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CalWORKs 2.0 County Level Guide

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Strategic Initiative Team

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Contents

INFORMATION ABOUT THIS GUIDE

Description: This guide is for county administrative staff. It includes two sections:

1. a **background** section on CalWORKs 2.0, including the goal-achievement framework and intentional service selection concepts underlying it, as well as CalWORKs Policy context, and

2. directions on how to utilize the CalWORKs 2.0 framework for planning and goal setting in your county to help manage staff, program development and allocation of resources. The guide contains descriptions of tools that help facilitate a strategic planning process that can aid programs in moving toward a more family-centered, goal-achievement approach to serving families.

Purpose: This guide describes the components of CalWORKs 2.0 and the constructs behind them, and provides instructions for using a set of tools in a regular county planning and improvement process.

When to use this guide: The tools in this guide are designed to support critical reflection on program design and a structured, forward thinking process for program change through goal setting. Counties may find it beneficial to use the tools in this guide annually, semi-annually, or quarterly to review progress toward goals, update plans and set new goals.

How to use this guide: **Read through this guide** when you first receive it. Make sure you understand the principles behind CalWORKs 2.0 and the culture change indicated by the background and contextual information. Once you have a foundational understanding of CalWORKs 2.0, review the tools and how to use them. It is a good idea to involve multiple key staff at different levels in the county goal setting and change process. Have all staff involved in that process read this guide, and then **reference the guide** while working together as a team to create change and program improvement. You can refer to the table on page 7 as a quick reference to review tools that are used at different stages in the planning and goal setting process.

What successful use of this guide would look like: You can describe the CalWORKs 2.0 principles to co-workers and customers and how it differs from your work in the past. You understand the principles behind good goal-setting and can apply them broadly (that is, for any type of goal). You have a good understanding of program goals to move toward full implementation of CalWORKs 2.0 and how the program will look unique in your county. You refer to the guide whenever needed to make decisions about how and when to use specific tools with customers.

How to get more information: Visit the **CalWORKs 2.0 Next Generation website** (http://calworksnextgen.org/). There you can:

*   Refer to training videos to see how the frontline tools are ideally used with customers.

*   View webinars that provide a deeper background on the science behind CalWORKs 2.0 and the goal-setting framework.

SECTION 1: CALWORKS 2.0 COUNTY CONTEXT

The CalWORKs program has made significant changes over the last 25 years in response to economic, budgetary, and political forces. Some of these changes have expanded the options available for helping customers and even resulted in customer success, however there is **room for additional improvement**. The current compliance-oriented, directive case management approach has had limited success. Recognizing this, the County Welfare Directors Association (CWDA) of California launched an initiative to incorporate emerging research evidence on brain science, behavioral science, and best practices on how adults learn and build critical skills.

> **CalWORKs 2.0 is a new framework for delivering CalWORKs services that emphasizes goal-achievement, intentional service selection, and considers the circumstances and needs of the whole family.**

Known as CalWORKs 2.0, this new approach focuses on helping people **set and achieve their goals**, which requires an environment with flexibility and a shift from directive case management to customer-led case management focused on goals. The redesigned approach will help families set goals that are aligned with program aims while taking into account families' strengths and the obstacles they face. With CalWORKs supports and services, some customers are immediately able to begin, but others need time to resolve crises and address significant challenges before they can progress. CalWORKs 2.0 emphasizes the importance of engaging in activities on the way to full employment. While this is a fundamental shift for some counties, other counties may already be implementing some of these concepts into their current work.

The design of CalWORKs 2.0 draws from emerging research in several complementary fields:

- **Adult Capabilities:** Long-term exposure to the stresses of poverty affects adults' core capabilities (i.e. organizing, planning, self-control, and monitoring). Core adult capabilities are best improved through supportive relationships that empower people to make choices that are meaningful to them.

- **Goal Achievement**: Working on goal achievement can ultimately have positive impact on self-sufficiency. Adults are more likely to achieve goals when (1) they set goals that are meaningful to them, (2) the goals are specific, short-term, and within their reach, (3) and plans are in place to address roadblocks before they occur.

- **Behavioral Science:** Living in poverty imposes a "bandwidth tax" that limits individuals' ability to see and plan for the future. Programs can increase success by streamlining requirements, removing unnecessary hassles and ensuring that communications focus only on the most important information.

- **How Adults Learn**: Adults need to do something with new information in order to learn. Learning happens when people focus on what is most relevant to their life now. Adults are more likely to make changes in their life when staff engage in supportive (rather than directive) relationships.

CalWORKs 2.0 Tools

There are **several tools** for you to use as you reflect on your program successes and challenges and strategically plan for continuous quality improvement over time. Work to demonstrate the behavior you expect to see from staff by using goal oriented language and encouraging regular, crticial reflection on how program activities, worker behavior and client experiences align with the established county vision for a successful CalWORKs 2.0 program. The tools in this guide are designed to work as a package of resources that provide concrete information to aid in reflection on program design and success, as well as establish forward looking outcomes through culture change and goals setting.

A Policy Note

The breadth of services available to CalWORKs participants sets CalWORKs apart from nearly every other welfare employment program in the country. The distinguishing features are: (1) a strong commitment to serving a greater proportion of low-income families; (2) access to a range of personal and work supports, including mental health and substance abuse treatment; and (3) investments in education and training opportunities that are much more substantial than in other programs nationwide.

CalWORKs 2.0 enhances the program by drawing on the latest research on the important role that adult capabilities play in parenting and employment success, and emerging evidence of effective employment practices. It differs from the current CalWORKs approach in several key ways:

- Rather than focusing on putting all participants on the same path to work, it emphasizes the importance of intentionally selecting services that are appropriate given participants' unique needs and circumstances.

- It focuses on helping participants to identify goals that are feasible and personally meaningful to them; break goals into small steps; and develop very detailed action plans that can be completed within relatively short timeframes.

- Rather than focusing on addressing barriers generally, it considers barriers and solutions to overcoming them in relationship to completing the steps outlined in the action plan.

- It assumes that plans will be reviewed and revised regularly and frequently, as participants learn more about themselves, the goals they would like to achieve and how they would like to use their time while they are receiving CalWORKs benefits.

- Rather than place heavy emphasis on achieving WPR, it allows for the development of performance measures that can be used to gauge client progress even if not fully meeting hours requirements. This is more realistic for families and more motivating to them and to staff, who can track incremental progress and critical intermediate steps in skill building and program participation.

Table 1.A: Suggested Tools for County Strategic Planning

Process	Planning goal	Suggested tools to use
Culture Change	Develop a comprehensive understanding of the vision for CalWORKs 2.0 and think critically about how County program design and implementation might change to reflect that vision.	Goal Achievement Framework
		Intentional Service Selection
		County Goal Setting Guide
Assessment	Review current program design elements in five key areas as well as current program resource allocation and prioritize places for county change.	County Self-Assessment
		County Resource Map
Reflection	Examine how program and staff performance aligns with updated concepts and expectations for CalWORKs 2.0.	CW 2.0 Staff Attributes Matrix
		CW 2.0 Fidelity Tool

SECTION 2: CALWORKS 2.0 COUNTY TOOLS AND HOW TO USE THEM

This section describes the CalWORKs 2.0 tools and presents detailed guidance on how to use them. For each tool, use the general process below. More details about how to use the individual tools are described in the sections below.

