Update 2013-12: Common Place
Family Reunification - AB 429 Clarifications

Background
As the Department of Employment and Benefits Services (DEBS) is in partnership with the Department of Family and Children's Services (DFCS) to coordinate and integrate services for families common to both Departments, there is a need to periodically evaluate and align the processes to best meet the needs of the common clients.

Policy
To improve efficiencies, the DFCS/CWES common cases policy currently written in Chapter 42 of the CalWORKs Employment Service (CWES) handbook and the Family Reunification (FR) Program Chapter 41 of the CalWORKs handbook have been combined and transferred to the Common Place handbook, Chapter 27.

A few clarifications are below:

Confidentiality
Client information necessary to determine or re-assess eligibility in public social service programs may be shared between departments within the Social Services Agency.

Sanctions
Family Reunification (AB 429) clients are not subject to non-compliance process nor sanction. A FR client who is under a CWES sanction at the time he/she enters the FR (AB 429) Program may start the CWES services immediately. As long as the client is cooperating with the DFCS activities, CWES must provide supportive services.

A client who is approved FR (AB 429) services and is currently under a CalWORKs sanction, is assigned to the Partnership EC and referred to a CWES Orientation. She/he will be given the opportunity to cure the sanction. The Partnership Employment Counselor (EC) will initiate
supportive services for the DFCS activities. In certain cases, the FR Plan may be adopted in lieu of the WTW 2 Plan. The Family Reunification approval notice, WTW 34, must reflect the adoption of the FR plan in lieu of the WTW Plan.

["DFCS/DEBS Common Cases," page 27-1]

Non-Compliance
FR (AB 429) clients who fail to comply with the WTW or DFCS activities are not subject to the non-compliance process. In such situations, the Partnership Employment Counselor (EC) informs the DFCS social worker of the non-compliance and maintains the CWES case open until such time that the social worker informs the Partnership EC the case is closed. During the non-compliance period, supportive services continue upon receiving proper verifications for the DFCS activities that the client actually attends.

WTW 34
“Welfare to Work Family Reunification Plan (WTW 34) is an informing notice that tells parents that their cash aid has been reduced because all of their children have been removed from the home, the county has determined that they may continue to receive WTW activities and supportive services because those services will assist the family to reunify, and that those services will be provided under the FR Plan (AB 429), WTW Plan, or both.

Implementation
These clarifications are effective immediately.

Kudos
Kudos to Lolita Castillo, Richard Ching, Agnes Febles, Nancy Negron and the CalWORKs/DFCS Partnership Committee for their input and support in writing this Update.

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