid as sixty months. Fewer respondents (57 percent) were knowledgeable about the number of months of aid remaining to them. That 43 percent professed not to know is worrisome for a group so close to timing out. Among those who reported knowing, however, the degree of knowledge was quite good; 29 percent underestimated the amount of time remaining to them (that is, they had more months available than they thought); 37 percent of respondents matched administrative records within one month; and another 16 percent were within two to three months.

To examine whether different subgroups of CalWORKs recipients varied in their grasp of key time-limit policies, we constructed three measures of time-limit understanding: (1) an index that counted the number of correct answers to five time-limit policy questions; (2) an index that measured the accuracy of recipients' knowledge of the number of months of CalWORKs aid remaining to them; and (3) a variable that indicated whether respondents had considered banking months for the future—a strategy that signifies a fairly sophisticated grasp of time-limit policies. We conducted a regression analysis to examine how respondent subgroups differed in their understanding. This analytic approach permits a test of the association of a single characteristic (such as immigrant status) with knowledge of time-limit policies while controlling for other influential characteristics (such as ethnicity, language, education, county of residence). The results reinforce several of the findings we discuss in this chapter.

Knowledge about the time limit varied considerably across race/ethnicity and language groups. In general, Asian respondents and those who spoke languages other than English, Spanish, and Vietnamese knew less about time-limit policies, were less likely to be accurate about their remaining months of aid, and were less likely to consider banking months for the future. Controlling for these and other characteristics, immigrants and those without high school diplomas were among the least knowledgeable about general time-limit policies.

On the whole, individuals reporting various barriers to employment were not very knowledgeable about how their conditions might warrant exemptions or extensions. However, people with certain barriers appeared savvier about general time-limit policies. In particular, respondents who reported physical limitations, recent domestic violence, or depression severe enough to interfere with obligations at work, school, or at home were more knowledgeable than average respondents and far more knowledgeable than those who reported no barriers to employment. In the same vein, those who reported physical limitations, domestic violence, or mental illness (anxiety, depression, stressful events) were more likely to know the number of CalWORKs months remaining to them. Those who reported domestic violence, or drugs or

alcohol use severe enough to interfere with their daily lives were more likely to consider banking months for the future.

County of residence also played a role, although the differing demographic characteristics of county CalWORKs populations nearing the sixty-month time limit may account for much of the cross-county variation we observed. For example, in the raw data, Alameda County respondents seemed to better understand general time-limit policies. However, this degree of understanding could be attributed to the demographic characteristics (including ethnicity and language) of Alameda County recipients. Once these factors were adjusted for statistically, Los Angeles and Orange County respondents emerged as more knowledgeable than respondents in the other four focus counties.

Finally, we examined how the nature of county CalWORKs communications affected respondents' knowledge of time-limit policies. We asked respondents about verbal discussions with county staff and about written materials (letters or brochures) they may have received. As one might expect, communications mattered quite a bit. Controlling for the other characteristics, we found that verbal communication with county staff was the single most important form of communication in helping respondents grasp relevant policies. That said, respondents who reported receiving all three types of communication (letters, brochures, and discussions with county staff) were the most knowledgeable.

Because respondents who remembered receiving communications knew more about relevant time-limit policies and their remaining time on aid, we conclude that county CalWORKs staff should strive to provide recipients with frequent and varied forms of communication about the most important features of the CalWORKs time limit. Providing such communication in the native languages of non-English-speakers is extremely important. In addition, communications should be pitched at an appropriate level of understanding, given that 40 percent of CalWORKs recipients nearing the time limit in the six focus counties had neither completed high school nor earned a GED, and 25 percent of foreign-language-speakers had not completed even eight years of schooling in their native countries.

## **Future Survey Data Analyses**

We will re-interview survey respondents to determine if they have exhausted their sixty months of CalWORKs cash aid and, if they have not, to find out why they received exemptions or extensions. If they have indeed used sixty countable months of cash assistance and had their grants reduced or terminated, we will assess how they are managing.

We will concentrate on measures of family well-being, including employment and earnings, material hardship, health insurance coverage, and reported barriers to employment. We will continue to pay particular attention to how these measures vary by ethnicity and language spoken. The second wave of the survey includes many of the same questions asked in the first wave, so we should be able to make direct comparisons over time.

## **Appendix A**

### **Survey Methodology**

This report relies on data from a survey of 1,797 respondents receiving CalWORKs cash aid in six focus counties (Alameda, Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, Sacramento and Tulare). At the time they were sampled from administrative records, these adults were expected to reach the CalWORKs sixty-month time limit within six months of the date of the projected interview.

The overall response to the survey was 60.6 percent. In other words, interviewers reached and interviewed nearly 61 percent of those selected for interview. This is our survey sample.

#### **Survey Sample**

We intentionally selected survey respondents who were expected to time out between October 2004 and October 2005. We selected them from county administrative records in each of the six counties on the basis of case type—sampling from two-parent and “all other” (i.e., one-parent) cases—and on the basis of their CalWORKs “clocks,” the county-constructed data element that identifies the number of aided months that count toward the time limit. The clock variable corresponds roughly to total months of CalWORKs receipt, modified to exempt months for reasons specified in state law (for example, months in which the adult was disabled or caring for an ill or disabled family member, or months in which CalWORKs payments were offset by court-ordered child support payments). When these adjustments occur retroactively, recipients’ time-limit clocks move backwards—that is, recipients gain additional time in which to receive CalWORKs cash benefits. We relied on the clock variables as they stood at the point when we selected the samples, although we knew that counties regularly made retroactive adjustments as recipients drew close to reaching their time limits.

The average elapsed time between when we sampled respondents and when we interviewed them was 4.5 months. During these months, the Survey Research Center (SRC) sent contact letters, traced potential respondents (the process by which respondents are located), and sent and received the red and green cards used in Los Angeles County (to confirm recipients’ willingness to participate voluntarily in the survey).

During these interim months, counties also continued to make retroactive adjustments to the clocks of recipients approaching the time limit, exempting aided months offset by court-ordered child support payments and for other reasons. Hence, at the time of the survey, as shown in Appendix Exhibit A.1, some respondents were no longer within six months of the time limit, even though initially they seemed to be: 7 percent of the respondents had accumulated less than fifty months toward the time limit and 9 percent had accumulated fifty to fifty-three months. The remaining 84 percent of respondents’ clocks still showed at least fifty-four countable months, with the majority in the fifty-five to fifty-seven month range. The “true” clock values are inferred from the most recent county data available for the sample. It is not clear when the county clocks were adjusted; possibly the adjustments were made very close

to the sixty-month deadline, and possibly earlier than that. County staff might have made further adjustments after the distribution in Appendix Exhibit A.1 was calculated.

From a research standpoint, the chief drawback to this deviation from our intended sampling plan is that some of the families we had expected to have reached the time limit by their Wave-2 interviews will not have done so. We decided not to exclude any of these cases from the analyses in this report because we do not know when their clocks were rolled back. Quite possibly, the roll-back occurred when the clocks appeared to be close to sixty months, in which case these individuals were appropriately included as part of the sample close to the time limit. However, it is also possible that the roll-back occurred soon after the sample was initially selected, when the clocks were still far from sixty, in which case they would not belong in the sample.

**Appendix Exhibit A.1**  
**Survey Respondents' Months Accumulated at the Time of the Survey**

Months Accumulated (After Exemptions/Extensions)	Percent
Less than 50	6.5
51-53	8.9
54	11.0
55	18.3
56	19.2
57	12.0
58	7.3
59	6.6
60	8.2
Missing data	2.3

We sampled in batches; each batch was drawn from the CalWORKs caseload in a specific month in a specific county. Appendix Exhibit A.2 shows when we drew batches and when we expected these batches to time out.

**Appendix Exhibit A.2**  
**Selection Criteria for Batches and Clocks**

<b>County and Batch</b>	<b>Caseload month for sampling</b>	<b>Selection Criteria: In month XX respondent will have clock YY</b>	<b>Clocks in sampling month</b>
Alameda, B-1	April 2004	XX = June 2004, YY = 54–56	52–54
Alameda, B-2	July 2004	XX = Sept 2004, YY = 54–56	52–54
Los Angeles, B-1	April 2004	XX = Sept 2004, YY = 54–56	49–51
Los Angeles, B-2	Sept. 2004	XX = Jan 2004, YY = 54–55	50–51
Orange, B-1	April 2004	XX = June 2004, YY = 54–56	52–54
Orange, B-2	July 2004	XX = Sept 2004, YY = 54–56	52–54
Orange, B-3	Jan. 2005	XX = Mar 2005, YY = 54–57	52–55
Riverside, B-1	April 2004	XX = June 2004, YY = 54–56	52–54
Riverside, B-2	July 2004	XX = Sept 2004, YY = 54–56	52–54
Riverside, B-3	Feb. 2005	XX = Mar 2005, YY = 54–55	53–54
Sacramento, B-1	April 2004	XX = June 2004, YY = 54–56	52–54
Sacramento, B-2	July 2004	XX = Sept 2004, YY = 54–56	52–54
Tulare, B-1	April 2004	XX = June 2004, YY = 54–56	52–54
Tulare, B-2	July 2004	XX = Sept 2004, YY = 54–56	52–54
Tulare, B-3	January 2005	XX = Mar 2005, YY = 54–57	52–55

In order that survey data adequately reflect the experiences of diverse ethnic and language groups, we conducted the full telephone survey in English, Spanish, and Vietnamese. We interviewed all other language groups using a simultaneous-translation service and an abbreviated survey instrument. Because the simultaneous translation requires more time, we shortened the survey so that the duration of the interviews with respondents who spoke languages other than English, Spanish, or Vietnamese was roughly the same as the full interview. See Appendix D for the questions asked in the survey. The complete survey instrument including full skip patterns, the responses for each question, and distributions of responses, is available at WPRP’s website:

<http://wprp.ucop.edu/documents/bpocodebook30oct2006.pdf>.

To better reflect this linguistic and ethnic diversity, as well as the differences between one- and two-parent families, our interviewees were not a simple random sample of all near-leavers in a county. Rather, we selected interviewees to provide adequate representation of less-frequent as well as more-frequent kinds of cases. We defined the sampling groups (known in sampling parlance as strata) along two dimensions, each with two levels. One dimension was whether the case was a one- or two-parent case. The other dimension was intended to over-represent numerically small ethnic and linguistic groups: Cases in which the adult respondents were English-speaking, Spanish-speaking or of Hispanic ethnicity were selected at a lower rate than were cases in which the adult respondents were Vietnamese, or spoke any language other than English, Spanish, or Vietnamese. From each of these strata we selected a pre-defined fraction—the sampling rate—to interview. In addition, so that we would not expend disproportionate resources in Los Angeles County (due to that county’s large population), we sampled smaller proportions of the Los Angeles County caseload than we did in the other five focus counties. Appendix Exhibit A.3 shows the sampling rates.

## Weighting

Weights help render the survey sample in each focus county generalizable to all cases nearing the sixty-month time limit in that county. Two weights were constructed: the *monthly weight* and the *equal-probability weight*. Both weights adjust in identical ways for the deliberate over-representation of certain strata relative to others (shown in Appendix Exhibit A.3), for the percent of each stratum successfully interviewed, and for cross-county differences in the number of caseload months that provided cases to be interviewed (six sampled months from Alameda and Sacramento Counties, five from Los Angeles County, eight from Riverside County, and ten from Orange and Tulare Counties). Whether the monthly or equal-probability weight is used, the results shown in the columns for an individual county can be generalized to the county’s sampling frame: all cases which were, at the time the sample was drawn, receiving CalWORKs cash aid in that county and were expected to reach the CalWORKs sixty-month time limit within six months of the projected date of our interview.

**Appendix Exhibit A.3  
Sampling Rates**

County and Batch	Percent of each batch sampled:		
	1 parent, English/Spanish	1 parent, Vietnamese/Other	Two-parent, all languages
Alameda, B-1 and B-2	75	100	100
Los Angeles, B-1, B-2*	10	50% (to 100%)*	50
Orange, B-1, B-2, B-3	75	100	100
Riverside, B-1, B-2, B-3	75	100	100
Sacramento, B-1, B-2	75	100	100
Tulare, B-1, B-2, B-3	75	100	100

\*The sampling rate for “other language” one-parent cases in Los Angeles was raised from 50% to 100% in January 2005.

The two weights diverge only in how they affect the values reported in the “Total” columns. The *monthly weight* averages across the six focus counties so that the large counties comprise their proportionate (large) share of the average, and the small counties comprise their proportionate (small) share of the average. In contrast, the *equal-probability weight* calculates a simple average of the values for each of the focus counties so that each county contributes equally to the “Total.” For any variable, the value calculated for the smallest of our focus counties (Orange) has as much influence on the average as the value calculated for the largest county (Los Angeles). All the survey tabulations in this report use the equal-probability weight except for Appendix Exhibit B.1.

