

**Diana Jimenez, Branch Deputy Director
Aging and CalWORKs Employment
Services**

DATE: June 14, 2017
TO: Nick Chiulos, Assistant County Administrative Officer
FROM: Diana Jimenez, DSS Deputy Director
SUBJECT: CWES Program Overview

CalWORKs Employment Services (CWES) Program Overview:

CWES is a time limited state mandated Welfare-To-Work (WTW) program that provides vital services and a holistic approach by assisting participants build a career pathway, remove employment barriers, and move toward self-sufficiency and off public assistance utilizing a variety of supportive services and extensive case management.

The case management includes: extensive appraisals and identification of social, poverty, educational, health, and mental health barriers to employment; referrals to appropriate service providers; development of effective Welfare-To- Work plans to assist families move toward self-sufficiency, and ongoing case management and support.

The CWES Program services include: job search, job readiness, and motivational workshops; job placement, High School Equivalency HSE/GED services, learning disability assessments and tutoring, vocational assessments; child care; transportation assistance and support for tools, uniforms, and educational material; mental health, substance abuse, and domestic violence counseling services; credit repair and support for clearing legal records; parenting classes; and housing assistance.

Current Organizational Structure:

Currently the CWES program is part of the Aging and Employment Services (ACES) Branch of the Department of Social Services (DSS). The ACES Branch is led by one Deputy Director who was promoted in October of 2016, and who was the previous CWES Program Manager for 15 years.

Within the CWES portion of the ACES Branch, there is a total of 87 full time positions that includes; one Program Manager, five analysts, eight Employment and Training Supervisors. Additional CWES staff include analysts, clerical support staff, and Employment and Training Workers II and IIIs. Please see attached organizational chart for details.

Budget:

The CWES Program has a FY 2016/2017 budget of \$19.9 million to support the 87 positions, and program mandates.

Please note that in the FY 17/18 four Employment and Training Worker positions were eliminated and \$1.1 million in contracted services were reduced due to pending budget cuts to the CalWORKs program.

Program Eligibility:

CWES is a state mandated program for recipients of the federal TANF program who are between the ages of 18 and 59. CWES Welfare-to-Work (WTW) participants must participate (unless they meet an exemption criteria) in the CWES program for a minimum number of hours per week (20/30/35) depending on their family composition to avoid being sanctioned.

Number of Customers Served:

As of May 2017, the total number of CWES participants was **2270**, of which approximately 625 were exempted and 469 are sanctioned.

Supportive Services:

Supportive services provided to CWES participants include;

- Child care reimbursements using the regional market rates, and assistance locating a child care provider.
- Transportation reimbursements that includes bus tickets and mileage reimbursement to cover fuel costs and the operation and maintenance of the participants’ vehicles.
- Ancillary assistance to cover education and work related expenses such as books, parking permits, clothing, and uniforms.

Supportive services also include **onsite**; group and individual behavioral health, domestic violence, and substance abuse counseling, high school equivalency classes, tutoring and testing, learning disability assessments and tutoring, parenting classes, and stress reduction classes.

Additional services include; credit repair, legal assistance for expungements, lifting of child support license holds, and housing assistance.

Community Partners:

We recognize the value of community partnerships to make a collective impact and help meet the needs of CWES participants to successfully transition off public assistance and onto employment. As such, we have collaborated with 18 different community agencies that includes:

<u>Community Agencies-</u>	<u>Monterey County -</u>	<u>Education -</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • United Way • Goodwill Industries • Community Action Council • Learning Time, Inc. • Watsonville Law Center • Sun Street Centers • Housing Resource Center • MILPA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health Department • Behavioral Health Department • Family and Children Services • Adult Protective Services-SSI/SSP • Child Abuse Council • Child Support Office 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Soledad School District • Monterey Peninsula College • Hartnell Community College • First 5

EMPLOYMENT AND FAMILY STABILIZATION PROGRAMS:

We have implemented several initiatives to better promote and help families address barriers and achieve self-sufficiency. Two programs that we would like to highlight are the; Subsidized Employment and Family Stabilization programs.

1. **Expanded Subsidized Employment (ESE):** The ESE program is a one to six month program that provides a first step pathway into employment for CWES participants who lack work experience and includes: real work experience, immediate job placement, supportive work environment, soft skills development, job skills development, job retention training, value and benefit of earning a fair wage, meets program requirements, concurrent employment barrier removal, and opportunity to secure unsubsidized employment.

Between January 2014 and March 2017,

- 616 CalWORKs participants were enrolled in the ESE program and;
- \$1,720,570 was paid in wages (over \$2,750 per participant)
- 40% obtained un-subsidized employment and moved off cash aid public assistance
- 74% met required WTW participation requirements

2. **Family Stabilization (FS):** The FS program was established to help CWES families in crisis and assist them stabilize their situation through extensive case management provided by a Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT) consisting of CWES Workers, Child Protective Services, Community, and Domestic Violence Social Workers, Behavioral Health Counselors, and Housing Specialists.