Step-by-step process for using the tools for strategic planning:

1. Provide key administrative and supervisory staff at multiple levels with CalWORKs 2.0 strategic planning and goal setting tools contained in this guide

2. Allow staff time to review the tools and reflect on the content

3. Provide staff with program data and documentation that accurately reflects current program design, performance, and expectations

4. Collect assessment feedback from staff independently about current program performance, and combine individual feedback into composite or summary program reflections to share with the broader group

5. Conduct collaborative meeting(s) with key staff involved in the reflection process (preferably across many levels) to discuss if the program intentions and expectations are reflected in current program implementation and execution

6. Determine priority areas for improvement in program approach, resources allocation, staff training and support, environment, and county culture to take steps toward continuous quality improvement

7. Set program goals that echo the assessment and reflection noted above. Program goals should demonstrate a clear path forward and relate directly to improvement and priority areas highlighted by administrators, staff and customers during the assessment and reflection processes

Goal-Achievement Framework

In a goal-achievement framework, families set **individual goals** that are **meaningful to them** and aligned with program aims, but are realistic given their strengths and challenges. When customers are working on goals that are meaningful to them and within their reach, customers may be more likely to participate and stay engaged long enough to progress. In contrast, when customers are required to participate in activities that do not directly address their current circumstances, they are unlikely to follow through. The clear messaging of each interaction should be: "CalWORKs is here to help you set and achieve your goals."

> CalWORKs 2.0, a new framework for delivering CalWORKs services, emphasizes goal achievement and intentional service selection, and considers the circumstances and needs of the entire family.

The CalWORKs 2.0 goal-achievement framework is built on a **four-step process** that, if practiced regularly and with fidelity, will build skills and make setting and achieving goals easier and more effective. Any meeting with a customer can cover one or more steps. The four steps always happen in the same order:

1. **Goal:** Set a goal—something that the customer wants to accomplish and is within their reach.

2. **Plan:** Create a road map for how to achieve the goal and identify obstacles and solutions.

3. **Do:** Put the plan into action.

4. **Review/Revise:** Assess what was achieved and what wasn't; make a new plan, modify an existing goal, or set a new one.

The framework relies on the idea that **successful small steps** will lead to better long-term outcomes. Using the CalWORKs 2.0 tools, customers can set and achieve goals and benchmarks (e.g., showing up to appointments, calling and connecting to service referrals, completing job readiness training, attending job fairs, attending mental health counseling) on the way to meeting longer-term goals like full-time employment. Applying a customer-driven goal achievement approach is more motivating for customers than a compliance-driven approach and will help customers stick with their planned activities.

| GOAL-ACHIEVEMENT PRINCIPLES |
|---|
| **GOAL-SETTING** |
| Goals need to be personally **meaningful** and motivating **Visualizing** the outcome makes the goal feel real and builds motivation to achieve it Goals must be **challenging, but still within reach**—goals that are too easy are un-motivating, and goals that are too hard are abandoned out of frustration Goals must be **specific** and have a **clear target** and **timeline** To develop a goal habit, set (and review goals) **daily or weekly** If needed, reframe CalWORKs activities as **opportunities** to pursue goals that are meaningful to the customer |
| **GOAL-PLANNING** |
| **Write down** plans to make them stick Commit to goals by sharing them with others, **an action that holds us accountable** Break long-term goals into **shorter, more manageable goals or steps**; short-term goals are more motivating that longer-term goals Be **specific** and include the details of **when** you will complete each step Encourge the customer to think about the **support and resources needed** to reach the goal **Identify obstacles** that may get in the way of achieveing the goal and **develop solutions** for each obstacle |
| **GOAL-DOING** |
| Help customers achieve their goals by: Walking customers through their action plan at the end of the planning session Helping customers develop their own reminder system Providing regular reminders Providing opportunities to practice working on their goal Reducing program burden on participants Helping participants address and manage stress Providing lots of encouragement and feedback |
| **GOAL-REVIEWING AND REVISING** |
| **Review**: How did it go? **Revise:** What did you learn? What will you do moving forward? Create a **learning environment:** Be **strengths-based**: What went well? **Emphasize the learning**: What did you learn about yourself or your obstacles? Be **forward-looking**: What can I do differently next time? Convey these **messages** to build skills: Success is starting! There is No Failure → Only Feedback We rarely get goals or plans right the first time we try |

Why this approach to goal achievement is different

Most human service programs touch on goal-setting and planning with customers along with activities like removing barriers (e.g. childcare referral), job search, and training referrals. Research suggests that a focus on these common activities is likely not enough to accomplish real change. Instead of requiring every customer to do the same activities at the same pace, the GPDR framework focuses on empowering customers to set and achieve their own goals. With use, interactions between staff and customers can become more relational and less transactional. Here are highlights of how each stage of the GPDR process differs from current practice.

Goal	- Customers set goals, not the program or staff - Staff act as facilitators, not fixers - Staff guide clients beyond generic goals to personally meaningful goals within the client's control - Staff help clients build confidence with success in achieving feasible short-term goals - Staff suggest ways clients can use program activities and services to help achieve their goals
Plan	- Staff guide clients to develop specific, yet simple plans (including what, when where and how) - Staff help clients identify strategies to overcome potential obstacles *before they happen*. - Staff work with clients to write their plans down and rehearse them
Do	- Staff provide support and encouragement when clients are doing their plans - Staff design opportunities for clients to support and encourage each other - Staff offer opportunities for clients to build and practice skills they need to remain focused on goals and do their plans - Program components with frequent contact (job search, work experience or subsidized employment) offer skill building opportunities related to goal achievement
Review/Revise	- Staff focus client check-ins on assessing how things went and how it relates to moving forward - Plans are viewed as living documents that change as clients learn more about their strengths and become clearer about what matters most to them

