

Introduced by Senator Pan

February 3, 2016

An act to amend Section 11052.5 of the Welfare and Institutions Code, relating to public social services.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SB 947, as amended, Pan. Public assistance: personal interviews.

Existing law provides for protection, care, and assistance for people of the state by providing appropriate aid and services to the needy and distressed. Programs established for this purpose include the California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids program (CalWORKs), which provides cash assistance and other social services to needy families, using federal Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) block grant program, state, and county funds. Existing law prohibits an applicant from being granted public assistance under CalWORKs until he or she is personally interviewed by the county human services agency or state hospital staff. Existing law also requires the county department to verify if an applicant is incapable of acting on his or her own behalf by personal contact with the applicant before aid is authorized.

This bill would authorize the county human services agency to conduct this personal interview telephonically or through electronic means. The bill would require *an in-person* personal interview to be conducted if requested by an applicant or recipient. ~~The bill would delete the requirement that the county department verify an applicant is incapable of acting on his or her own behalf.~~ *By imposing a higher level of service*

on county human services agencies administering the CalWORKs program, this bill would impose a state-mandated local program.

The California Constitution requires the state to reimburse local agencies and school districts for certain costs mandated by the state. Statutory provisions establish procedures for making that reimbursement.

This bill would provide that, if the Commission on State Mandates determines that the bill contains costs mandated by the state, reimbursement for those costs shall be made pursuant to these statutory provisions.

Vote: majority. Appropriation: no. Fiscal committee: ~~no~~-yes.
 State-mandated local program: ~~no~~-yes.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

1 SECTION 1. This act shall be known, and may be cited, as the
 2 County Option of Efficient Interviewing of CalWORKs Applicants
 3 Act of 2016.

4 SEC. 2. Section 11052.5 of the Welfare and Institutions Code
 5 is amended to read:

6 11052.5. (a) An applicant shall not be granted public assistance
 7 under Chapter 2 (commencing with Section 11200) *and Chapter*
 8 *5.1 (commencing with Section 13000)* until he or she is first
 9 personally interviewed by the office of the county human services
 10 agency or state staff for patients in state hospitals.

11 (b) In lieu of an in-person personal interview as required under
 12 subdivision (a), the county may elect to conduct the interview
 13 required by this section telephonically or through other electronic
 14 means. ~~The interview shall be conducted promptly following the~~
 15 ~~application for assistance.~~ *If an applicant is incapable of acting*
 16 *in his or her own behalf, the county department shall verify this*
 17 *fact with the applicant before aid is authorized.* As used in this
 18 section, the term public assistance does not include health care as
 19 provided by Chapter 7 (commencing with Section 14000).

20 (c) The interview conducted pursuant to this section shall occur
 21 within seven days after the time of application unless there are
 22 extenuating circumstances that justify further delay.

23 (d) ~~An in-person~~ personal interview shall be conducted if
 24 requested by an applicant.

1 *SEC. 3. If the Commission on State Mandates determines that*
2 *this act contains costs mandated by the state, reimbursement to*
3 *local agencies and school districts for those costs shall be made*
4 *pursuant to Part 7 (commencing with Section 17500) of Division*
5 *4 of Title 2 of the Government Code.*

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