## **Conducting the Interviews: Contacting Respondents, Languages and Interview Length**

We interviewed one adult per case, and we instructed interviewers to interview a woman if available. Almost all interviews occurred by telephone using Computer-Assisted Telephone Interviewing (CATI). Interviewers conducted the full survey in English, Spanish, and Vietnamese, using bilingual interviewers when appropriate. Respondents interviewed in those languages were all given the same set of survey questions, which had been translated and back-translated to ensure validity of the questions.

Speakers of languages other than English, Spanish, or Vietnamese were interviewed using a simultaneous-translation service.<sup>91</sup> The service provides over-the-phone interpretation from English into more than 150 languages. The simultaneous translation requires more time, so we shortened the survey instrument in order to keep the length of the survey in these other languages about the same as the full interview in English, Spanish, or Vietnamese. In the end, 157 respondents (8.7 percent of the survey sample) completed the abbreviated instrument; languages included (in order of prevalence): Armenian, Russian, Cantonese, Cambodian, Farsi, Hmong, Laotian, Mien, Arabic, and other languages. Two-thirds of the abbreviated interviews were with two-parent households, and they constituted nearly one-quarter (22.7 percent) of all the two-parent interviews in the sample. In contrast, only 4 percent of the single-parent households required an abbreviated interview.

Following pre-testing in March and April of 2004, we began interviewing June 14, 2004. The data we analyzed for this report came from the surveys we conducted through August 31, 2005. Respondents received a detailed informational letter prior to the start of interviewing. In the letter, we provided information on how respondents could call in to volunteer for the survey. We also included a postcard that we asked respondents to fill out with their telephone numbers and send back to us. In Los Angeles, we included two postcards: to opt out of the survey, a respondent could return a red card, while to indicate explicitly she wanted to participate, she could return a green card. Respondents who did not return any card were included in the survey sample that we attempted to interview.<sup>92</sup>

The SRC staff employed various strategies to find telephone numbers for those who could not be reached at the telephone numbers provided in the counties' administrative data: directory assistance, Haines Reverse Directory, DMV records, Trans-Union credit report services, and further investigation into county data files with the help of county staff.

In an attempt to boost response rates, the SRC conducted an in-person field effort to reach respondents whom we had been unable to contact after repeated telephone calls. We randomly assigned a certain percentage of such cases in Alameda, Sacramento, and Riverside Counties to be "off-loaded" to the in-person field effort. The interview procedure and instrument used were identical to the telephone-based CATI version. Interviewers attempted to contact the

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<sup>91</sup>Language Line Services, based in Monterey, California, provided the translations. The service is available twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week, and no appointment is necessary.

<sup>92</sup> Among the potential respondents whose letters were not returned by the post office in Los Angeles County as undeliverable (3.5 percent), 8 percent returned the red cards indicating they did not want to participate in the survey.



respondents at the home/residential addresses we had on record and, where they succeeded in conducting interviews, entered the responses onto a pre-programmed laptop computer. The interviewers visited the homes of these hard-to-reach cases three to five times over the course of five to seven days—ideally attempting to reach the respondents during the hours of 3:00 pm to 8:00 pm Saturday to Thursday. If a respondent was not home or unavailable at the time of the initial visit, the interviewer left a card with UCB/SRC contact information. To maintain confidentiality, we did not leave information regarding the survey per se, but we did mention that we were following up on letters sent earlier to the respondent's address.

Because of the high costs of this in-person effort and its low yield in numbers of completed interviews, we ended this effort in April 2005 in Alameda and Sacramento Counties, and earlier in Riverside, where we were unable to locate any respondents for in-person interviews. In all, interviewers conducted fifty-two interviews in person and 1,745 by telephone.

### **Incentives to Participate in the Survey**

We offered respondents various financial incentives to participate. In the locator letter initially sent to all prospective respondents, we informed each that, upon completion of the interview, he or she would receive a check for \$30. In March 2005, we sent letters via Federal Express to respondents not yet interviewed, but still eligible to be interviewed (i.e., they had not yet timed out), offering increased incentives. These letters also established whether the Federal Express delivery persons could find respondents at the addresses we had for them. Each letter contained a \$10 bill and offered \$50 for completing the interview. Finally, we sent a letter to those who had not responded to the first two letters or repeated phone calls, informing them that we had increased the incentive to \$100. A substantial number of additional interviews were completed in response to this \$100 incentive.

Midway through the interview effort, we changed the incentives for Los Angeles participants from checks to gift cards for a local store.

In addition to these financial incentives, in December 2004, everyone in the sample received a gift refrigerator magnet showing the SRC phone number and reminding recipients that we valued their participation in the survey.

## **Appendix B**

### **Survey Validity and Generalizability**

There are two types of validity we examine in this Appendix in order to demonstrate that the survey data are reliable. The first seeks to ensure that the survey describes the groups of CalWORKs recipients it intended to reach. The second is concerned with generalizing beyond the survey sample to a broader population of CalWORKs recipients. We discuss both types of validity below.

Given the diversity of county CalWORKs operations in California (all operating within the broad guidelines of the state program), a third important question is how typical and how generalizable are the CalWORKs programs in the focus counties. Our first report, *Working Against the Clock: The Implementation of Welfare Time Limits in California*, addressed this topic to some degree and we will revisit it in future reports. In this report we provide most findings separately for each county studied, which may help highlight some commonalities across the counties. This Appendix, however, provides no formal assessment of the typicality or uniqueness of the CalWORKs programs in the focus counties, but rather focuses on recipient characteristics.

The data we analyze here are drawn from the interview responses of the 61 percent of those we selected for the survey sample who responded. Our analysis provides information about CalWORKs recipients who are within six months of the time limit in the six focus counties. Weights make the survey sample comparable to this target group or population, which is known technically as a sampling frame.<sup>93</sup> Appendix Exhibit B.1 compares the weighted survey sample, shown on the left, to the target population or sampling frame, shown on the right. This report compares samples on characteristics reported in the June 2004 administrative (MEDS) data file; these characteristics did not necessarily apply at the point of sampling or interviewing.<sup>94</sup>

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<sup>93</sup> We conducted interviews from June 2004 through August 2005; cases in our sample were expected to reach the sixty-month time limit between October 2004 and October 2005. Appendix A provides more details of the sampling frame, the sampling process, and data collection methods, while Exhibit 3.1 in Chapter 3 provides more detail on survey response rates for various groups.

<sup>94</sup> For example, although the survey respondents were all enrolled in CalWORKs when they were selected for interview (which happened between April 2004 and February 2005), in June 2004, 8 percent of them (weighted) were not in CalWORKs.

**Appendix Exhibit B.1**  
**Survey Respondents Compared to CalWORKs Recipients Near Timing Out**  
**(the Sampling Frame) in the Focus Counties)**

	June 2004 MEDS	
	Survey Respondents in Focus Counties %	Adults Near Timing Out in Focus Counties (% of Sampling Frame)
<b>County</b>		
Alameda	6.2	6.3
Los Angeles	70.7	70.5
Orange	3.1	3.1
Riverside	4.7	4.7
Sacramento	11.2	11.2
Tulare	4.1	4.1
<b>Case Type</b>		
One Parent/All Other Families	77.0	76.5
Two Parent	15.1	15.2
Not on CalWORKs in June 2004	8.0	8.4
<b>Case Type, excluding those off aid in June 2004</b>		
One Parent/All Other Families	83.7	83.5
Two Parent	16.4	16.5
<b>Race/Ethnicity</b>		
White	17.7	18.9
African American	38.7	37.6
Latino	33.2	33.3
Vietnamese	4.1	4.1
Other Southeast Asian	2.0	2.0
Other Asian	2.7	2.3
Other	1.6	1.8
<b>Race/Ethnicity and Language</b>		
White, English-Speaking	11.5	12.3
White, Non-English-Speaking	6.2	6.5
African American, English-Speaking	38.7	37.6
Latino, English-Speaking	21.3	22.7
Latino, Spanish (Non-English) Speaking	11.9	10.7
Asian, English-Speaking	2.1	2.1

Appendix Exhibit B.1 (continued)

	June 2004 MEDS	
	Survey Respondents in Focus Counties %	Adults Near Timing Out in Focus Counties (% of Sampling Frame)
Asian, Vietnamese-Speaking	3.7	3.6
Asian, Other Southeast-Asian-Speaking	1.7	1.5
Asian, Other Language	1.3	1.4
Other, English-Speaking	1.5	1.6
Other, Non-English-Speaking	0.1	0.2
Age		
Under 18	0.0	0.0
18–24	12.3	12.5
25–34	39.7	42.0
35–44	31.3	31.5
45 or Older	16.7	14.0
Number of Children in the Assistance Unit		
1	34.9	32.9
2	28.8	31.9
3 or more	36.3	35.2
Age of Youngest Child		
0–2	26.7	27.6
3–5	25.1	24.0
6–12	34.9	34.6
13 or older	13.4	13.8
Number of Quarters Employed Between July 1999 and June 2004		
No work at all	24.0	25.4
1–4 quarters	19.9	18.3
5–8 quarters	19.2	17.6
9–12 quarters	14.2	14.5
13–16 quarters	12.0	12.7
17–19 quarters	8.0	7.6
20 quarters	2.8	4.0
Number of Observations	1,797	6,925

**Note:** Survey cases are weighted up to the sampling frame using the monthly weight.

We find that when weighted appropriately, the survey sample matches the characteristics of the sampling frame closely. This indicates that the weights reliably adjust the distribution of survey respondents so that the sample, when weighted, resembles the population from which it was drawn, including non-respondents. If non-respondents were very different from respondents—perhaps less willing to participate in the labor market, for example, or burdened with the care of much larger families—then the weighted survey data would differ markedly from the sampling frame. Inspection of Appendix Exhibit B.1 shows this concern to be unwarranted.<sup>95</sup>

It is also useful to know how the survey respondents compare to the statewide population of families on the cusp of timing out. Appendix Exhibit B.2 provides this comparison; it describes the survey sample and recipients statewide who had accumulated between fifty-one and fifty-six months of aid as of June 2004.<sup>96</sup> The first panel shows the distribution across counties: in June 2004, all of the survey respondents resided in the six focus counties (left column), while 41 percent of all recipients close to timing out statewide lived in counties other than the focus counties (right column). These differences in county of residence, which of course arose from the design of the survey, led to quite pronounced racial/ethnic differences between the survey sample and their counterparts statewide. The focus counties were selected in part to provide insight into the experiences of non-English-speakers, so the study sample had more speakers of languages other than English (25 percent compared to 16 percent statewide) and fewer English-speaking Whites and Latinos (33 percent compared to 50 percent). It also had more African Americans (39 percent compared to 30 percent statewide).<sup>97</sup>

Associated with this variation in ethnic makeup of the two samples, we see that the survey sample had more two-parent families than the comparable statewide group.

In other respects, the survey sample closely resembled those near to timing out statewide. Of those on CalWORKs, the large majority (84 percent of the survey sample and 87 percent of the statewide sample) were one-parent cases.<sup>98</sup> About three-fourths of both groups had had some UI-recorded employment (76 percent in the survey sample compared to 72 percent statewide), and essentially identical fractions with 13 or more consecutive quarters of employment (23 percent compared to 22 percent statewide). Families in the study sample had fewer children than the comparable group statewide, but the differences are quite modest (36 percent had three or more children, compared to 40 percent statewide).

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<sup>95</sup> The characteristics to focus on for this type of validity check should be ones *not* used to build the weights: number of children, age of youngest child, quarters of UI-covered employment, current CalWORKs enrollment, and months of CalWORKs receipt.

<sup>96</sup> All months of aid for a case in which at least one aided adult was on the case are included in this calculation.

<sup>97</sup> As in Appendix Exhibit B.1, 8 percent of the survey sample was not on CalWORKs in June 2004 but the entire comparable statewide sample was. See the discussion of this point above, for Appendix Exhibit B.1.

<sup>98</sup> Exhibit B.2 reports that 77 percent of the survey sample were one-parent cases in June 2004. However, at that time 8 percent of the sample were no longer enrolled in CalWORKs, so the 77 percent represents a larger portion (83 percent) of the 92 percent who were still receiving CalWORKs cash benefits.

