



WESTERN CENTER
ON LAW & POVERTY

Maternal and Child Health Access Community Meeting

LINDA NGUY | WESTERN CENTER ON LAW & POVERTY

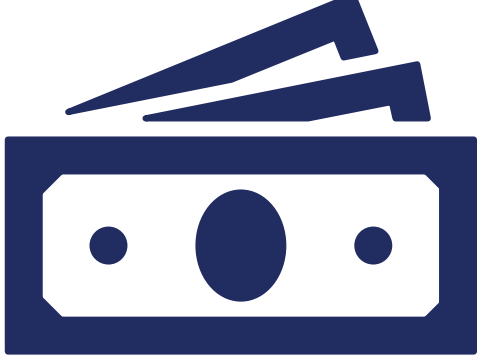
JANUARY 18, 2024

Q: Who is Western Center?

A: California's oldest "legal services support center." See www.wclp.org.



FIGHTING TO END POVERTY IN CALIFORNIA



January Budget Proposal

- On Jan 10, Governor Newsom released his \$291B budget, estimating a \$37.9B deficit (vs \$68B shortfall the Legislative Analyst's Office predicted).
- Proposal honors past commitments, with are no cuts to caseloads or grants to our most vulnerable families on CalWORKs and SSI.
- Proposed cuts to CalWORKs raises concerns.
- Economic downturns hit low-income families the hardest, highlighting need to protect and strengthen California's safety net.



Health Budget Investments

- Maintains past budget actions on Health4All and asset test elimination.
- Maintains Covered CA affordability measures.
- Urge timely implementation of Share of Cost Reform and continuous Medi-Cal eligibility for children up to age 5.
- Funding for new Wellness Coach Benefit for children and youth in Medi-Cal effective Jan 2025.



Health Measures to Address Budget Deficit

- Managed Care Organization (MCO) tax to maximize federal drawdown.
- Assisted Living Waiver and Home and Community-Based Services increased slots.
- Health care worker minimum wage ‘trigger’ language.
- Delay in behavioral health and workforce initiatives



Human Services Budget Maintenance

- Maintains grant levels for CalWORKs, SSI, and CAPI (no additional funding)
- Maintains previous food assistance commitments, including:
 - CFAP expansion to undocumented adults age 55 and older beginning in October 2025.
 - Pilot program to increase the minimum CalFresh benefit from \$23 to \$50 for some recipients; and
 - Summer EBT administrative funding to provide EBT Cards to students eligible for free or reduced-price school meals in 2024.



Cuts to Human Services

- Empties the safety net reserve fund by withdrawing complete amount (\$900M).
- Cuts to CalWORKs program including family stabilization programs, intensive case management, and subsidized employment.
 - Labeled a 'reduction' but effectively zeroes out funding for family stabilization.
- Child Welfare Cuts: Family Urgent Response System (FURS), Los Angeles County Child Welfare Services Public Health Nursing Program, Supervised Independent Living Placements.



Next Steps

Jan-May: Legislative Budget Hearings

By May 14, 2024: Governor's May Revise

By June 15, 2024: Budget Bill Pass Legislature

July 1, 2024: Beginning of New Fiscal Year



CARE Court and SB 43 Implementation

- WCLP opposed CARE Court, which creates a new court system that subjects unhoused people with mental health disabilities to involuntary treatment with no right to behavioral health treatment or housing.
 - Agency Dec 2023 Quarterly Update:
 - Nearly 200 petitions have been filed for last quarter
 - This includes 28 petitions filed in Los Angeles in December (implemented Dec 2023).
- SB 43 expands the definition of “gravely disabled” to make it easier to involuntarily conserve people, especially those who are unhoused, and much broader implications than CARE Court
 - Most counties delaying until 2026



Questions?

Contact me!

Linda Nguy

(916) 282-5117

Inguy@wclp.org



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