Intentional Service Selection
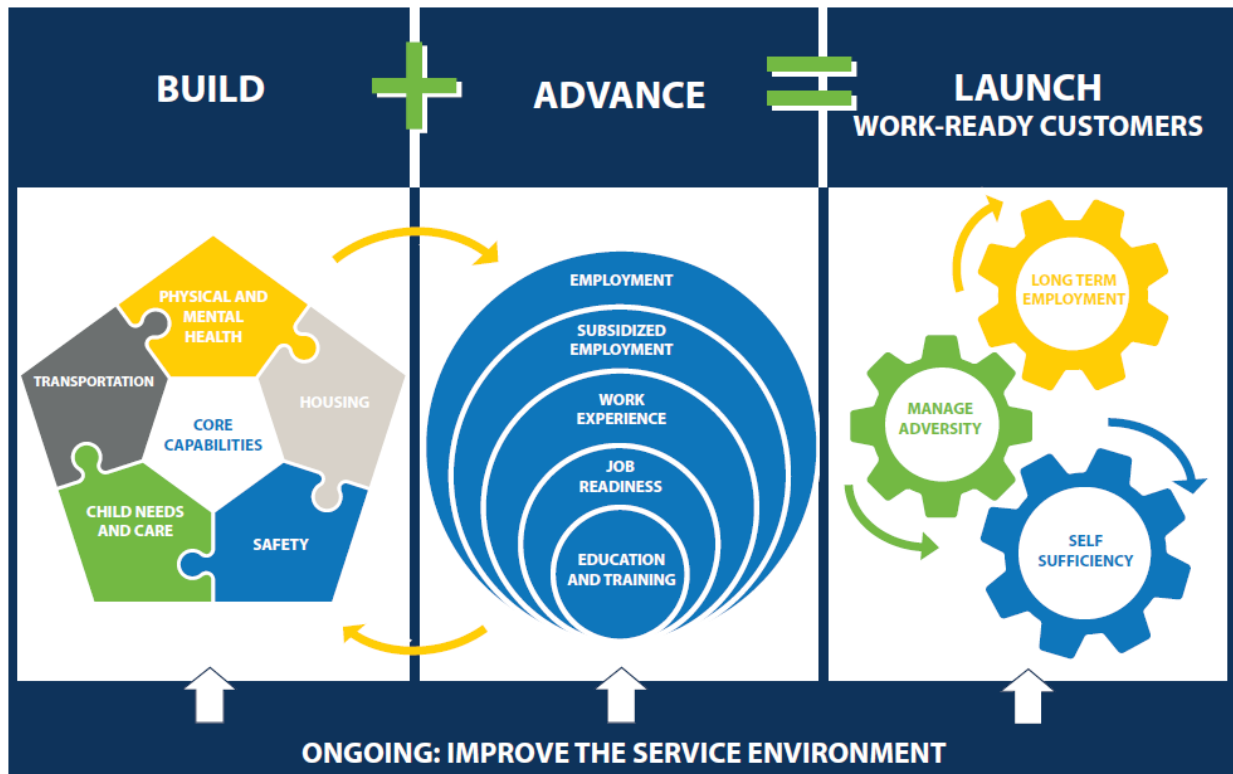
For goal-achievement to be successful, counties need to provide services in a reimagined service environment that takes into account a family's circumstances, strengths, challenges and goals. Through Intentional Service Selection (ISS), county administrators consider their **unique county circumstances and goals as a starting point** for updating their service delivery model and setting county goals to make progress and continually improve the program to best meet the needs of customers within the policy and resource constraints of the locality.

Counties should determine their starting point by completing the county self-assessment tool to evaluate the state of the current organizational environment relative to the vision of CalWORKs 2.0. Then administrators can intentionally prioritize areas for making changes that will move the county culture forward towards the desired "to be" state. When counties have a desired CalWORKs program approach service delivery model goal, administrators can work through the goal-setting guide to reflect on these priorities and set program activity, staff management and customer outcome goals accordingly.

Finally, the culture change and practice of intentionality must come from the top down. Administrators should clearly communicate to staff that it is ok to think more broadly about the paths that might lead clients to full program participation and to encourage staff to align their behavior with the updated CalWORKs 2.0 program goals. In every county these priorities may

look a little different, but generally staff should be encouraged to think beyond the WPR as a way of measuring their own performance and the success of customers.

ISS PRINCIPLES for the County
Communication with staff

• Avoid sending mixed messages, for example by focusing exclusively on WPR as the measure of staff performance.
 • Complete the Resource Map
   - Use it as a guide to help identify gaps in services in your county
   - Ensure that resources are designed to meet clients where they are and help them find a path toward full participation and, eventually, employment
   - Consciously make funding decisions about where resources are allocated - acknowledging explicitly when one resource is provided at the exclusion of another
   - Identify areas to expand service offerings, potentially through partnerships if new resources are unavailable
   - Develop a plan for regularly updating the Resource Map

Program planning and partnerships

• Maximize partnerships and specify contract requirements around intentional service selection model.
   - Use contract negotiations as opportunities to outline how you want staff (in-house and contracted) to engage customers and place them in activities based on their unique needs and circumstances.
   - Prioritize partnership and contract decisions based on findings from self-assessment and resource mapping to fill gaps or expand services for the needs of the largest CalWORKs population segments.

Introduction to County Goal Setting

Purpose: This goal setting overview is designed to help counties start the critical process of explicitly outlining program outcomes of interest specific to the county. This guide provides a simple stepwise process for counties to complete in order to derive those outcomes of interest and then set appropriate goals related to them.

Description: This is a brief document that introduces county goal setting, and provides framing for thinking about county, program and client goals. The graphics and stepwise process succinctly walk counties through initiating the goal setting process.

When to use: This goal setting guide can be used alongside the other county resources with whatever frequency the county would like to reflect on progress and update goals. The county may choose to examine their program at quarterly, semi-annual, or annual intervals depending on the continuous quality improvement desires and the magnitude of the change expected as well as how long that change is anticipated to take.

How to use: County CalWORKs leadership and other key staff involved in the county assessment and reflection process should read the goal setting guide completely prior to engaging in a reflective and analytic conversation. The guide should be used to facilitate the conversation amongst team staff members designated to set and reflect on goals for continuous quality improvement.

What successful use would look like: Counties will establish a regular process for engaging in county reflection, assessment, and goal achievement. Counties will record, distribute, and follow up with staff on goals. Goals will be easy to understand and applicable to regular staff activities such that county team members can use them as part of a framework for making service delivery decisions and engage customers with intentionality in a goal-achievement framework.

Why setting county-level goals is an important component of CalWORKs 2.0
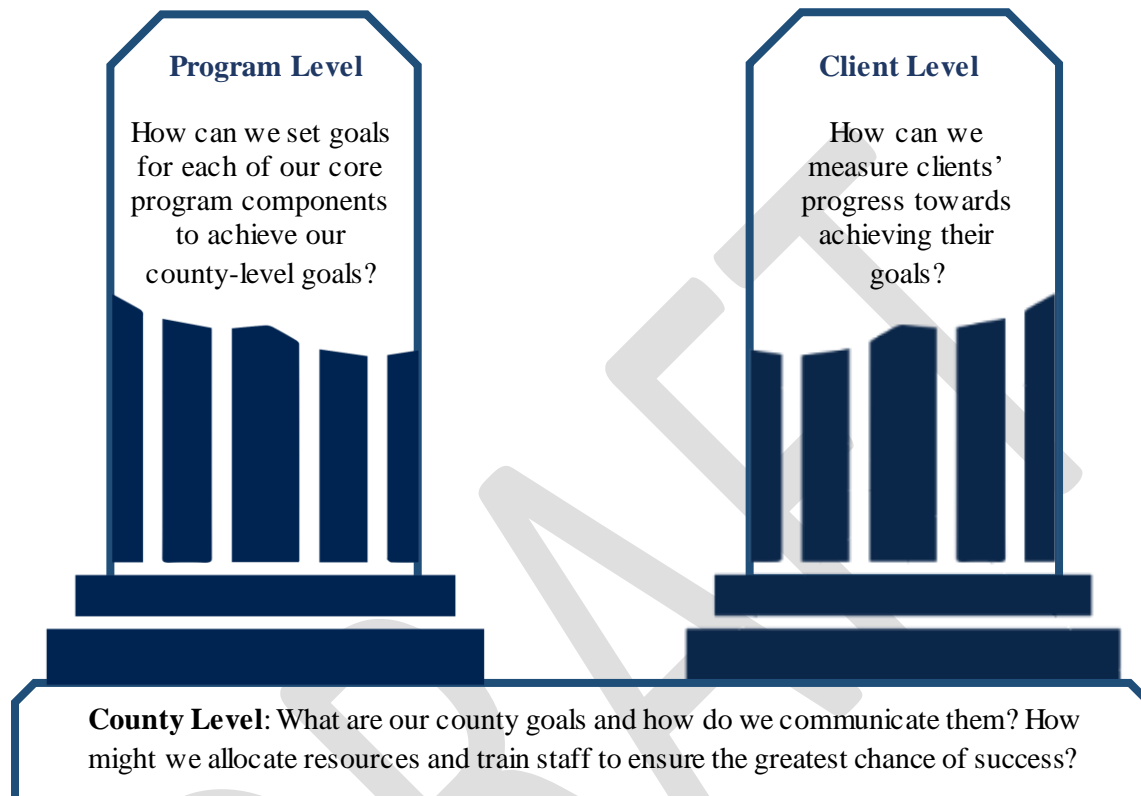
Effective county-level goals can keep everyone focused on the same destination, help create clarity about how each of the program activities contributes to the county's overall goals and identify how to target limited resources. Given the structure of CalWORKs, it is quite likely that counties will have goals in similar domains (e.g., engagement, employment, education, and family well-being) but their actual goals within those domains may differ, reflecting their unique priorities and caseloads.