**Appendix Exhibit B.2**

**Survey Respondents in Focus Counties Compared to CalWORKs Adults Near to Timing Out Statewide**

	June 2004 MEDS	
	Survey Respondents in Focus Counties (%)	Adults Near to Timing Out Statewide (%)
<b>County</b>		
Alameda	6.2	3.6
Los Angeles	70.7	40.5
Orange	3.1	2.3
Riverside	4.7	4.0
Sacramento	11.2	6.5
Tulare	4.1	2.2
Non-study counties	0.0	40.9
<b>Case Type</b>		
One Parent/All Other Families	77.0	86.7
Two Parent	15.1	13.4
Not on CalWORKs in June 2004	8.0	0.0
<b>Case Type, excluding those off aid in June 2004</b>		
One Parent/All Other Families	83.7	86.7
Two Parent	16.4	13.4
<b>Race/Ethnicity</b>		
White	17.7	23.6
African American	38.7	30.3
Latino	33.2	38.8
Vietnamese	4.1	1.9
Other Southeast Asian	2.0	1.8
Other Asian	2.7	1.7
Other	1.6	1.8
<b>Race/Ethnicity and Language</b>		
White, English Speaking	11.5	21.1
White, Non-English-Speaking	6.2	2.5
African American, English-Speaking	38.7	30.3
Latino, English-Speaking	21.3	28.7
Latino, Spanish (Non-English) Speaking	11.9	10.1
Asian, English-Speaking	2.1	2.2
Asian, Vietnamese-Speaking	3.7	1.6
Asian, Other Southeast-Asian-Speaking	1.7	1.1

**Appendix Exhibit B.2 (continued)**

	<b>June 2004 MEDS</b>	
	<b>Survey Respondents in Focus Counties (%)</b>	<b>Adults Near to Timing Out Statewide (%)</b>
Asian, Other Language	1.3	0.5
Other, English Speaking	1.5	1.6
Other, Non-English-Speaking	0.1	0.2
<b>Age</b>		
Under 18	0.0	0.0
18–24	12.3	13.0
25–34	39.7	42.8
35–44	31.3	31.9
45 or Older	16.7	12.3
<b>Number of Children in the Assistance Unit</b>		
1	34.9	29.9
2	28.8	30.6
3 or more	36.3	39.6
<b>Age of Youngest Child</b>		
0–2	26.7	28.8
3–5	25.1	25.0
6–12	34.9	34.2
13 or older	13.4	12.1
<b>Number of Quarters Employed Between July 1999 and June 2004</b>		
No work at all	24.0	28.3
1–4 quarters	19.9	18.6
5–8 quarters	19.2	16.2
9–12 quarters	14.2	14.6
13–16 quarters	12.0	12.8
17–19 quarters	8.0	6.9
20 quarters	2.8	2.7
<b>Number of Observations</b>	<b>1,797</b>	<b>14,651</b>

**Notes:**

- (1) Survey cases are weighted up to the sampling frame using the monthly weight.
- (2) Adults near to timing out had accumulated 51–56 months of aid in June 2004.

It is also interesting to compare those on the cusp of timing out in the focus counties (the entire sampling frame) with the populations in the focus counties' entire CalWORKs caseloads (aside from the child-only cases). Los Angeles County appears to have more than its proportionate share of those near to timing out, and Orange and Riverside Counties fewer. Put differently, Orange and Riverside Counties have a smaller fraction of their caseloads near timing out. There are also demographic differences. As one would expect, the typical CalWORKs recipient is younger than those close to timing out: 31 percent of the adults in the full caseload are under age 25, compared to only 13 percent of the sample approaching sixty months on aid. The younger mothers in the full caseload are more likely to have only one child (44 percent) compared to the somewhat older mothers in the near-timing-out sample (33 percent). By the same token, the younger mothers in the full caseload had younger children (39 percent with the youngest child under age 2) compared to the mothers close to timing out (28 percent with the youngest child under 2).

Perhaps because they are younger and have younger children, a smaller portion of the adults in the focus counties' full caseloads had UI-covered employment than did the adults in the sample cases close to timing out. Only 17 percent of the adults in the full caseload had at least thirteen consecutive UI-employment quarters in the preceding five years, compared with 24 percent of the older adults in the study sample. Ethnic differences may also correlate with the age differences: In our six counties, African Americans were more heavily represented among those near to timing out than they were among the full caseload (38 percent compared to 29 percent) and Latinos were less heavily represented (33 percent versus 41 percent). Vietnamese-speaking adults were over-represented among those close to timing out (4 percent) compared with the full caseload (3 percent).



**Appendix Exhibit B.3**

**Adults Near to Timing Out Compared to All CalWORKs Cases (Except Child-Only), in the Focus Counties**

	June 2004 MEDS	
	Adults Near to Timing Out in Focus Counties (Sampling Frame) %	All CalWORKs Cases (Except Child-Only) in the Focus Counties %
<b>County</b>		
Alameda	6.3	8.6
Los Angeles	70.5	61.1
Orange	3.1	6.2
Riverside	4.7	8.1
Sacramento	11.2	11.6
Tulare	4.1	4.4
<b>Case Type</b>		
One Parent/All Other Families	76.5	85.5
Two Parent	15.2	14.5
Not on CalWORKs in June 2004	8.4	
<b>Case Type, excluding those off aid in June 2004</b>		
One Parent/All Other Families	83.5	85.5
Two Parent	16.5	14.5
<b>Race/Ethnicity</b>		
White	18.9	20.7
African American	37.6	29.0
Latino	33.3	40.8
Vietnamese	4.1	2.7
Other Southeast Asian	2.0	2.2
Other Asian	2.3	2.6
Other	1.8	2.0
<b>Race/Ethnicity and Language</b>		
White, English Speaking	12.3	16.8
White, Non-English-Speaking	6.5	4.0
African American, English-Speaking	37.6	29.0
Latino, English-Speaking	22.7	27.0
Latino, Spanish (Non-English) Speaking	10.7	13.8
Asian, English-Speaking	2.1	3.0

**Appendix Exhibit B.3 (continued)**

	June 2004 MEDS	
	Adults Near to Timing Out in Focus Counties (Sampling Frame) %	All CalWORKs Cases (Except Child-Only) in the Focus Counties %
Asian, Vietnamese-Speaking	3.6	2.1
Asian, Other Southeast-Asian-Speaking	1.5	1.3
Asian, Other Language	1.4	1.0
Other, English-Speaking	1.6	1.7
Other, Non-English-Speaking	0.2	0.3
<b>Age</b>		
Under 18	0.0	6.2
18–24	12.5	24.3
25–34	42.0	31.8
35–44	31.5	25.3
45 or Older	14.0	12.5
<b>Number of Children in the Assistance Unit</b>		
1	32.9	43.7
2	31.9	29.2
3 or more	35.2	27.1
<b>Age of Youngest Child</b>		
0–2	27.6	38.6
3–5	24.0	21.3
6–12	34.6	28.0
13 or older	13.8	12.1
<b>Number of Quarters Employed</b>		
<b>Between July 1999 and June 2004</b>		
No work at all	25.4	36.5
1–4 quarters	18.3	20.2
5–8 quarters	17.6	15.8
9–12 quarters	14.5	10.9
13–16 quarters	12.7	9.2
17–19 quarters	7.6	5.3
20 quarters	4.0	2.2
Number of Observations	6,925	150,696

In sum, the comparisons we provide in this appendix should reassure those seeking to generalize beyond the sample we surveyed for this study to all recipients close to timing out in the six focus counties, and statewide. Not only did the properly weighted survey sample describe very well the entire set of those nearing the sixty-month time limit in the six focus

counties, but it also corresponded quite well to those nearing the time limit statewide. The largest differences were in ethnicity and language: Compared to those adults nearing the sixty-month time limit statewide (Appendix Exhibit B.2), the study sample had more African Americans, more speakers of languages other than English, and fewer English-speaking Latinos and English-speaking whites.

Not surprisingly, in the focus counties, adults nearing the time limit were somewhat different from adults in the caseload at large (Appendix Exhibit B.3): They were older, had more and older children, and they had more labor market experience. They were not, however, noticeably more likely to be non-English speakers. The largest ethnic differences were in the higher fraction of African Americans and smaller fraction of English-speaking Latinos among our sample of those nearing the time limit compared with the full caseloads. Whether these differences reflect a change over the past few years in the ethnic composition of the CalWORKs caseloads in the focus counties, or differential propensities to continue receiving CalWORKs benefits up to the sixty-month limit, is not yet clear. We will take up this question in a future report.

## Appendix C Regression Results

### Appendix Exhibit C.1 Determinants of Time-Limit Knowledge Regression Results

	Model 1: Excluding Communications Variables		Model 2: Including Communications Variables	
	Coefficient	Standard Error	Coefficient	Standard Error
Female	0.089	0.124	-0.064	0.115
White (reference)				
African American	0.018	0.100	0.039	0.093
Latino	-0.128	0.102	-0.019	0.094
Asian	-0.502	0.205 **	-0.351	0.190 *
Other Race	-0.012	0.128	0.085	0.119
English (reference)				
Spanish	-0.063	0.156	-0.112	0.144
Vietnamese	-0.062	0.213	-0.042	0.196
Other language	-0.513	0.150 ***	-0.412	0.139 ***
Less than HS diploma (reference)				
HS graduate or more	0.358	0.069 ***	0.314	0.064 ***
Foreign Education 12 years +	-0.049	0.404	-0.171	0.374
Education missing	-1.280	0.397 ***	-1.044	0.367 ***
Living without spouse/partner	-0.051	0.072	-0.040	0.066
Immigrant	-0.691	0.130 ***	-0.491	0.121 ***
Youngest child 0–5 yrs	0.073	0.067	0.117	0.062 *
No child in household	0.118	0.286	0.010	0.264
Domestic violence past year	0.268	0.108 **	0.207	0.099 **
Physical limitation	0.042	0.077	-0.010	0.071
Depression interferes w/work	0.250	0.103 **	0.200	0.095 **
Anxiety interferes w/work	-0.056	0.104	-0.018	0.096
Alcohol interferes w/work	-0.017	0.232	-0.027	0.215
Drugs interfere w/work	-0.201	0.214	-0.036	0.198
Currently on CalWORKs	0.091	0.109	0.027	0.101
Has 58+ months accumulated	0.077	0.079	0.041	0.073
Alameda	-0.089	0.112	-0.102	0.104
Los Angeles (reference)				
Orange	0.456	0.115 ***	0.322	0.108 ***
Riverside	-0.180	0.112	-0.188	0.105 *
Sacramento	0.037	0.112	0.033	0.104
Tulare	-0.125	0.116	-0.053	0.108
Talked to Staff			0.761	0.060 ***
Received Brochure			0.318	0.069 ***
Received Letter			0.537	0.062 ***
<i>Sample size</i>	1,793		1,793	

**Notes:**

- (1) We ran two separate models: one that did not include the communications variables (model 1) and one that included all three communications variables (model 2). Except for those related to communications, the regression adjusted averages reported in Exhibits 4.9–4.14 come from model 1.
- (2) Reference categories are shown in Exhibit C.1 for only those groupings that have more than two categories. In groupings with just two categories, the reference category should be assumed to be the opposite of what is reported (e.g., male, not immigrant, and so on).
- (3) All models are weighted using equal-probability weights. \*p<.10, \*\*p<.05, \*\*\*p<.01.

**Appendix Exhibit C.2**  
**Knowledge of Months Regression Results**

	Model 1: Excluding Communications Variables		Model 2: Including Communications Variables	
	Coefficient	Standard Error	Coefficient	Standard Error
Female	0.361	0.126***	0.258	0.122**
White (reference)				
African American	0.065	0.102	0.074	0.098
Latino	0.130	0.104	0.189	0.100
Asian	-0.284	0.208	-0.201	0.202
Other Race	-0.116	0.131	-0.078	0.126
English (reference)				
Spanish	-0.343	0.159**	-0.367	0.153**
Vietnamese	-0.096	0.216	-0.118	0.209
Other language	-0.196	0.153	-0.147	0.148
Less than HS diploma (reference)				
HS graduate or more	0.076	0.070	0.054	0.068
Foreign Education 12 years +	0.467	0.411	0.355	0.397
Education missing	-0.295	0.403	-0.163	0.390
Living without spouse/partner	-0.138	0.073*	-0.129	0.071*
Immigrant	-0.150	0.132	-0.036	0.129
Youngest child 0–5 yrs	-0.101	0.068	-0.071	0.065
No child in household	-0.272	0.290	-0.353	0.281
Domestic violence past year	0.006	0.110	-0.012	0.106
Physical limitation	-0.028	0.078	-0.067	0.075
Depression interferes w/work	0.065	0.105	0.022	0.101
Anxiety interferes w/work	0.101	0.106	0.122	0.102
Alcohol interferes w/work	-0.353	0.236	-0.358	0.228
Drugs interfere w/work	-0.218	0.217	-0.129	0.210
Currently on CalWORKs	0.344	0.111***	0.289	0.108***
Has 58+ months accumulated	-0.065	0.080	-0.094	0.077
Alameda	0.277	0.114**	0.276	0.110**
Los Angeles (reference)				
Orange	0.373	0.117***	0.260	0.114**
Riverside	-0.054	0.114	-0.057	0.111
Sacramento	0.165	0.113	0.160	0.111
Tulare	0.134	0.118	0.173	0.115
Talked to Staff			0.590	0.064***
Received Brochure			-0.079	0.073
Received Letter			0.376	0.066***
<i>Sample size</i>	<i>1,791</i>		<i>1,791</i>	

**Notes:**

- (1) We ran two separate models: one that did not include the communications variables (model 1) and one that included all three communications variables (model 2). Except for those related to communications, the regression adjusted averages reported in Exhibits 4.9–4.14 come from model 1.
- (2) Reference categories are shown in Exhibit C.2 for only those groupings that have more than two categories. In groupings with just two categories, the reference category should be assumed to be the opposite of what is reported (e.g., male, not immigrant, and so on).
- (3) All models are weighted using equal-probability weights. \*p<.10, \*\*p<.05, \*\*\*p<.01.