The FS families face significant barriers such as homelessness, mental health, and/or substance abuse. The FS MDT team hold monthly joint meetings to address the families' needs and ensure they are collaborating and streamlining processes to help the families get needed resources to stabilize their crisis. Between December 2014 and December 2016,

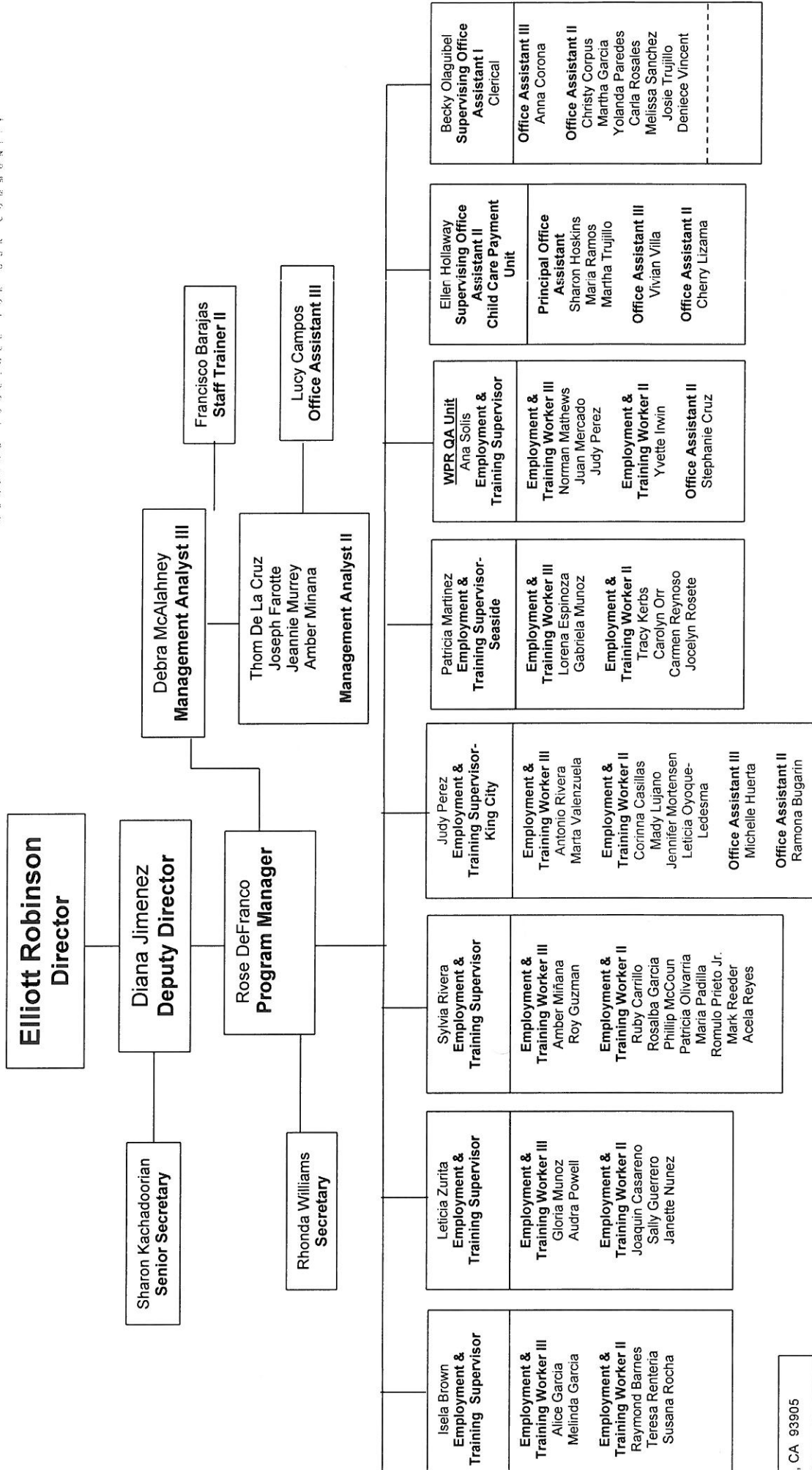
- 208 families were enrolled in the FS program
- 56 families received housing assistance
- 81 (40%) families became stabilized; most were stabilized within 3-4 months
- 115 (53%) transitioned off public assistance

PROGRAM RESULTS:

CWES has been making significant and continuous progress over the last few years by increasing the Monterey County Federal Work Participation Rate (WPR). The target WPR goal of 50% participation was met in Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2016 and the new FFY is off to a strong start.

As important is the positive impact the CWES program has made to the families we serve by providing them with a holistic approach to addressing their needs and providing much needed resources and hope for a better day.

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