Effective goals are also a critical component of creating better programs. If you know where you're heading and where you are now, it is much easier to think specifically and strategically about how to get from point A to point B – and to figure out whether the strategies you've implemented are helping to get you there. It also helps to target limited resources to the components of your program where you feel like you have the best chance of making improvements.

Effective goals can also keep staff engaged because they know what they are aiming for and what is expected of them – and allows them to celebrate their successes along the way.
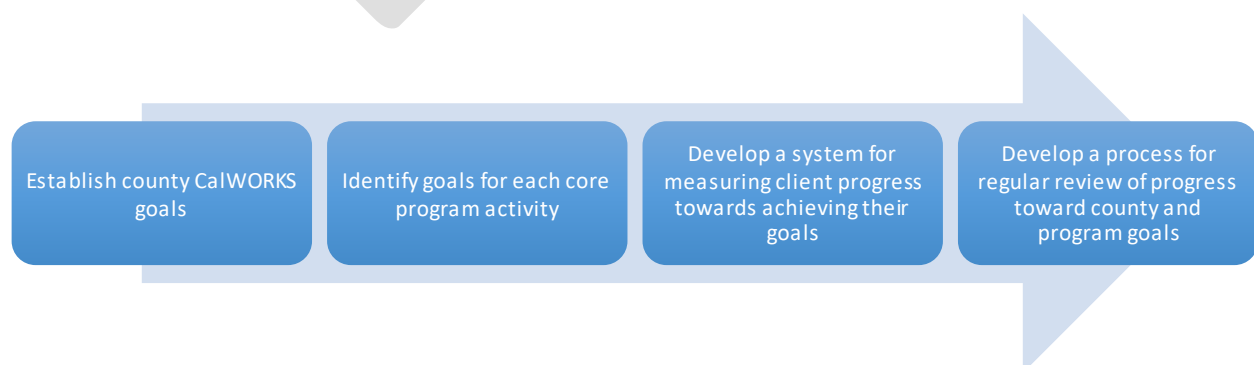
Effective goals should be SMART – specific, measurable, attainable, realistic and time-bound. There also should be a manageable number of them. It is better to have a few goals which you can realistically strive to achieve than to have many goals that fail to provide a clear roadmap for what you hope to achieve.

Effective County-Level Goals Provide the Foundation for Program and Client-Level Goals

Program Level

How can we set goals for each of our core program components to achieve our county-level goals?

Client Level

How can we measure clients' progress towards achieving their goals?

County Level: What are our county goals and how do we communicate them? How might we allocate resources and train staff to ensure the greatest chance of success?

Steps to Successful County and Program-Level Goal-Setting

Counties can use a four-step process to create a goal-achievement foundation for their programs. The primary aim of this process is to encourage counties to take a systematic look at their program through the lens of CalWORKs 2.0, which aims to encourage staff at all levels to think about the goals of CalWORKs as broader than meeting the TANF Work Participation Rate (WPR). The four steps do not need to be completed all at one time. You can start with establishing county-level goals and add the other components as time and resources permit.

| Establish county CalWORKS goals | Identify goals for each core program activity | Develop a system for measuring client progress towards achieving their goals | Develop a process for regular review of progress toward county and program goals |

1. **Establish county-level CalWORKs goals.** County-level goals should reflect the outcomes you hope to achieve for the families you serve. You can start by being explicit about how you define client success in your county. For example, do you define success as: Getting a job? Getting a job at a specific wage? Increasing education or skills? Improving well-being (e.g., providing stable housing)? Engaging clients in program activities? After clarifying how you define success, you can begin to establish county-level goals that provide an explicit framework for what you hope to achieve.

> **Examples of county-level goals**
> - **Increase participation in post-secondary education by 10 percent within the next year**
> - **Increase program engagement by 10 percent within the next six months**
> - **Place 50 percent of clients assigned to group job search in paid employment within three months.**
>
> *Note that the first two goals are improvement goals and the last goal is an absolute target; both are acceptable types of county-level goals.*

2. **Identify goals for each core program activity.** CalWORKs uses a broad range of strategies to guide participants toward economic and life success. This component of the goal setting process encourages counties to think strategically and specifically about what constitutes success within each program activity, providing staff with clearer direction on the purpose of each program activity. It also helps to clarify how each component contributes to the overall county goals.

3. *Develop a system for measuring client progress towards achieving their goals.* The goal achievement framework underlying CalWORKs 2.0 recognizes the importance of breaking bigger and longer-term goals into small steps with shorter time horizons. Creating a system to measure progress towards achieving longer-term goals can help instill in staff and clients the importance of achieving small steps. There are different ways in which progress and/or interim steps could be captured. For example, you might track movement from no participation to any participation to substantial participation to full participation. Alternatively,

> **Examples of core program activity goals**
> - **Increase the percentage of clients in subsidized employment that move into unsubsidized jobs within six months by 20 percent by January 2019**
> - **Increase the percentage of clients that participate in a program activity after orientation by 50 percent by the end of fiscal year 2018**
> - **50 percent of clients that enter a post-secondary education program complete it**

you might use the CalMAP (included in the frontline guide) as a framework for measuring progress in specific domains. Still another approach would be to track the status of goals that clients set, identifying whether they have been achieved, revised or replaced with a different goal.

4. **Develop a process for regular review of progress towards county and program goals.** Counties can model the importance of reviewing and revising goals by establishing a formal process for writing, distributing and assessing achievement of goals. These regular review periods should also inform whether goals need to be revised and what next steps to take for counties, programs, and customers to achieve success.

County Self-Assessment

Purpose. The county self-assessment is designed to guide county administrators and managers in a reflective exercise about their current CalWORKs implementation. The self-assessment focuses on five areas: (1) program approach, (2) program environment, (3) administration and staffing, (4) service delivery process, and (5) performance management. By completing the self-assessment, counties will gain an understanding of how their current implementation aligns with the CalWORKs 2.0 vision. This assessment can help counties decide where there is interest in making changes to better align with that vision.

People involved. County program administrators, managers and frontline staff should complete the self-assessment, using input from supervisors and other staff as needed. One person can coordinate soliciting feedback from all sources and compiling it, or copies of the self-assessment could be distributed to multiple people with one person tallying the results.