**Appendix Exhibit C.3**  
**Consideration of Banking Regression Results**

	Model 1: Excluding Communications Variables		Model 2: Including Communications Variables	
	Coefficient	Standard Error	Coefficient	Standard Error
Female	0.009	0.044	0.001	0.048
White (reference)				
African American	0.057	0.036	0.059	0.040
Latino	0.016	0.036	0.023	0.042
Asian	-0.089	0.073	-0.082	0.069
Other Race	0.012	0.046	0.016	0.049
English (reference)				
Spanish	-0.081	0.055	-0.083	0.064
Vietnamese	-0.116	0.076	-0.116	0.071
Other language	-0.138	0.053 **	-0.132	0.054 **
Less than HS diploma (reference)				
HS graduate or more	-0.020	0.025	-0.023	0.027
Foreign Education 12 years +	0.058	0.144	0.049	0.127
Education missing	-0.262	0.141 *	-0.250	0.054 ***
Living without spouse/partner	-0.039	0.025	-0.040	0.028
Immigrant	0.005	0.046	0.015	0.053
Youngest child 0–5 yrs	-0.009	0.024	-0.006	0.026
No child in household	-0.134	0.100	-0.135	0.086
Domestic violence past year	0.100	0.038 ***	0.096	0.045 **
Physical limitation	-0.024	0.027	-0.026	0.031
Depression interferes w/work	0.020	0.037	0.017	0.041
Anxiety interferes w/work	0.011	0.037	0.012	0.041
Alcohol interferes w/work	0.123	0.083	0.118	0.091
Drugs interfere w/work	0.082	0.076	0.092	0.091
Alameda	0.004	0.040	0.000	0.040
Los Angeles (reference)				
Orange	0.110	0.041 ***	0.099	0.046 **
Riverside	0.127	0.040 ***	0.122	0.047 **
Sacramento	0.085	0.040 **	0.080	0.036 **
Tulare	0.150	0.041 ***	0.150	0.043 ***
Talked to Staff			0.053	0.025 **
Received Brochure			0.024	0.030
Received Letter			0.012	0.026
<i>Sample size</i>	1,793		1,793	

**Notes:**

- (1) We ran two separate models: one that did not include the communications variables (model 1) and one that included all three communications variables (model 2). Except for those related to communications, the regression adjusted averages reported in Exhibits 4.9–4.14 come from model 1.
- (2) Reference categories are shown in Exhibit C.3 for only those groupings that have more than two categories. In groupings with just two categories, the reference category should be assumed to be the opposite of what is reported (e.g., male, not immigrant, and so on).
- (3) All models are weighted using equal-probability weights. \*p<.10, \*\*p<.05, \*\*\*p<.01.

**Appendix Exhibit C.4**  
**Means of Regression Control Variables**

	Mean	Std Deviation
Female	0.925	0.263
White-English		
African American-English	0.290	0.454
Latino-English	0.309	0.462
Latino-Spanish	0.108	0.311
Asian-English	0.087	0.282
Vietnamese-Vietnamese	0.108	0.310
Other Race-English	0.069	0.254
Any Race-Other Language	0.070	0.255
Less than HS diploma		
HS graduate or more	0.606	0.489
Foreign Education 12 years +	0.007	0.081
Education missing	0.007	0.084
Living without spouse/partner	0.644	0.479
Immigrant	0.272	0.445
Youngest child 0–5 yrs	0.543	0.498
No child in household	0.013	0.113
Domestic violence past year	0.102	0.302
Physical limitation	0.287	0.453
Depression interferes w/work	0.202	0.401
Anxiety interferes w/work	0.196	0.397
Alcohol interferes w/work	0.020	0.138
Drugs interfere w/work	0.024	0.153
Currently on CalWORKs	0.905	0.293
Has 58+ months accumulated	0.212	0.409
Alameda	0.166	0.372
Los Angeles		
Orange	0.167	0.373
Riverside	0.167	0.373
Sacramento	0.167	0.373
Tulare	0.167	0.373
Talked to Staff	0.473	0.499
Received Brochure	0.276	0.447
Received Letter	0.492	0.500
<i>Sample size</i>		1,793

**Notes:**

- (1) Sample is restricted to sample members with non-missing values who are included in regressions reported in Exhibit C.1.
- (2) All means are weighted using equal-probability weights.

# **Appendix D**

## **Survey Research Instrument**

**CALWORKS SIXTY-MONTH TIME-LIMIT SURVEY**  
**Welfare Policy Research Project**

**(1,797 completed cases)**

**Sample:**

**Random selection from CalWorks/AFDC/TANF recipients in the State of California**

**Method:**

**Computer-Assisted Telephone Interviewing (CATI) conducted by the Survey Research Center, University of California, Berkeley**

**Key Investigators:**

**Rebecca A. London, University of California at Santa Cruz and Stanford University**  
**Jane G. Mauldon, Goldman School of Public Policy, University of California, Berkeley**

**Sponsor: Welfare Policy Research Project, University of California**

**Data Collection Period: June 14, 2004–September 20, 2005**



## INTRODUCTION

### CALWORKS SIXTY-MONTH TIME LIMIT SURVEY

In recent years significant reforms have been made to California's welfare programs. This survey is the first of two interviews conducted to assess how these changes are affecting current recipients of the CalWorks/AFDC programs. The full survey instrument, complete with skip patterns and frequency distributions on responses, is available on WPRP's website <http://wprp.ucop.edu/documents/bpocodebook30oct2006.pdf>.

The study sample was drawn from welfare recipients who appear in the MEDS (Medicaid Eligibility File), released to the Survey Research Center by the California Department of Social Services, and who were about to reach the 5 year time limit.

Interviews were conducted in English, Spanish, and Vietnamese languages. Subjects who did not speak these languages were administered an abbreviated form of the instrument, using a simultaneous interpretation service.

The majority of interviews were conducted using computer assisted telephone interviews (CATI). In a limited number of cases (e.g. the subject did not have a telephone available) interviews were conducted in person, using computer assisted personal interviewing (CAPI) technology on laptop computers.

This document lists the questions asked in the survey, and omits uninformative repetition, such as questions that were asked identically for each child in a household. Also omitted here are the skip patterns that determined which respondents were asked which questions, and . Questions not asked in the abbreviated foreign-language interview (encompassing all languages other than English, Spanish and Vietnamese) are highlighted, while questions asked only of the "foreign-language" sample are italicized. In short, this document provides only a general, not a precise, picture of the survey as it was actually conducted. For more detail, interested people should look at the full codebook available at the UC DATA and WPRP websites.

Topics covered include:

1. Household composition
2. Educational background and schooling
3. Recent employment history
4. Family environment
5. Child well-being
6. Child care arrangements
7. Welfare history
8. Use of social services
9. Medical conditions and mental health
10. Domestic violence

The number of completed interviews was 1,797. The overall response rate was 60.8 percent. Interviews averaged approximately 35 minutes in length.

### ENUMERATION INDEX

Two lists were made during the enumeration of children under 18 years old living in each household. The first list was for all children residing in the household. Each child was assigned an index number from 11–20 based on the order they were given to the interviewer. The second list is made up of the children that the respondent is actually responsible for. The original index number will follow each child through the remainder of the enumeration and interview.

#### Abbreviations Used in This Document:

R....Respondent	REF....Refused	HH....Household	DK....Don't Know
MD....Missing Data	RN....Random Number	FL....Foreign Language	

Note: Shaded questions were not asked in abbreviated interviews conducted in languages other than English, Spanish or Vietnamese. Italicized questions were asked *only* in the abbreviated interviews.

**ENUMERATION**

**RESPONDENT AND HOUSEHOLD INFORMATION**

How old are you?

Are you male or female?

Now, I have a few questions about people who usually live in your household—meaning in your apartment or house with you.

BESIDES YOURSELF, are there any OTHER people who usually live in your household that are age 18 years of age or older? Include anyone who is temporarily away, such as someone who is in school, working at a job out of town, traveling, in a hospital, in a correctional facility or other institution.

NOT COUNTING YOURSELF, how many OTHER people who usually live in your household are 18 years of age or older?

What is your CURRENT marital status?

Are you never married, married and living with your spouse, married and living apart, formally separated, divorced, or widowed?

Are you currently living with someone as a couple, or living with a partner?

Are you currently living with someone other than your spouse as a couple, or living with a partner?

Do you have a partner or steady boyfriend/girlfriend who does not live with you (other than your spouse)?

**CHILDREN IN HOUSEHOLD: ALL CHILDREN**

Now I have a few questions about children.

Are there any babies or other children UNDER 18 YEARS OF AGE who are living or staying in your household? Please include children who live here part of the time.

Are there any babies or other children UNDER 18 YEARS OF AGE who are living or staying with you right now? Please include children are with you part of the time.

How many people who are living or staying in your household are under 18 years of age?

How many people who are living or staying with you now, are under 18 years of age?

IF NECESSARY: Is (1st child) male or female?

How is (1st child) related to you?

How old was (1st child) on [his/her] last birthday?

And is (spouse) the mother/father of (1st child)?

Have you or (1st child) had contact with (1st child)'s mother/father in the last 2 years?

How recently did (1st child) see [his/her] [mother/father]—within the last month, 1–6 months ago, 6–12 months ago, 1 to 2 years ago, or more than 2 years ago?

Are you or your [wife/husband/partner] responsible for this child—that is, do either of you regularly take care of this child or regularly pay for any of [his/her] expenses?

IF NECESSARY: Is (2nd child) male or female?

How is (2nd child) related to you?

How old was (2nd child) on [his/her] last birthday?

And is (spouse) the mother/father of (2nd child)?

Have you or (2nd child) had contact with [his/her] mother/father in the last 2 years?

How recently did (2nd child) see his/her mother/father—within the last month, 1–6 months ago, 6–12 months ago, 1 to 2 years ago, or more than 2 years ago?

Are you or your [wife/husband/partner] responsible for this child—that is, do either of you regularly take care of this child or regularly pay for any of [his/her] expenses?

**[These same questions are repeated for each child.]**

#### ***CHILDREN IN HOUSEHOLD: RESPONSIBILITY OF RESPONDENT***

Total number of children aged 0–17 that respondent is responsible for.

Total number of children aged 0–5 that respondent is responsible for.

Total number of children aged 6–11 that respondent is responsible for.

Total number of children aged 12–17 that respondent is responsible for.

[Constructed variable: Total number in HH including respondent.]

#### ***LANGUAGE USED IN FOREIGN LANGUAGE INTERVIEW***

ASKED ONLY OF FOREIGN LANGUAGE RESPONDENTS:

*What language are you using?*

*Do you mostly speak [LANGUAGE] in your home?*

*What language do you mostly speak in your home?*

**RESPONDENT AND SPOUSE/PARTNER EDUCATION LEVEL**

*Have you attended school or college, or received any formal education, in the United States? (If YES, continue with the primary sequence of education questions and omit the italicized ones, below.)*

What is the highest grade or level of school you have completed?  
(Add if Foreign Language case: *in the United States?*)

Do you have your GED?

Did you receive a HS diploma, a GED or neither?

ASKED ONLY OF FOREIGN-LANGUAGE CASES WITH NO U.S. EDUCATION:

*Did you receive any formal education in another country?*

*And how many years of education total did you complete in another country/other countries?*

*Did you complete a college or university degree outside the United States?*

*What was your degree?*

*Has [spouse/partner] attended school or college, or received any formal education, in the United States? (If YES, continue with the primary sequence of education questions and omit the italicized ones, below.)*

What is the highest grade or level of school [your spouse/partner/boyfriend/girlfriend] has completed?