How to complete the assessment. In each of the five focus areas, the first column of the self-assessment lists components that are aligned with the CalWORKs 2.0 vision. The remaining columns contain space for checkmarks to capture the extent to which the county's approach is consistent with each:

- **In Place:** The component exists and is concretely observable and/or measurable.

- **Room for Improvement:** The component has been partially established, the component has been conceptualized but not fully used, or the component exists, but is not being utilized on a regular basis. This is further broken into three subcategories to capture the extent of implementation.

  - **Not in Place:** The component does not exist or has not yet been initiated. This is further broken into three subcategories to capture the level of interest in implementing the component.

How to use the results. County administrators and program managers can use this tool to identify the areas in which they feel the county is strong and areas where see the most opportunity for improvement. This self-assessment should be viewed as an iterative process. It is not possible to take on everything at once (and usually not wise to do so). Start with one or two priority areas in which you would like to focus improvement efforts and then come back to the assessment once you feel like you have made adequate progress. This information can be combined with the resource mapping activity to generate a comprehensive look at the current state of the CalWORKs program, and should inform the county goal setting process.

Exhibit 2. The County Self-Assessment

Instructions: Add check marks to the column(s) that best represent your current implementation of CalWORKs.

In Place – Item is part of the system and "evidence" of this component is observable and/or measurable.[1]

Partially in Place – Part of the component has been established, the component has been conceptualized but not fully used, or the component exists, but is not being utilized on a regular basis. Indicate extent of implementation.

Not in Place – The component does not exist or has not yet been initiated. Indicate level of interest in implementing the component.

	In place	Room for improvement			Not in Place		
		Almost fully in place	Partly in place	A few steps taken	Very interested	Somewhat interested	Not at all interested
I. Program Approach							
1. Evidence-informed, goal-focused achievement program framework							
• System design and actions are aligned and framed around explicit achievable goals							
• Well-defined services are aligned with the characteristics, needs and aspirations of the caseload							
• Draws upon behavioral science theory and best available research evidence (e.g., self-regulation, executive functioning, behavioral insights, and trauma informed care)							
2. Institutionalization of program framework							
• Clarity and consistency between the program vision, guiding principles, staff expectations, and program outcomes with regard to goal achievement							
• Recommendations for incorporating the needs of TANF youth and children into service delivery							

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[1] Adapted from Blasé, Karen, Melissa van Dyke, and Dean Fixsen (2013). Implementation Drivers: Assessing Best Practices. National Implementation Research Network. University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, NC.

	In place	Room for improvement			Not in Place		
		Almost fully in place	Partly in place	A few steps taken	Very interested	Somewhat interested	Not at all interested
3. Strength based, family-focused approach							
• Staff recognizes and builds on client strengths							
• Administrators and staff believe in clients' inherent ability to succeed							
• Program provides services and supports that benefit the family unit, including children							
4. Well-defined, customized service approach							
• Program mission, core values, and program framework encourage and support setting and achieving goals							
• Client and staff collaborate to customize services for each client and family							
• Program embraces a culture and practice of equal input from both clients and staff in planning							
II. Program Environment							
1. Clear, positive, action-oriented program messaging							
• Program materials, including letters and notices, are clear, simple, encouraging, and action-oriented							
• Information is relevant and accessible in multiple formats							
2. Accessible, inviting, and family-friendly physical space							
• Waiting rooms include positive messaging about the program and are clean, well-decorated, and child friendly							

		Room for improvement			Not in Place		
	In place	Almost fully in place	Partly in place	A few steps taken	Very interested	Somewhat interested	Not at all interested
• Front desk staff are visible, face clients and welcome all clients immediately upon entry with a friendly and approachable tone							
• Security and other personnel are held to the same expectations as agency staff (unconditional positive regard for clients, inclusive and culturally sensitive, respectful, adherence to program mission and core values, etc.)							
3. Professional customer service approach							
• Wait times in the lobby and on the telephone are short							
• Clients flow easily through the application process							
• Client needs are resolved within one worker when possible; otherwise hand-offs between workers are efficient and friendly							
• Program minimizes need for clients to repeat their circumstances to multiple workers							
III. Administrative Infrastructure and Program Staffing							
1. Well-defined list of core competencies to guide hiring and development of staff							
• Staff believe in the parent's ability and potential to accomplish his or her goals							
• Staff are collaborative rather than directive							
• Staff hold clients accountable for making progress							
• Staff have unconditional positive regard for the client							
2. Inclusive, culturally sensitive staff							

		Room for improvement			Not in Place		
	In place	Almost fully in place	Partly in place	A few steps taken	Very interested	Somewhat interested	Not at all interested
• Staff work effectively with diverse populations (e.g., inclusion-focused, culturally inclusive language)							
• Staff are aware of and manage their cultural biases and judgements toward low-income parents							
3. Staff training and development							
• The agency has developed clear job descriptions and expectations for staff							
• Staff are provided training and tools to support desired job performance							
• Staff performance measures map to overall program outcomes and core competencies							
• Management and supervisors create and support a healthy peer-to-peer coaching environment among staff							
4. Knowledge of policies, state initiatives, and community resources							
• Program managers and supervisors clearly communicate how staff can use all the policies, specialized services, and supports offered through CalWORKs							
• Program managers and supervisors clearly communicate how staff can help clients achieve federally defined work activities within a goal achievement framework							
• Staff are provided training and tools to simplify the process of helping clients access all available services and supports							

	In place	Room for improvement			Not in Place		
		Almost fully in place	Partly in place	A few steps taken	Very interested	Somewhat interested	Not at all interested
• Staff are provided up-to-date information about community resources available to CalWORKs families							
• Staff are provided a clear process and tools for timely, accurate tracking of the 24- and 48-month time clocks							
5. Approach of contracted service providers and community partners							
• Contracted service providers and community partners who work with CalWORKs families have received training and support on client goal-setting							
• The expectations and performance measures for contracted service providers and community partners who work with CalWORKs families are clearly defined and support client goal achievement							
• Performance-based contracts reward clients' progress toward and achievement of goals							
IV. Service Delivery Process (case flow)							
1. Clear, simple, and engaging orientation							
• Orientation generates enthusiasm about the program and introduces goal achievement and family focus							
• Orientation includes relevant, accessible, and useful information and does not flood the client with too much information							
• Participants understand the options available to them under CalWORKs and the initial steps they need to take to exercise those options							

	In place	Room for improvement			Not in Place		
		Almost fully in place	Partly in place	A few steps taken	Very interested	Somewhat interested	Not at all interested
2. Initial and ongoing assessment of skills, abilities, and service needs							
• Initial assessment is used to identify client strengths and needs and create an individualized service plan							
• Initial assessment process is used to inform client goal setting							
• Ongoing assessment process includes reviewing and revising client goals and updating client strengths and needs							
3. Clear, user-friendly, adaptable goal achievement process							
• Goal-setting and achievement are embedded into all aspects of the program, including individual sessions with clients, group job search, and early engagement initiatives including Family Stabilization and Enhanced Subsidized Employment							
• Goals are meaningful to the clients and reflect their interests and abilities							
• Goals have a short time horizon with practical, specific, concrete, and sequential steps for achieving them							
• Staff use short-term and intermediate steps to monitor and track client goal progress							
• Staff are skilled at identifying and troubleshooting potential challenges that interfere with goal achievement							
• Staff meet regularly and frequently with clients to review and revise their goals							