Does [he/she] have [his/her] GED?

Did [he/she] receive a HS diploma, a GED or neither?

ASKED ONLY OF FOREIGN-LANGUAGE CASES WHERE SPOUSE HAS NO U.S. EDUCATION:

*Has [spouse/partner] received any formal education in another country?*

*And how many years of education total did [NAME] complete in another country/other countries?*

*Did [spouse/partner] complete a college or university degree outside the United States?*

*What was [his/her] degree?*

**VARIABLES USED LATER IN HOUSEHOLD INCOME SERIES**

You said that (number) adults age 18 or older live with you in this household, and one of them is your [wife/husband/partner], right?

You said that (number) adults age 18 or older live with you in this household. How many of these adults are immediate family members, meaning your adult children, parents, grandparents, or brothers or sisters?

If I have understood correctly, I think there are [NUMBER] adults apart from you, [your [wife/husband/partner]], [and your immediate family members], living in your household.  
Is that correct?

Sometimes when relatives or friends live in the same household, everybody pools their income and shares expenses, helping to support one another. In other cases income and expenses are kept separate. Do you and your [wife/husband/partner] share income and expenses, or not?

Thinking about the [NUMBER] other adults in your household—[apart from you and your [wife/husband/partner]]—[are they all people/is this a person] who help(s) support you or whom you support?

How many of them are people who help support you or whom you support?

**MATERIAL HARDSHIP**

The next questions are about how easily you have been able to cover basic necessities such as food, housing, and medical care, over the past 12 months. In the past 12 months, since (MONTH), (YEAR), have you ever not had enough money to pay your rent or mortgage?

In the past 12 months, have you ever not had enough money for your phone, gas, electricity, water or heat bills?

In the past 12 months, have you ever not had enough money to buy the food your family needed?

About how many times in the past 12 months did you find you couldn't pay your rent or mortgage, or household bills, or couldn't buy food?

Was it only once or twice, 3, 4 or 5 times, or 6 or more times?

Do you generally have enough money to buy the basic things you need, even at the end of the month?

At the moment, are you, your [wife/husband/partner], [and your child/ren] living with another person or another family in order to cut down on your household costs for housing or other things?

How long have you been sharing housing in order to save money?

Would you say less than 2 weeks, 2 weeks to a month, 1 to 3 months, 4 to 6 months, or more than 6 months?

In the past 12 months, did you have to move out of your home when you didn't really want to?

How many times did that happen?

Thinking about the most recent time: Why did you have to move out of your home? (Do not read choices)

- Couldn't afford rent/bills
- Eviction for non-payment of rent
- The people I was living with made me leave (other than non-payment of rent)
- Eviction because the landlord wanted me out for some other reason
- Home was damaged or burned

- Needed more space
- Home/Neighborhood was too dangerous/too much crime
- Looking for work or take a job somewhere else
- Other (DESCRIBE)

What did you do when that happened (Do not read choices)? PROBE ONCE: And then what?

- I and my children (and spouse/ptr) found a new apt/house of own
- I and my children (and spouse/ptr) went to a family member's home
- I and my children went to a boyfriend's home
- I and my children (and spouse/ptr) went to a friend's home
- I and my children (and spouse/ptr) went to a homeless shelter
- Split up the family to different places (DESCRIBE VERBATIM)
- Other (DESCRIBE)

In the past 12 months, was your phone, gas or electricity turned off for not paying the bill?

Which were turned off (READ EACH)?

- Phone?
- Gas?
- Electricity?

In the past 12 months, did you or someone else in your family that you live with lose their car because you couldn't afford to pay to repair or register or insure it?

In the past 12 months, did you get food from a church or food bank—or any other place where you can get bags of food?

In the past 12 months, did you get meals from a church or soup kitchen—or any other place where you can get a cooked meal?

In the past 12 months, did you borrow or receive money from friends or family to help pay rent or bills?

How many rooms altogether are there in your home, that is, in the space occupied by everyone staying in your household? Count all of the rooms, including the kitchen but don't count bathrooms or hallways.

How many of these rooms are bedrooms?

***CURRENT EMPLOYMENT, PROGRAM PARTICIPATION & INCOME (RESPONDENT)***

Are you currently working for pay for an employer at a full-time job, that is, a job in which you usually work 30 hours a week or more?

And how about in the last 12 months? (Have you been employed for pay at a full-time job?)

Are you currently also working for pay for an employer at one or more part-time jobs, that is, jobs in which you usually work less than 30 hours per week?

Are you currently working for pay for an employer at one or more part-time jobs, that is, jobs in which you usually work less than 30 hours per week?

And how about in the last 12 months? (Have you worked for pay at any part-time jobs?)

These days some people are self employed, have their own business, or also earn money more informally by working for pay on their own. Some examples are; providing child care, making home repairs, building

maintenance, landscaping, doing taxes for people, housecleaning, cooking and catering, sewing, doing nails or hair, picking up odd jobs, or doing other paid work on their own.

In the last month or so, have you been doing anything like this to earn money?

And how about in the last 12 months? (Have you done any paid work on your own?)

In total, how many different [full-time/part-time/self-employed] jobs do you have?

At which job did you last work? The [full-time job,] [the part-time job,] [or] [the job on your own]?

THE REMAINDER OF THE EMPLOYMENT SERIES IS ONLY ASKED IF THE RESPONDENT IS CURRENTLY WORKING, OR HAS WORKED WITHIN THE LAST 12 MONTHS

In total, about how many hours each week are you working for pay? Please include all jobs.

Now, in your work for [company name], in what kind of business or industry [are/were] you working? For example, what do they make or do?

Now, in your work for yourself, in what kind of business or industry [are/were] you working? For example, what do you make or do? PROBE: How would you describe a business that makes or does the things you do? (SPECIFY)

What kind of work [do/did] you do, that is, what is the job or type of work called and what [are/were] your usual activities or duties? (SPECIFY) IF NEEDED: What is the name for that type of work?

On average, how many hours per week do you usually work at this job now?

How much are you paid per hour for this work before taxes and other deductions?

Is that before or after taxes?

How much are/were you paid per hour for this work BEFORE TAXES AND OTHER DEDUCTIONS?

INTERVIEWER: ENTER WEEKLY BEFORE-TAX EARNINGS (IF MONTHLY, CONVERT TO WEEKLY)

INTERVIEWER: ENTER YEARLY BEFORE-TAX EARNINGS

[Do/Did] you regularly receive overtime pay, tips, regular bonuses, commissions, or any other kind of pay beyond your normal wage or salary?

How much [do/did] you typically receive in overtime pay, tips, bonuses, or commissions?

Approximately how long [does/did] it usually take you to get to the place where you work? That is, how long [does/did] it take you to travel from your front door to the front door of your work one way, including any time spent dropping children off along the way?

You said the job or work we've been discussing ended. Why was that? Was it a temporary job that ended; were you laid off and given a date to return to work; were you laid off without a date to return to work; were you fired; or did you quit?

You said earlier that in the last 12 months you were working for an employer [full-time/part-time]. Why did that job end? Was it a temporary job that ended; were you laid off and given a date to return to work; were you laid off without a date to return to work; were you fired; or did you quit?

What was the main reason you quit? (SPECIFY)

[Does/Did] your job offer you paid sick leave?

How about vacation time, aside from workplace holidays like the Fourth of July?

***CURRENT EMPLOYMENT (SPOUSE/PARTNER)***

Is [spouse name] currently working for pay for an employer at a full-time job, that is, a job in which [he/she] usually works 30 hours a week or more?

And how about in the last 12 months? (Has [spouse name] been employed for pay at a full-time job?)

Is [spouse name] currently working for pay for an employer at one or more part-time jobs, that is, jobs in which [he/she] usually works less than 30 hours per week?

And how about in the last 12 months? (Has [he/she] worked for pay at any part-time jobs?)

These days some people are self employed, have their own business, or also earn money more informally by working for pay on their own. Some examples are; providing child care, making home repairs, building maintenance, landscaping, doing taxes for people, housecleaning, cooking and catering, sewing, doing nails or hair, picking up odd jobs, or doing other paid work on their own.

In the last month or so, has [spouse name] been doing anything like this to earn money?

And how about in the last 12 months? (Has [he/she] done any paid work on [his/her] own?)

In total, how many different [full-time/part-time/self-employed] jobs does [he/she] have?

At which job did [hi/she] last work? The [full-time job,] [the part-time job,] [or] [the job on his/her own]?

THE REMAINDER OF THE EMPLOYMENT SERIES IS ONLY ASKED IF THE RESPONDENT'S SPOUSE/PARTNER IS CURRENTLY WORKING, OR HAS WORKED WITHIN THE LAST 12 MONTHS

In total, about how many hours each week is [spouse name] working for pay? Please include all jobs.

Now, in [spouse name]'s work for (employer name), in what kind of business or industry is [he/she] working? For example, what do they make or do?

Now, in [spouse name]'s work for [him/her]self, in what kind of business or industry is [he/she] working? For example, what does [he/she] make or do? PROBE: How would you describe a business that makes or does the things [he/she] does?

Now, in [spouse name]'s work for (employer name), in what kind of business or industry was [he/she] working? For example, what do they make or do?

Now, in [spouse name]'s work for [him/her]self, in what kind of business or industry was [he/she] working? For example, what did [he/she] make or do? PROBE: How would you describe a business that makes or does the things [he/she] did?

What kind of work [does/did] [he/she] do, that is, what is/was the job or type of work called and what are [his/her] usual activities or duties? IF NEEDED: What is the name for that type of work?

How long altogether have you worked in this position?

How long altogether have you done this kind of work?

How long altogether has [he/she] worked in this position?



How long altogether has [he/she] done this kind of work?

On average, how many hours per week does [spouse name] usually work at this job now?

On average, how many hours per week did [spouse name] usually work at this job just before [he/she] left?

How much is/was [spouse name] paid per hour for this work before taxes and other deductions?

INTERVIEWER: ENTER WEEKLY EARNINGS (IF GAVE MONTHLY, CONVERT TO WEEKLY)

INTERVIEWER: ENTER YEARLY EARNINGS

Is that before or after taxes?

How much [is/was] [he/she] paid per hour for this work BEFORE TAXES AND OTHER DEDUCTIONS?

INTERVIEWER: ENTER WEEKLY BEFORE-TAX EARNINGS (IF MONTHLY, CONVERT TO WEEKLY)

INTERVIEWER: ENTER YEARLY BEFORE-TAX EARNINGS

[Does/Did] [he/she] regularly receive overtime pay, tips, regular bonuses, commissions, or any other kind of pay beyond [his/her] normal wage or salary?

How much [does/did] [he/she] typically receive in overtime pay, tips, bonuses, or commissions?

Approximately how long [does/did] it usually take [him/her] to get to the place where [he/she] works? That is, how long [does/did] it take [him/her] to travel from [his/her] front door to the front door of [his/her] work one way, including any time spent dropping children off along the way?

You said [his/her] job or work we've been discussing ended. Why was that? Was it a temporary job that ended; was [he/she] laid off and given a date to return to work; was [he/she] laid off without a date to return to work; was [he/she] fired; or did [he/she] quit?

You said earlier that in the last 12 months [he/she] was working for an employer full-time. Why did that job end? Was it a temporary job that ended; was [he/she] laid off and given a date to return to work; was [he/she] laid off without a date to return to work; was [he/she] fired; or did [he/she] quit?

What was the main reason [he/she] quit? (SPECIFY)

[Does/Did] [his/her] job offer [him/her] paid sick leave?

How about vacation time, aside from workplace holidays like the Fourth of July?

### ***HEALTH COVERAGE***

The next set of questions is about health insurance coverage. Are you currently covered by health insurance?

Is your [wife/husband/partner] currently covered by health insurance?

How about your child? Is your child currently covered by health insurance?

How about your children? Are (both/all) of the children living with you currently covered by health insurance?

How many of your (number) children living with you do NOT have health insurance?

Do the (number) children that are insured all have the same type of health insurance?

Are you, your [wife/husband/partner], and your children covered under the same health insurance?

What type of insurance do YOU currently have?

Is it insurance through your employer, Medi-Cal or Medicaid, Medicare, some other PRIVATE insurance, insurance through someone else's plan, or some other type of insurance?

Is it insurance through your [wife/husband/partner]'s employer, Medi-Cal or Medicaid, Medicare, some other PRIVATE insurance, insurance through someone else's plan, or some other type of insurance?

What type of insurance does YOUR [wife/husband/partner] currently have?

Is it insurance through your employer, Medi-Cal or Medicaid, Medicare, some other PRIVATE insurance, insurance through someone else's plan, or some other type of insurance?