		Room for improvement			Not in Place		
	In place	Almost fully in place	Partly in place	A few steps taken	Very interested	Somewhat interested	Not at all interested
• Staff are encouraging and supportive of goal achievement							
• Staff have knowledge of internal and community resources and strategize with clients about how to access them							
4. Accountability							
• Accountability measures for staff and clients are clearly defined and tied to progress toward goals							
• Staff troubleshoot with clients who are not making progress toward their goals							
V. Performance Management and Measures							
• Relevant and appropriate short-, intermediate-, and long-term measures for tracking goal progress and achievement are in place							
• Outcome targets are clearly defined and map to the expectations for the agency and contracted service providers							
• Clear and useful process for administrators, supervisors, and direct service staff to use performance management data							

County Resource Map

Purpose: The County Resource Map is designed to make it easy for program administrators to identify how program resource allocations align with program services priorities and the community needs. The result of the resource mapping activity is an easy to reference guide for all staff to access that provides an up-to-date menu of what activities and services are available. The guide simultaneously allows administrators to reflect on intentionality in resources allocation and to facilitate staff demonstration of intentionality in activity selection.

Description: The CalWORKs Resource Map is an Excel file that automatically suggests activities, resources and services for customers. The resources available to support a family are determined by the family's circumstances and the length of time they have been receiving assistance. When you enter these two pieces of information into the County Resource Map, it will provide you with a list of available resources for each of four service areas: (1) work experience and job placement; (2) education and training; (3) child care; and (4) work, personal and family supports.

How to use: A program administrator with the greatest depth of knowledge of the services and activities available in the county will populate the resource by following the instructions in the first tab of the Excel sheet. Then at regular intervals determined by the county the resources should be updated. Provided the map output to staff for reference in making intentional service selection decisions. As part of the county assessment and goal setting process, review the map alongside the county self-assessment tool to analyze areas for continuous quality improvement.

What successful use would look like: The county administrators and frontline staff all have access to a comprehensive list of services and activities available in the county. Staff are familiar with the services and resources available, and administrators feel confident that resource allocation decisions reflect program goals and customer needs. Customers are connected with the best services and resources available to meet their needs.
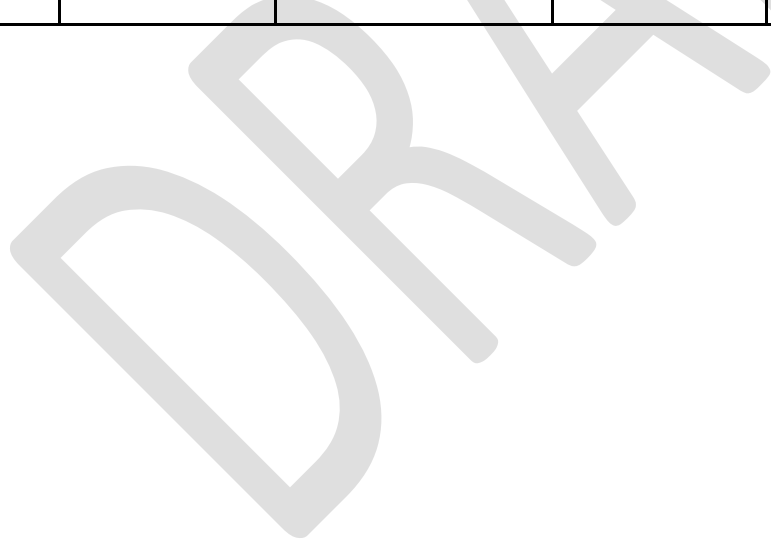
CalWORKs 2.0 Staff Skills and Attributes

Purpose: In order for the county's vision and program approach to be executed successfully, staff require clear expectations and guidelines about how to perform their job, engage customers and deliver CalWORKs services. The staff skills and attributes matrix outlines a clear set of staff performance expectations that are specifically related to the CalWORKs 2.0 hallmark goal-achievement framework.

Description: The staff skills and attributes matrix outline critical skills and attributes for the implementation of CalWORKs 2.0. The top of the matrix highlights four key areas of staff performance: (1) **General skills and attributes for direct work with customers**; (2) **CalWORKs Goal Achievement Framework**; (3) **Professional goal-setting, wellbeing and self-care practices for service workers**; (4) **Skills for managing daily tasks.** Within each key area, specific skills or attributes are outlined, and under each there is a description of what ideal worker performance might look like.

How to use: The information contained in the matrix can be used for staff training purposes, to generate updated staff position descriptions as part of a regular county reflection process, to inform goal setting and continuous quality improvement planning, or reviewed as a menu of options to consider in future program and staffing decisions.

	I. General skills and attributes for direct work with customers						
Skills and attributes	**Mindset in working with clients**		**Meeting facilitation skills**				
	Demonstrates ability to see a person's potential and helps them achieve it	Non-judgmental	Facilitates, rather than directs, a natural and focused conversation with the client	Asks open-ended, reflective questions	Detects and addresses an individual's ambivalence about change	Redirects conversation when it goes off task	Sets clear and consistent meeting structure with clients
Ideal Performance	• Consistently affirms and encourages client regardless of circumstance • Guides client in viewing challenges as opportunities for improvement • Envisions role as helping clients reach their full potential • Lives with and instills in others a sense of hope	• Demonstrates unconditional positive regard in all interactions with client • Accepts the client as he is and with all his/her limitations	• Asks questions to guide discussion, rarely gives direct advice • Maintains two-way dialogue • Client decides meeting topic(s) • Observable rapport with client	Consistently asks open-ended questions that are highly responsive to client's prior statements and that promote client self-awareness	• Detects the client's ambivalence (unsure, fearful, or indecisive) about making a change and asks reflective questions that draw out the root of the client's ambivalence • Leads to observable shift in client's readiness to change	Effectively redirects client telling by connecting the issue to the client's goal(s)	• Meeting structure and length is highly consistent across clients • Never steps in to complete a task for the client • Most "next steps" are assigned to the client

	II. CalWORKs Goal Achievement Framework							
Skills and attributes	**Customer appraisal and client coaching skills**		**CalWORKs action plan development and client coaching skills**				**Regular case management and goal review client coaching skills**		
	Uses assessment to help client identify areas for change and frame goals	Helps client to brainstorm potential goals	Helps client identify goals that are meaningful	Helps client break goals/ tasks into smaller, more feasible steps	Helps client articulate specific, time-bound action plans	Helps client identify obstacles and solutions	Helps client assess their progress toward goal(s) and revise accordingly	Provides clear expectations and holds client accountable	Maintains timely and consistent contact with client
Ideal Performance	• Consistently reflective questions help client identify 1-2 key areas of need • Guides client in prioritizing services and opportunities and linking to potential goals	• Client-led brainstorming on aspects of work and life that they would like to change • Guides client in articulating 2-3 challenging, but achievable goals	• Client's goal(s) elicited through conversation about what they care about/want to accomplish • Consistently asks about the difficulty of goal • Prompts client to visualize accomplishing goal	• Engages the client in dialogue about steps • Asks reflective questions on effort/ feasibility • Summarizes steps back to client	• Reflective questions help client articulate plan and consider necessary skills/ resources • Prompts client to specify exact timelines • Guides My Goal Plan completion, summarizes back to client	• Reflective questions prompt client to identify at least one obstacle and one solution • Encourages client to focus on internal obstacles • Helps client formulate concrete plan	• Guides client through My Goal Plan Review/ Revise boxes • Reflective questions on lessons learned promote client's self-awareness • Celebrates progress; encourages the client if goal not been reached • Help client revise their goal and plan as needed	• Guides client through reflection on effort and progress • Expectations focus on client's goals • Connects progress to the client's motivation	• Proactively checks-in with clients on goal progression • Uses different methods of check-in depending on client preference • Tailors frequency of contacts to client need