Is it insurance through [his/her] employer, Medi-Cal or Medicaid, Medicare, some other PRIVATE insurance, insurance through someone else's plan, or some other type of insurance?

What type of insurance does YOUR CHILD[REN] currently have?

Is it insurance through your employer, Healthy Kids, Healthy Families, SCHIP, Medi-Cal or Medicaid, Medicare, some other PRIVATE insurance, insurance through someone else's plan, or some other type of insurance?

Is it insurance through your [wife/husband/partner]'s employer, Healthy Kids, Healthy Families, SCHIP, Medi-Cal or Medicaid, Medicare, some other PRIVATE insurance, insurance through someone else's plan, or some other type of insurance?

Please tell me how many of your children have each of the following types of insurance.

How many have Insurance through your employer?

How many have Insurance through your [wife/husband/partner]'s employer?

How about, Healthy Kids/Healthy Families, SCHIP?

How about, Medi-Cal, Medicaid?

How about, Medicare?

How about, through other PRIVATE insurance? (SPECIFY)

How about, insurance through someone else's plan? (SPECIFY)

How about, some other insurance? (SPECIFY)

What type of insurance is that?

Is it insurance through your employer, Healthy Kids, Healthy Families, SCHIP, Medi-Cal or Medicaid, Medicare, some other PRIVATE insurance, insurance through someone else's plan, or some other type of insurance?

Is it insurance through your [wife/husband/partner]'s employer, Healthy Kids, Healthy Families, SCHIP, Medi-Cal or Medicaid, Medicare, some other PRIVATE insurance, insurance through someone else's plan, or some other type of insurance?

Does your employer offer a health insurance program that you could enroll in?

Why have you not enrolled in your employer's health insurance plan?

IF MORE THAN ONE MENTIONED: Which is the most important reason?

- Too expensive
- Had other coverage
- Didn't want/need
- Not eligible (EXPLAIN)
- Other (SPECIFY)

Does your employer's health insurance program offer coverage that your child(ren) could enroll in?

Why has your child (have your children) not been enrolled in your employer's health insurance plan?

IF MORE THAN ONE MENTIONED: Which is the most important reason?

- Too expensive
- Had other coverage
- Didn't want/need
- Not eligible (EXPLAIN)
- Other (SPECIFY)

Does your [wife/husband/partner]'s employer offer a health insurance program that [he/she] could enroll in?

Why has [he/she] not enrolled in [his/her] employer's health insurance plan?

IF MORE THAN ONE MENTIONED: Which is the most important reason?

- Too expensive
- Had other coverage
- Didn't want/need
- Not eligible (EXPLAIN)
- Other (SPECIFY)

Does your [wife/husband/partner]'s employer's health insurance program offer coverage that you could enroll in?

Why have you not enrolled in your [wife/husband/partner]'s employer's health insurance plan?

IF MORE THAN ONE MENTIONED: Which is the most important reason?

- Too expensive
- Had other coverage
- Didn't want/need
- Not eligible (EXPLAIN)
- Other (SPECIFY)

Does your [wife/husband/partner]'s employer's health insurance program offer coverage that your child(ren) could enroll in?

Why has/have your child/children not been enrolled in your [wife/husband/partner]'s employer's health insurance plan?

IF MORE THAN ONE MENTIONED: Which is the most important reason?

- Too expensive
- Had other coverage
- Didn't want/need
- Not eligible (EXPLAIN)
- Other (SPECIFY)

Do you (or your [wife/husband/partner]) have to pay anything per month out of your own money for health insurance for you or your family?

About how much do you pay per month for it?

Would you say it's more than \$100 per month, \$20–\$100 per month, or under \$20 per month?

### ***HOUSEHOLD INCOME***

Now I'd like you to think specifically about your household's income and expenses last month, meaning, during all of [month]. When I say "household", I mean the (number) other adults and children who share income and expenses. What was the total combined income after taxes of all members of this household last month?

Please include take-home money from jobs, CalWORKs grants, child support, a pension, SSI, social security payments, rent payments, income from a business, and any other money income received by you or any other family member. (PROBE FOR ACTUAL AMOUNT, EVEN IF AN ESTIMATE)

Let's talk about the different sources of that income, starting with your earnings. In [month], did you earn money from any kind of work, such as a regular job or self-employment or doing odd jobs?

About how much take-home pay in total did you earn, after taxes, from working in [month]?

And in [month], did you get a CalWORKs grant or check?

About how much did you [and spouse name] get from Calworks in [month]?

And in [month], did you receive any child support payments for any of your children?

About how much child support did you and/or [spouse name] receive in [month]?

And in [month], did you get any other money, such as a pension, SSI, social security payments, rent payments, income from a business, or any other money?

About how much did you get from all these sources in [month]?

Now I'm going to ask similar questions about [spouse name]'s income last month, in [month]. In [month], did [spouse name] earn money from any kind of work, such as a regular job or self-employment or doing odd jobs?

About how much take-home pay in total did [he/she] earn, after taxes, from working in [month]?

And in [month], did [spouse name] get any other money, such as a pension, SSI, social security payments, rent payments, income from a business, or any other money?

About how much did [he/she] get from all these sources in [month]?

Now I'm going to ask similar questions about (name)'s income last month, in [month]. In [month], did (name) earn money from any kind of work, such as a regular job or self-employment or doing odd jobs?

About how much take-home pay in total did (name) earn, after taxes, from working in [month]?

And in [month], did (name) get any other money, such as a pension, SSI, social security payments, rent payments, income from a business, or any other money?

About how much did (name) get from all these sources in [month]?

### ***NON-CASH BENEFITS***

In [month], did any adults or children in your household—that is the adults and children you help support or who help support you—receive any of the following:

- How about Food Stamps?
- What was the total amount in food stamps in [month] for all household members?
- (How about) help from the Women, Infants, and Children Nutrition program called WIC?
- Free or reduced price school lunches?
- (How about) free or reduced price school breakfasts?

### ***EXPENDITURES ON HOUSING***

Thinking about where you are living now, do you rent, or do you own, or are you sharing with someone else and paying them, or do you live there for free, or do you have some other arrangement?

Is it a public housing project—that is, housing owned or operated by a local housing authority or other government agency? Please do not include Section 8 housing.

Does your household pay less rent because the government pays for part of it, such as in Section 8 housing?

Do you have to pay for utilities—gas, heat, electricity—separately from rent, or are they included as part of your rent?

Do you have to pay for utilities—gas, heat, electricity—or does someone else pay those bills?

What is the monthly rent that you and your family have to pay?

Do you help pay for upkeep, insurance or taxes on the home?

About how much do you pay per year for these?

Are insurance and taxes included as part of your mortgage payment or do you pay for them separately from the mortgage?

What is your monthly mortgage payment?

What is your monthly mortgage payment including taxes and insurance?

How much do you and your family usually pay each month for gas, heat, and electricity combined?

How much do the insurance and taxes for your house cost per year?

### ***INDEBTEDNESS***

Do you [or spouse name] owe more than a total of \$500 on loans or debts that you have to pay back? Don't include a mortgage.

Are any of those loans or debts more than \$500 by itself?

Do you owe \$500 or more on a credit card?

Do you owe \$500 or more on a car loan?

How about on a bank loan?

How about on medical or legal bills? (Do you owe \$500 or more on medical or legal bills?)

How about on a student loan?

Do you owe \$500 or more to a neighborhood money store or any other stores?

How about to friends or relatives? (Do you owe \$500 or more to friends or relatives?)

Did you file an income tax return for [2003/2004] this year?

The federal government allows parents earning less than about \$34,000 a year to pay lower taxes or to get extra money back from the IRS (the tax system). This special rule is called the Earned Income Tax Credit, or EITC, and is available to families with children. Did you use this on your federal income tax return this year?

### CHILDCARE

THIS SERIES ASKS ABOUT THE YOUNGEST CHILD IN THE AGE GROUP 0–5.

Now I'd like to ask a few questions about [child] ([age]) and childcare arrangements. About how many hours per week is [child] cared for by someone who is NOT you and NOT part of your family living with you? Please include all regular babysitting, daycare and preschool time.

Some kids have only one regular babysitting or childcare arrangement, and some have more than one—for example, they go to a preschool 3 days a week and are cared for by a neighbor 2 days a week.

Most weeks, does [child] have only one regular babysitting or childcare arrangement, or does [he/she] have more than one?

The next set of questions are about your childcare arrangements. When you answer them, please tell me about the arrangement [child] spends the MOST TIME IN.

How easy or convenient is it getting the child to this childcare situation, or is the childcare provided in your own home?

Would you say getting there is almost always easy and convenient, generally easy and convenient, neither easy nor difficult, generally difficult or inconvenient, or almost always difficult or inconvenient?

How satisfied are you with the care and attention your child gets in this arrangement? Would you say very satisfied, somewhat satisfied, neither satisfied nor dissatisfied, not very satisfied, or not at all satisfied?

Thinking about all your children ages 0 to 5, do you get any help with childcare costs for these children from the CalWORKs program or another government program?

[Excluding any money that you get from the government for childcare costs,] about how much money does your family pay out of pocket for childcare for this child?

Would you say that you pay \$0–100, \$101–200, \$201–300, \$301–400, \$401–600, \$601–800, \$801–1,000, or \$1001 or more? ASK IF NECESSARY: Is that weekly or monthly?

In the past year, have you had difficulty finding childcare for any of your children ages 0–5, for the days or hours or times of day that you wanted to work or go to school? IF YES, PROBE: What days or hours have you needed childcare but have had difficulty?

### CHILDCARE ARRANGEMENTS FOR CHILDREN AGE 6–11 YEARS OLD

Now I'd like to ask a few questions about [child] [age]. Apart from regular school hours, about how many hours per week is [child] cared for by someone who is NOT you and NOT part of your family living with you? Please include all regular babysitting, childcare and after-school arrangements.

And about how many hours per week is [child] taking care of [him/her] self?

Some kids have only one regular babysitting or childcare arrangement, and some have more than one—for example, they go to a preschool 3 days a week and are cared for by a neighbor 2 days a week. Most weeks, does [child] have only one regular babysitting or childcare arrangement, or does [he/she] have more than one?

The next set of questions are about your childcare arrangements. When you answer them, please tell me about the arrangement [child] spends the MOST TIME IN.

How easy or convenient is it getting the child to this childcare situation, or is the childcare provided in your own home? Would you say getting there is almost always easy and convenient, generally easy and convenient, neither easy nor difficult, generally difficult or inconvenient, or almost always difficult or inconvenient?

How satisfied are you with the care and attention your child gets in this arrangement?

Would you say very satisfied, somewhat satisfied, neither satisfied nor dissatisfied, not very satisfied, or not at all satisfied?

Thinking about all your children ages 6 to 11, do you get any help with childcare costs for these children from the CalWORKs program or another government program?

[Excluding any money that you get from the government for childcare costs,] about how much money does your family pay out of pocket for childcare for your [child or children] ages 6 to 11?

Would you say that you pay \$0–100, \$101–200, \$201–300, \$301–400, \$401–600, \$601–800, \$801–1,000, or \$1001 or more? ASK IF NECESSARY: Is that weekly or monthly?

In the past year, have you had difficulty finding childcare for any of your children ages 6–11, for the days or hours or times of day that you wanted to work or go to school? PROBE: What days or hours have you needed childcare but have had difficulty?

About how many hours per week [does this child/do any of these children age 6–11] spend taking care of your younger child(ren) when you or your [wife/husband/partner] are not home?

### CHILDCARE ARRANGEMENTS FOR CHILDREN AGE 12–17 YEARS OLD

Now I'd like to ask a few questions about [child] [age]. Apart from regular school hours, about how many hours per week is [child] supervised or cared for by someone who is NOT you and NOT part of your family living with you? Please include all supervised recreation and after-school arrangements.

And about how many hours per week is [child] taking care of [him/her] self?

Some kids have only one regular supervised after-school arrangement, and some have more than one—for example, they go to an after-school program 3 days a week and are cared for by a neighbor 2 days a week.

Most weeks, does [child] have only one regular supervised arrangement outside of school hours, or does [he/she] have more than one?

The next set of questions are about your childcare arrangements. When you answer them, please tell me about the arrangement [child] spends the MOST TIME IN.

How easy or convenient is it getting the child to this supervised situation, or is the supervision provided in your own home? Would you say getting there is almost always easy and convenient, generally easy and convenient, neither easy nor difficult, generally difficult or inconvenient, or almost always difficult or inconvenient?

How satisfied are you with the care and attention your child gets in this arrangement?

Would you say very satisfied, somewhat satisfied, neither satisfied nor dissatisfied, not very satisfied, or not at all satisfied?

Thinking about all your children ages 12 to 17, do you get any help with childcare costs for these children from the CalWORKs program or another government program?

[Excluding any money that you get from the government for childcare costs,] about how much money does your family pay out of pocket for childcare for your children ages 12 to 17?

Would you say that you pay \$0–100, \$101–200, \$201–300, \$301–400, \$401–600, \$601–800, \$801–1,000, or \$1001 or more? ASK IF NECESSARY: Is that weekly or monthly?

In the past year, have you had difficulty finding childcare for any of your children ages 12–17, for the days or hours or times of day that you wanted to work or go to school? PROBE: What days or hours have you needed supervision or a program but have had difficulty?

About how many hours per week [does this child/do any of these children age 12–17] spend taking care of your younger child(ren) when you [or your wife/husband/partner] are not home?

### ***CHILDCARE AS A BARRIER TO EMPLOYMENT***

In the past year, has finding someone or someplace to take care of your [child/children] been a problem for you in finding or keeping a job?

Why has finding someone or some place to take care of your [child/children] been a problem for you in getting or keeping a job?

- Was it because of affordability or expense?
- Because you could not find a vacancy in a place that was conveniently located?
- Because you could not find a vacancy in a place open at the right hours?
- Because you could not find a vacancy that could meet your [child's/children's] medical needs?
- Because you could not find a vacancy in a place that you trusted?
- Because of some other reason?

### ***PROBLEMS WITH CHILDREN AGE 12–17***

Raising children can be difficult these days. Have there ever been any of the following problems with [child or children] age 12 to 17?

- Being suspended, excluded or expelled from school?
- Getting into trouble with the police?
- Dropping out of school before graduating?
- Getting pregnant or getting someone pregnant?



***TIME LIMITS***

**Current Aid Status**

In the next set of questions I will be asking you about your participation in California's cash assistance program. This is often referred to as CalWORKs, TANF, or by some other County program name. This program provides a monthly cash benefit to parents and children. I will be referring to this program as CalWORKs throughout the survey.

Are you or your family currently receiving cash assistance from CalWORKs?

Are you or your children currently receiving any kind of cash welfare assistance?

Who is currently receiving that cash assistance?

- Is it you yourself?
- Is it your children?
- How about your spouse or partner?

What is the name of the program which you are receiving the cash aid from?

INTERVIEWER: If the description indicated that this program is, in fact, CalWORKs, inform the respondent that this is CalWORKs.

In what month and year did you last receive cash assistance from CalWORKs?

***RESPONDENT'S KNOWLEDGE OF CALWORKS/TIME LIMIT***

Now I'm going to ask you about some of the welfare program rules. These questions are to help us learn if the welfare office explained the program rules to you properly. So of course, this is not a test. Please, do your best to answer each question, but it's okay to respond that you don't know if you don't know the answer.

As far as you know, is there a limit on the amount of time in their entire lives, that most people can stay on CalWORKs?

Who does this time limit apply to?

- Does it apply to most parents who have been in CalWORKs?
- How about children?

You just mentioned that you believe there is not a limit on the time that most parents can stay on CalWORKs.

You just mentioned that you believe there is a limit on the time that most children and adults can stay on CalWORKs.

(READ TO ALL) The CalWORKs rules DO state that most PARENTS can receive CalWORKs for only a limited time period. This is referred to as the time limit. The next set of questions are about the rules for the time limit. And as I said, this isn't a test—it's okay to respond that you don't know if you don't know the answer.

Have you ever heard about this time limit before today?

To the best of your knowledge, how long do you think this lifetime time limit might be? In other words, how many months or years are most parents allowed to receive CalWORKs in their entire lives?

Well, I think that sounds like the length of time you can receive CalWORKs before you have to get a job. Is that also the maximum amount of time you can get any cash aid from CalWORKs?

Is there a limit on the amount of time you can get cash aid from CalWORKs in your entire life?

How long is that time limit?

What do you think happens to most families' CalWORKs cash grant when they hit the time limit? Would you say...(THE ORDER OF ITEMS 1–3 WAS RANDOMIZED.)

- (1) the family's CalWORKs grant is cancelled, so they get no money,
- (2) parents have to work in exchange for benefits,
- (3) children continue to receive CalWORKs but the adults do not, so the family's grant is reduced,
- (4) the family's CalWORKs grant continues with no change, or
- (5) something else (SPECIFY)?

After parents hit the sixty-month time limit, so that they are no longer getting CalWORKs for themselves, do you think the amount of money they make at work affects the amount of their family's grant?

When parents are on CalWORKs, do you think the amount of money they make at work affects the amount of their family's grant?

And if parents are already getting child care assistance when they are cut off of CalWORKs because of the time limit, can they continue to receive child care assistance?

How about transportation assistance?

If parents get cut off of CalWORKs because of the time limit, do you think they themselves can still get Medi-Cal?

How about food stamps?

How about housing assistance?

And what about their children—can they usually continue to get Medi-Cal?

How about food stamps?

Have you heard about or do you know anyone who has reached the time limit?

So far as you know, are there any reasons why a parent might be allowed to continue to receive the full CalWORKs grant after reaching the time limit?

Which of the following conditions do you think allow a parent to collect benefits past the time limit?

- How about being 60 years of age or more?
- How about being 55 years of age or more?
- How about a doctor says the person is too sick or disabled to work?
- (How about) caring for a sick or disabled family member?
- (How about) the person has an impairment that makes them unable to keep a job and has not been sanctioned in the past?
- (How about) the person doesn't have a car to get to work?
- (How about) the person doesn't have any childcare?
- (How about) the person doesn't have a job?
- (How about) the person is currently a victim of domestic abuse?
- (How about) the child's absent parent has paid child support to the state?
- If you know of any other conditions that permit people to receive aid past the time limit, please tell them to me.

Do any of those conditions that you just said would let a parent collect benefits past the time limit, apply to you in particular? Which ones? (IF NECESSARY: READ BACK THE CONDITIONS):

- How about being 60 years of age or more?
- How about being 55 years of age or more?
- How about a doctor says the person is too sick or disabled to work?
- (How about) caring for a sick or disabled family member?
- (How about) the person has an impairment that makes them unable to keep a job and has not been sanctioned in the past?
- (How about) the person doesn't have a car to get to work?
- (How about) the person doesn't have any childcare?
- (How about) the person doesn't have a job?
- (How about) the person is currently a victim of domestic abuse?
- (How about) the child's absent parent has paid child support to the state?

Have you discussed the possibility of continuing to get aid after the time limit with your case manager?

What did the case manager or worker tell you?

Have you ever spoken to a case worker or other CalWORKs staff person about the CalWORKs time limit?

Approximately when did a case manager or other staff person from the CalWORKs office FIRST tell you about the time limit?

Would you say you were first told when you started getting CalWORKs, two or three years ago, within the past year, within the past six months, or Other?

In what ways have you gotten information about the CalWORKs time limit?

- Brochures or pamphlets, posters, signs (at the office)
- Letter or other information in the mail from welfare office
- Talking to other CalWORKs recipients
- Talking to family/friends
- TV/radio/newspaper
- Some other way

Did you read any posters or signs or brochures at the welfare office about the CalWORKs time limits?

FOR SPANISH/VIETNAMESE/FOREIGN LANGUAGE. VERSIONS ONLY: Were any of these in [RESPONDENT LANGUAGE]?

Did you get a letter or other information about time limits in the mail from the welfare office?

FOR SPANISH/VIETNAMESE/ FOREIGN LANGUAGE VERSIONS ONLY: Were any of these in [RESPONDENT LANGUAGE]?

Do you know how many more months you yourself have left before you reach the CalWORKs time limit?

You said that you were not currently receiving CalWORKs. If you were to return to CalWORKs, do you know roughly how many more months you would have left before you reached the CalWORKs time limit?

How did you learn about the number of months YOU HAVE LEFT in CalWORKs (READ EACH)—

- Did you ask your case manager and were told?
- Did you get a letter in the mail telling you?
- Did your case manager tell you even though you didn't ask?
- Was there some other way you learned about the number of months you have left in CalWORKs?

Has your case manager told you about programs or services you might apply for or receive after reaching the time limit?

Which services has your case manager mentioned?

- How about the Earned Income Tax Credit?
- How about Medi-Cal?
- (How about) food stamps?
- (How about) Healthy Families?
- (How about) help with finding or paying for child care?
- (How about) transportation assistance?
- How about something else?

Have you ever considered NOT getting CalWORKs in order to save CalWORKs months for some future time when you might need them more than now?

Did you ever do that?

Are you doing that now?

What, if anything, have you already done to prepare in case you do reach the time limit?

### ***ADULT PHYSICAL HEALTH, DISABILITY, HEALTH INSURANCE***

Now lets talk about health and your family members.

Relative to other people your age, would you rate YOUR overall health at the present time as excellent, very good, good, fair, or poor?

And how would you rate your [wife/husband/partner]'s health, relative to other people [his/her] age—excellent, very good, good, fair, or poor?

At any time in the last year were either you or your [wife/husband/partner] a patient in a hospital OVERNIGHT, [— not counting any time you may have been there to have a baby]?

Which of you?

Do you [or your (wife/husband/partner)] have any ongoing physical, mental, or emotional problems that limit you in the kind of work or amount of work that [either] of you can do?

Which of you?

Is your ability to work limited because of PHYSICAL health problems?

Is your ability to work also limited because of problems with emotions, nerves or mental health?

Have you been limited in your ability to work for 12 or more months?

Have you ever applied for Supplemental Security Income or SSI? SSI provides cash benefits to people with limiting disabilities based on financial need.

What happened with this application?

Did you get SSI, or get denied, or are you still waiting, or did something else happen?

Did you appeal that decision?

How many times did you appeal an SSI decision?

Have you ever applied for Social Security Disability Insurance or SSDI? Social Security pays benefits to you and certain members of your family if you are "insured" meaning that you worked long enough and paid Social Security taxes.

What happened with this application?

Did you get Social Security Disability, or get denied, or are you still waiting, or did something else happen?

Did you appeal that decision?

How many times did you appeal an SSDI decision?

Does your health problem affect your family's financial situation?

How does your health problem(s) affect your family's financial situation?

Is your [wife/husband/partner]'s ability to work limited because of PHYSICAL health problems?

Is your [wife/husband/partner]'s ability to work limited because of problems with emotions, nerves or mental health?

Has [he/she] been limited in [his/her] ability to work for 12 or more months?

Has [he/she] ever applied for Supplemental Security Income or SSI? SSI provides cash benefits to people with limiting disabilities based on financial need.

What happened with this application?

Did [he/she] get SSI, or get denied, or is [he/she] still waiting, or did something else happen?

Did [he/she] appeal that decision?

How many times did [he/she] appeal an SSI decision?

Has [he/she] ever applied for Social Security Disability Insurance or SSDI? Social Security pays benefits to you and certain members of your family if you are "insured" meaning that you worked long enough and paid Social Security taxes.

What happened with this application?

Did [he/she] get Social Security Disability, or get denied, or are [he/she] still waiting, or did something else happen?

Did [he/she] appeal that decision?

Does your [wife/husband/partner] have an ongoing physical or mental health problem or disability such that [he/she] needs help with personal care, such as eating or bathing, or with other routine daily tasks?

Does your [wife/husband/partner]'s health problem affect your family's financial situation?

How does your [wife/husband/partner]'s health problem(s) affect your family's financial situation?

- Respondent can't work at all
- Respondent's available work hours reduced
- [wife/husband/partner] can't work at all
- [wife/husband/partner]'s available work hours reduced
- [wife/husband/partner] needs special care or medication that costs money
- Other (SPECIFY)

Are you the primary person who helps your [wife/husband/partner] with personal care needs or routine tasks?

Was there ever a time in the past 12 months when you or someone in your immediate family needed medical care but did not get care at all, or did not get care as quickly as needed?

In the past 12 months, how many times did that happen (—when you or a family member did not get needed medical care or the care was delayed)?

Was the needed medical care not received at all, or was the care delayed?

Thinking of all the times it happened over the past 12 months, was the needed medical care not received at all, or was the care delayed?

Who in the past 12 months, did not get care when needed or had a delay in getting care?

What was the reason for not getting care?

### ***PHYSICAL HEALTH: CHILDREN***

These next questions are about health conditions or problems that YOUR CHILDREN may have.

When your [child has/children have] a health problem, where do you usually take [him/her/them]?

- To his/her regular doctor or nurse practitioner
- To a hospital or emergency room
- To the on-duty doctor at a clinic or community health center
- To some other place (SPECIFY)
- I don't have a place that I know I can take him/her

Does any of your children have any health condition, disability, or behavioral condition that limits the kinds of things or amount of things that [he/she] can do, such as playing, going to school or participating in family activities?

How many of your (number) children have a limiting health problem?