III. Professional goal-setting, wellbeing and self-care practices for service workers

	Professional goal-setting practices for service workers			Worker wellbeing and self-care practices	
Skills and attributes	Applies goal achievement principles in assessing his/her own professional development goals	Applies goal achievement principles in planning steps to take toward his/her own professional development goals	Applies goal achievement principles in reviewing successes and challenges his/her own professional development goals	Demonstrates awareness of and attends to their own emotional reactions to clients and their circumstances.	Promotes a culture of wellness in the workplace
Ideal Performance	Begins process of setting professional goals by: • Examining his/her professional strengths and needs for further development. • Brainstorming a few key areas of work where he/she would like to develop professionally and achieve success. • Beginning to narrow in on a professional goal that is meaningful and motivating to him/her	Engages in an ongoing cycle of professional development that includes the following goal-planning steps: • Setting his/her own meaningful professional goals based on what he/she values, cares about and wants to accomplish • Breaking professional goals into smaller, more feasible steps • Creating a concrete plan for achieving professional goals and considers necessary skills/ resources for achieving those goals (whether training or guidance is needed, support from co-workers, etc.) • Identifying obstacles that might get in the way of achieving goal and solutions for addressing each obstacle	Continually engages in a cycle of reflection and improvement by undertaking the following activities: • Regularly assessing progress toward professional goal(s) • As necessary, adjusting or setting new goals based upon process of reflection • Consistently taking time to review experiences and behaviors and gain new understanding from them • Deriving lessons learned from experiences and turning them into concrete action steps for the future • When old goals are accomplished, setting new goals and begins the process again	• Consistently maintains healthy boundaries with clients • Proactively develops responsive relationships and networks to deal with work stress	• Actively initiates group wellness activities within the workplace • Plays active role in discussing issues of community wellness • Participates in group wellness activities • Model healthy behaviors for coworkers and clients • Engages in personal wellness behaviors • Regularly engages in self-care behaviors

IV. Skills for managing daily tasks

Skills and attributes	Effectively organizes work	Effectively manages time	Adaptable and flexible	Knowledgeable about community resources and how to access them	Works well with others/ collegial
Ideal Performance	• Excellent organizational skills. • Focuses on developing and following effective routines and procedures, and on identifying priorities • Work is of excellent quality	• Utilizes work time in a highly responsible and productive manner • Tasks are completed on or before deadlines	Consistently demonstrates willingness and ability to adapt to changing demands	• Regularly seeks up-to-date information on community resources that are available to clients and how to access them • Shares additional information on new resources with co-workers and supervisors	• Consistently respects and is respected by co-workers • Highly cooperative and helpful • Consistently demonstrates courtesy, tact, and discretion when interacting with others. • Seeks to serve others in a positive manner

CalWORKs 2.0 Fidelity Assessment Tool

Purpose: This tool directly aligns with the county self-assessment tools and is designed to concretely list what full adherence to each component of CalWORKs 2.0 looks like in each program area. The tool can assist counties by adding clarity to the CalWORKs 2.0 culture change vision, by aiding with regular assessment through a CalWORKs 2.0 piloting effort, or through program implementation evaluation at regular intervals following the launch of CalWORKs 2.0.

Description: The fidelity assessment tool systematically breaks down the key CalWORKs 2.0 components listed in the county self-assessment tool and provides discrete examples and descriptions of what those components look like when implemented fully. In the first column, the shaded rows align with the exact information from the County Self-assessment tool. Each shaded row is followed by a subset of descriptors that illustrate full fidelity implementation of the specified CalWORKs 2.0 element. The remaining columns on the fidelity assessment contain space for checkmarks to capture the extent to which the county or worker's approach is consistent with what is defined as full fidelity.

How to complete the assessment. A neutral observer, supervisor or peer should observe a worker implementing the CalWORKs 2.0 approach and systematically review the elements listed in the assessment to determine if the worker is adhering to the listed expectation with high, medium or low fidelity.

- *High fidelity:* The staff person's actions align with the description and are concretely observable and/or measurable.

- *Medium fidelity:* The staff person's actions partially align with the component as described in the tool. Some portion of the action is demonstrated, but not to the full extent.

- *Low fidelity:* The staff person's actions minimally reflect implementation as described in the tool.

- *Not in Place:* The component does not exist or has not yet been initiated.

How to use the results. County administrators and program managers can use this tool to identify the areas for improvement in worker performance or in program design and implementation. The results may demonstrate county strengths in program delivery and adherence to CalWORKs 2.0 as well as areas where the most opportunity for improvement exists. This fidelity assessment should be viewed as an iterative process. This information can be combined with other information and reviewed by supervisors and/or be used alongside the staff skills and attributes matrix. In tandem, the fidelity tool and staff skills matrix will help supervisors and staff set professional goals, and can help the county think critically about additional staff training opportunities.

	Completely in Place- High Fidelity	Mostly in place- Medium Fidelity	Somewhat in place- Low Fidelity	Not in place
I. Program Approach				
1. Evidence-informed, goal- achievement focused program framework				
• Program design and actions are aligned and framed around explicit achievable program goals				
- County has set specific, attainable goals				
- County materials frequently reference county-level goals				
- Internal meetings reference county-level goals				
• Well-defined services are aligned with the characteristics, needs and aspirations of the population served				
- County services and resources are tailored to the needs and aspirations of the population served				
- Frontline staff are aware of the county's services and resources				
- County maintains a list of services and resources in the county				
• Program mission, core values, and program framework encourage and support client's setting and achieving goals				
• Program draws upon the self-regulation, executive functioning and behavioral nudges research				
- County materials appropriately apply these concepts (for example, reference executive functioning skills that clients need or mailings use nudge principles to increase effectiveness)				
- Frontline staff appropriately use these techniques and language when meeting with clients				
- During internal meetings staff discuss these concepts and their application in your program				
2. Institutionalization of program framework				
• Clarity and consistency between the program vision, guiding principles, staff expectations, and program outcomes with regard to goal achievement				