Please think about the oldest of these children with limiting health problems—How old is this child?

Does this child have any of these conditions?

- How about allergy or asthma?
- How about attention deficit or hyperactivity?
- How about behavior or emotional problems?
- How about developmental delay?
- How about loss of sight or hearing (total or partial)?
- How about motor disability (Cerebral Palsy or paralysis)?
- How about respiratory problems?
- How about some other chronic disease? (SPECIFY)

And does this child need help with eating or toileting or getting around?

Are you the primary person who helps this child with eating or toileting or getting around?

Who is the primary person who helps this child?

Please think about the youngest of these children with limiting health problems—How old is this child?

Does this child have any of these conditions?

- How about allergy or asthma?
- How about attention deficit or hyperactivity?
- How about behavior or emotional problems?
- How about developmental delay?
- How about loss of sight or hearing (total or partial)?
- How about motor disability (Cerebral Palsy or paralysis)?
- How about respiratory problems?
- How about some other chronic disease? (SPECIFY)

And does this child need help with eating or toileting or getting around?

Are you the primary person who helps this child with eating or toileting or getting around?

Who is the primary person who helps this child?

Does your children's health problem(s) health problem(s) affect your [or your (wife/husband/partner)'s] ability to work?

How do your children's health problem(s) affect your [or your (wife/husband/partner)'s] ability to work?

- Cannot work
- Can't work hrs needed
- Other (SPECIFY)

And do your children's health problem(s) affect your family's financial situation in some other way?

How does [this child's/these children's] health problem(s) affect your family's financial situation?

- Child(ren) need(s) medication that costs money
- Child(ren) need(s) special care or services that cost money
- Other

The next set of questions are about the [other adult/adults] living with you in your household, other than your spouse. Because of an ongoing physical or mental health problem or disability, [does this person/do any of these people] need help with personal care, such as eating or bathing, or with other routine daily tasks?

How many of the other [NUMBER] adults living with you in your household need such help (—with personal care, such as eating or bathing, or with other routine daily tasks)?

Are you the primary person who helps any of these people with personal care needs or routine tasks?

[Does this person's/Do any of these people's] health problem(s) affect [your/or your wife/husband/partner's] ability to work?

How [does this person's/do of these people's] health problem(s) affect [your/or your wife/husband/partner's] ability to work?

And do these people's health problems affect your family's financial situation in some other way?

How do these people's health problems affect your family's financial situation?

## LEARNING DISABILITIES

Do you have difficulty memorizing numbers?

Do you have difficulty adding and subtracting small numbers in your head?

Do you have difficulty filling out forms?

Do you have difficulty remembering how to spell simple words you know?

Were you ever in a special program in school, or given extra help in school?

Have you ever been diagnosed with a learning disability?

How does your learning disability affect your ability to get or keep a job?

- No impact.
- Makes it harder to get or keep a job.
- Makes it hard to get or keep a good job, or the kind of job I'd like.
- Other (SPECIFY)

Do your difficulties —[with numbers – with filling out forms – with spelling – with learning] affect your ability to get or keep a job?

- No impact.
- Makes it harder to get or keep a job.
- Makes it hard to get or keep a good job, or the kind of job I'd like.
- Other (SPECIFY)

## MENTAL HEALTH: DEPRESSION

During the past 12 months, was there ever a time when you felt sad, blue, or depressed for two weeks or more in a row?

During the past 12 months, was there ever a time lasting two weeks or more when you lost interest in most things like taking care of your kids or home, work, or activities that usually give you pleasure?

For the next few questions, please think of the two-week period during the past 12 months when these feelings were worst. During that time did the feelings of being sad, blue, or depressed usually last all day long, most of the day, about half the day, or less than half the day?

For the next few questions, please think of the two-week period during the past 12 months when you had the most complete loss of interest in things. During that two-week period, did the loss of interest usually last all day long, most of the day, about half the day, or less than half the day?

During those 2 weeks, did you feel this way every day, almost every day, or less often?

During those 2 weeks, did you lose interest in most things like taking care of your kids or home, work, or activities that usually give you pleasure?

Thinking about those same 2 weeks, did you feel more tired out or low on energy than is usual for you?

Did you gain or lose weight without trying, or did you stay about the same?



About how much weight did you gain/lose?

Did you have more trouble falling asleep than you usually do during those two weeks?

Did that happen every night, nearly every night, or less often during those two weeks?

During those two weeks, did you have a lot more trouble concentrating than usual?

People sometimes feel down on themselves, no good, or worthless. During that two week period, did you feel this way?

Did you think a lot about death—either your own, someone else's, or death in general during those two weeks?

To review, you had two weeks in a row during the past 12 months when you were sad, blue, or depressed and also had some other feelings or problems like... (READS FIRST THREE PROBLEMS REPORTED BY RESPONDENT.)

- losing interest in things that usually give you pleasure -
- feeling more tired-out or low on energy than is usual -
- having a weight change of 10 lbs or more -
- having more trouble falling asleep than usual -
- having more trouble concentrating than usual -
- feeling down on yourself -
- thinking a lot about death -

About how many weeks altogether did you feel this way during the past 12 months?

Think about this most recent time when you had two weeks in a row when you felt this way. How long ago was that?

Did you tell a doctor about these problems—by "doctor" I mean either a medical doctor or osteopath, or a student in training to be either a medical doctor or osteopath?

Did you tell any other professional—such as a psychologist, social worker, counselor, nurse, clergy, or other helping professional?

Did you take medication or use drugs or alcohol more than once for these problems?

How much did these problems interfere with your life or activities—a lot, some, a little, or not at all?

In the past year, has your depression interfered with your ability to take care of your kids or home, or work at a job or at school?

In the past year, have problems with your feelings, emotions, or mental health interfered with your ability to take care of your kids or home, or work at a job or at school?

### ***MENTAL HEALTH: ANXIETY***

During the past 12 months, did you ever have a time lasting one month or longer when most of the time you felt worried, tense, or anxious?

People differ a lot in how much they worry about things. Did you have a time in the past 12 months when you worried a lot more than most people would in your situation?

Has that time ended or is it still going on?

How many months or years has it been going on?

How many months or years did it go on before it ended?

[During that time,] would you say that your worry [was/is] stronger than in other people?

[Did/Do] you worry most days?

[Did/Do] you usually worry about one particular thing, such as your [child/children] or the failing health of a loved one, or more than one thing?

[Did/Do] you find it difficult to stop worrying?

[Did/Do] you ever have different worries on your mind at the same time?

How often [was/is] your worry so strong that you couldn't put it out of your mind no matter how hard you tried—often, sometimes, rarely, or never?

How often [did/do] you find it difficult to control your worry—often, sometimes, rarely, or never?

What sort of things [did/do] you mainly worry about? (SPECIFY) PROBE: Any other main worries?

When you [were/are] worried or anxious, were you also restless?

[Were/Are] you keyed up or on edge?

[Were/Are] you easily tired?

[Did/Do] you have difficulty keeping your mind on what you were doing?

[Were/Are] you more irritable than usual?  
(WORDING VARIED FOR PAST/PRESENT SYMPTOMS)

[Did/Do] you have tense, sore, or aching muscles?

[Did/Do] you often have trouble falling or staying asleep?

Did you tell a doctor about your worry or about the problems it was causing—by "doctor" I mean either a medical doctor or osteopath, or a student in training to be either a medical doctor or osteopath?

Did you tell any other professional, such as a psychologist, social worker, counselor, nurse, clergy, or other helping professional?

Did you take medication or use drugs or alcohol more than once for the worry or the problems it was causing?

How much [did/does] the worry or anxiety interfere with your life or activities—a lot, some, a little, or not at all?

In the past year, has anxiety or worrying interfered with your ability to take care of your kids or home, or work at a job or at school?

### ***MENTAL HEALTH: STRESS***

In the past year, have any stressful events in your life interfered with your ability to take care of your kids or home, or work at a job or at school—please do not include the birth of a child?

How many events of this sort happened in the past year? IF NECESSARY: I'm asking about Events that interfered with your ability to take care of your kids or home, or work at a job or at school.

How much did [that event/these events] interfere with your ability to take care of your kids or home, or work at a job or at school over the past year? Would you say a lot, some, or a little?

### MENTAL HEALTH: DRUG AND ALCOHOL USE

The next questions are about alcoholic beverages. In these questions, By a "drink" we mean either a bottle of beer, a wine cooler, a glass of wine, a shot of liquor, or a mixed drink. In the past year, how often did you have a drink in an average week? Would you say never, once or twice a week or less, 3 to 4 times a week, or most days?

In the past year, what is the largest number of drinks you had in any single day—none, between 1 and 3, 4 to 10, 11 to 20, or more than 20 drinks in a single day?

In the past year, was there ever a time when your drinking or being hung over, interfered with your ability to take care of your kids or home, or work at a job or at school?

In the past year, did you have such a strong desire or urge to drink that you could not keep from drinking?

In the past year, did you have a period of a month or more when you spent a great deal of time drinking or getting over the effects of alcohol?

The next questions are about your use of drugs in the past year. In responding, please include drugs you used without a doctor's prescription, or prescription drugs used in larger amounts or for a longer period than recommended.

In the past year, have you used sedatives, barbiturates, sleeping pills, or tranquilizers in this manner? (for example Seconal, Halcion, Methaqualone, Librium, Valium, Ativan, Meprobamate, Xanax?)

In the past year have you used analgesics or other PRESCRIPTION painkillers in this manner? (NOTE: this does not include NORMAL use of aspirin, Tylenol without codeine, etc., but does include use of Tylenol with codeine and other Rx pain killers like Demerol, Darvon, Percodan, Codeine, Morphine, and Methadone?)

How about marijuana or hashish? In the past year have you used marijuana or hashish?

How about amphetamines or other stimulants, cocaine or crack or free base, LSD or other hallucinogens, or inhalants that you sniff or breathe to get high or to feel good? Have you used any of these in the past year? (for example, Methamphetamine, Preludin, Dexedrine, Ritalin, "Speed", PCP, angeldust, peyote, ecstasy (MDMA), mescaline, Amylnitrate, Freon, Nitrous Oxide ("Whippets"), Gasoline, Spray paint?)

In the past year, did your use of any of these substances [drugs] ever interfere with your ability to take care of your kids or home, or work at a job or at school?

How often? Would you say once or twice, between 3 and 5 times, 6 to 10 times, 11 to 20 times, or more than 20 times in the past year?

In the past year, did you have such a strong desire or urge to use any of these substances that you could not keep from using them?

In the past year, did you have a period of a month or more when you spent a great deal of time using any of these substances or getting over their effects?

## **DOMESTIC VIOLENCE**

Has anyone you have been married to or in a romantic relationship with ever hit, slapped, or kicked you, or in some other way physically hurt you, other than sexual assault?

How often has this occurred in the past 12 months, that is since (MONTH), (YEAR)?

Would you say never, once, 2 or 3 times, or 4 or more times?

Thinking about the most serious of these, how seriously were you hurt?

Would you say not at all, slightly, moderately, or severely?

Did you seek medical treatment at that time?

Has anyone you have been married to or in a romantic relationship with ever forced you into any sexual activity against your will?

How often has this occurred in the past 12 months—never, once, 2 or 3 times, or 4 or more times?

Has anyone you have been married to or in a romantic relationship with ever made it difficult for you to go to work, training or school or harassed you while you were there?

How often has this occurred in the past 12 months—never, once, 2 or 3 times, or 4 or more times?

Has anyone you have been married to or in a romantic relationship with ever caused you to lose a job, or drop out of school or training because of their behavior?

How often has this occurred in the past 12 months—never, once, 2 or 3 times, or 4 or more times?

In the past year, have you or someone else called the police because you were threatened or harmed by a spouse, partner, or anyone you were in a romantic relationship with?

Thinking back to the things you just told me occurred in the past 12 months, did any of these events lead you to leave your home and stay someplace else, like with a friend or at a shelter?

Did you tell your CalWORKs case manager about any of these events?

Did your current [wife/husband/partner] any of those things to you?

## **DEMOGRAPHICS**

Do you consider yourself African American or Black, White or Caucasian, Hispanic or Latino, Asian, Pacific Islander, Native American, or some other race or ethnicity?

What is your national origin?

If Asian, what is your ethnicity?

What language do you mostly speak in your home? *(This question was asked earlier in the abbreviated interview.)*

FOREIGN LANGUAGE CASES ONLY:

*In what country were you born?*

Were you born in the United States, in a US territory, or in another country?

Are you a US citizen?

Have you always lived in California?

According to our records, you've received nearly 5 years of aid in California, so it seems you've been here at least since 1999. Approximately when did you move to California—if you moved here more than once, please tell me about the most recent time?

And approximately when did you move to United States?