	Completely in Place-High Fidelity	Mostly in place-Medium Fidelity	Somewhat in place-Low Fidelity	Not in place
- Program vision and guiding principles describe the same goal achievement principles and expectations				
- Staff expectations and program outcomes align with county-level goals and account for focus on goal-achievement at the client level				
- County has a logic model that shows how the program inputs, activities, and outputs relate to client outcomes in the context of goal achievement				
• Program gives staff specific recommendations for incorporating the needs of TANF youth and children into service delivery				
3. Strength based, family-focused approach				
• Staff members recognize and build on client strengths				
- Services are framed by staff as "skill-building" (positive) and are not framed as "barrier removal" (negative)				
- Staff use a standardized process to identify client strengths				
- Staff assess client strengths on a regular basis				
- Staff refer clients to services that are appropriate for the client's current skills and will build on their strengths				
• Administrators and staff believe in clients' ability to develop and use skills to help them succeed				
- Senior staff communicate in trainings and meetings a belief in clients ability to succeed				
- Staff are expected to use positive language and an encouraging approach when working with clients				
• Program provides services and supports that benefit the family unit, including children				
- Staff regularly discuss children's needs with clients				
- Staff provide services or referrals to services for children				
4. Well-defined, customized service approach				
• Client and staff collaborate to customize services for each client and family				

	Completely in Place- High Fidelity	Mostly in place- Medium Fidelity	Somewhat in place- Low Fidelity	Not in place
- Client and staff regularly discuss client service needs				
- Client and staff collaboratively consider appropriate services				
- Client plans vary from one client to the next, depending on individual client needs				
• Program leaders support a culture and practice of equal input from both clients and staff in planning				
- County leaders consult with staff when planning				
- County leaders consult with clients when planning				
- Staff and clients have a way to submit comments/feedback at any time				
II. Program Environment				
1. Clear, positive, action-oriented program messaging				
• Program materials, including letters and notices, are clear, simple, encouraging, and action-oriented				
• Information is relevant and accessible in multiple formats				
2. Accessible, inviting, and family-friendly physical space				
• Waiting rooms include positive messaging about clients and the program, and are clean, well-decorated and child friendly				
• The front desk is visible and easily identifiable from the entrance				
3. Professional customer service approach				
• Front desk staff are visible, face clients and welcome all clients immediately upon entry with a friendly and approachable tone				
• Wait times in the lobby and on the telephone are short				

	Completely in Place- High Fidelity	Mostly in place- Medium Fidelity	Somewhat in place- Low Fidelity	Not in place
• Security and other personnel are held to the same expectations as agency staff (positive regard for clients, inclusive and culturally sensitive, respectful, adhering to program mission and core values, etc.)				
• Clients understand and are able to easily self-navigate the application process				
• Clients understand what resources are available to them and who can help them access those resources				
• Client needs are resolved by one worker when possible (hand-offs are minimized); otherwise hand-offs between workers are efficient and friendly				
• Staff share information about clients and reference information already collected in order to minimize the need for clients to repeat their life circumstances or other information to multiple workers				
III. Administrative Infrastructure and Program Staffing				
1. Well-defined list of staff core competencies to guide hiring and staff development				
• Staff believe in the parent's ability and potential to accomplish his or her goals				
- Staff believe that clients can develop skills for success				
- Staff can see a client's potential				
• Staff are collaborative rather than directive				
- Staff facilitate, rather than direct, the work with clients				
- Staff ask clients open-ended, reflective questions				
- Staff are able to work with clients to determine the services that would be useful				
• Staff have knowledge of internal and community resources and strategize with clients about how to access them				
• Staff are encouraging and supportive of goal achievement				

	Completely in Place- High Fidelity	Mostly in place- Medium Fidelity	Somewhat in place- Low Fidelity	Not in place
• Staff are skilled at identifying and troubleshooting potential challenges that interfere with goal achievement				
• Staff hold clients accountable for making progress				
- Staff follow up with clients to see if they are making progress on their goals				
- Staff take appropriate action based on client's progress				
• Staff have positive regard for the client, as shown through positive language in private and public settings				
2. Inclusive, culturally sensitive staff				
• Staff work effectively with diverse populations				
- Staff use culturally inclusive language				
- Staff are attuned to strengths and needs of different communities				
- Staff proactively work to ensure everyone is treated with respect				
• Through training and materials, staff are made aware of and are able to manage any cultural biases and judgements toward low-income parents they may have				
3. Staff training and development				
• Staff have access to clear job descriptions and expectations for their role				
• Staff are provided training and tools to support desired job performance				
• Staff performance measures are tied to overall program and client outcomes				
• Supervisors coach frontline staff on working with clients				
• Management and supervisors create and support a healthy peer-to-peer coaching environment among staff				

	Completely in Place- High Fidelity	Mostly in place- Medium Fidelity	Somewhat in place- Low Fidelity	Not in place
- Staff have formal opportunities to discuss challenges and possible solutions with staff at their same level				
- Staff have informal opportunities to discuss challenges and possible solutions with staff at their same level				
4. Internal communication about policies, state initiatives, and community resources				
• Program managers and supervisors clearly communicate how staff should implement and utilize the policies, specialized services, and supports offered through CalWORKs				
• Program managers and supervisors clearly communicate how staff can help clients achieve federally defined work activities within a goal achievement framework				
• Staff are provided regular training and tools to simplify the process of helping clients access all available services and supports				
• Staff are regularly provided up-to-date information about community resources available to CalWORKs families				
• Staff are provided a clear process and tools for timely, accurate tracking of the 24- and 48-month time clocks				
5. Approach of contracted service providers and community partners				
• Contracted service providers and community partners who work with CalWORKs families have received training and support on client goal-setting				
• The expectations and performance measures for contracted service providers and community partners who work with CalWORKs families are clearly defined and support client goal achievement				
• Performance-based contracts reward clients' progress toward achievement of goals				
IV. Service Delivery Process (case flow)				
1. Clear, simple, and engaging orientation				
• Orientation introduces goal achievement and family focus of CalWORKs 2.0				

	Completely in Place- High Fidelity	Mostly in place- Medium Fidelity	Somewhat in place- Low Fidelity	Not in place
• Orientation uses positive language designed to encourage and excite participants				
• Orientation includes relevant, accessible, and useful information, but does not flood the client with too much information				
• When participants leave the orientation, they understand the options available to them under CalWORKs and the initial steps they need to take to exercise those options				
2. Initial and ongoing assessment of skills, abilities, and service needs				
• Initial assessment is used to identify client strengths and needs, and create an individualized service plan				
• Initial assessment process is used to inform initial client goal setting				
• Ongoing assessment process includes reviewing and revising client goals and updating client strengths and needs				
• Through the goal-setting process, staff informally assess client self-regulation and executive function skills				
3. Clear, user-friendly, adaptable goal achievement process				
• Goal-setting and achievement are embedded into all aspects of the program, including individual sessions with clients, group job search, and early engagement initiatives including Family Stabilization and Enhanced Subsidized Employment				
• Goals are meaningful to the clients and reflect their interests and abilities				
• Goals are broken down into practical, specific, concrete, and sequential steps				
• Staff use short-term and intermediate steps to monitor and track client goal progress				
• Staff meet regularly and frequently with clients to review and revise their goals				
• Frontline staff troubleshoot with clients who are not making progress toward their goals				

	Completely in Place- High Fidelity	Mostly in place- Medium Fidelity	Somewhat in place- Low Fidelity	Not in place
V. Performance Management and Measures				
• Relevant and appropriate short-, intermediate-, and long-term measures for tracking county goal progress and achievement are in place				
• Outcome targets are clearly defined and map to the expectations for the agency and contracted service providers				
• Staff have access to performance management data, and are given direction about how to use the data to improve their work				
• Accountability measures for staff and clients are clearly defined and tied to a client's progress toward goals				

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