

CalWORKs County System Improvement Plan (Cal-SIP) Report

County: Fresno

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Executive Summary

1. Please summarize the performance measures selected for improvement.

The performance measures selected by Fresno County Department of Social Services for the Cal-OAR System Improvement Plan (Cal-SIP) are the Orientation Attendance Rate and Engagement Rate. These two measures were selected based on their direct correlation with the overall success of the program. By focusing on improving the Orientation Attendance Rate and increasing overall engagement, DSS aims to create a more supportive and effective environment for participants, ultimately leading families to better outcomes and improved experiences.

2. Please provide a comprehensive list of improvement strategies identified within the Cal-SIP.

Fresno county seeks to improve their performance by implementing the following strategies:

Goal 1: Increase Orientation Attendance Rate to 50% from a baseline rate of 36%.

- Strategy 1: Increase utilization of Virtual WTW Orientation option
 - Action Step 1: Incorporate and advertise virtual orientation options as an integral part of the CalWORKs Intake process, ensuring that participants are aware of this alternative.
 - Action Step 2: Market the Virtual WTW Orientation option specifically to Job Specialists, highlighting its benefits and convenience.
 - Action Step 3: Promote the Virtual WTW Orientation option to participants through various channels such as flyers, lobby posters, mailers, email, and text messages, emphasizing its accessibility and flexibility.
 - Action Step 4: Enable the Virtual WTW Orientation option to be conducted in Spanish, catering to participants who prefer or require Spanish-language materials and monitor Orientation Attendance Rate of Spanish-speaking population
 - Action Step 5: Allow participants to complete the Virtual WTW Orientation prior to the approval of their WTW case, streamlining the process and reducing barriers to attendance.
- Strategy 2: Increase Group WTW Orientation Attendance Rate
 - Action Step 1: Incorporate notification of the Group Orientation during the CalWORKs Intake process, ensuring that participants are informed about this option and its importance.
 - Action Step 2: Enhance the effectiveness of WTW Introductory Phone Calls, ensuring that Job Specialists are skilled in making successful initial contacts with participants, building rapport, and emphasizing the importance of attending the Group Orientation.

- Action Step 3: Quarterly stakeholder engagement, including surveys conducted with staff and participant focus groups, will be conducted to assess and evaluate the effectiveness of the implemented changes.

Goal 2: Increase Engagement Rate to 50% from a baseline rate of 30%

- Strategy 1: Prioritize attendance tab updating practice for all activities by Job Specialist
 - Action Step 1: Develop an Attendance Tab Report for staff to take necessary action and for supervisors to review and ensure that activities are addressed promptly and effectively.
 - Action Step 2: Implement regular reminders, such as weekly newsletter posts and discussions during committee meetings, to emphasize the importance of updating the attendance tab.
 - Action Step 3: Provide refresher trainings via the eLearning system to reinforce proper attendance tab updating procedures and address any challenges or questions.
 - Action Step 4: Identify and eliminate or reduce unnecessary tasks or procedures that may hinder the efficient updating of the attendance tab.
 - Action Step 5: Conduct targeted case reviews specifically focusing on the attendance tab to assess progress, identify any issues or gaps, and take corrective actions as needed.
- Strategy 2: Promote various activities to increase participation and engagement
 - Action Step 1: Develop a report that displays the most successful activities with positive outcomes, highlighting their benefits and impact on participants.
 - Action Step 2: Collaborate with contract providers to identify and develop activities that align with participant needs and interests, ensuring a diverse range of options.
 - Action Step 3: Arrange periodic in-service trainings conducted by providers and internal liaison staff to educate participants and staff about the available programs and their benefits, thereby promoting engagement.
- Strategy 3: Increase Engagement Rate for 93706-Zip Code WTW Population
 - Action Step 1: Collaborate closely with local contract providers to conceptualize and implement meaningful programs that cater to the unique needs of the 93706-zip code area or those nearby.
 - Action Step 2: Organize quarterly focus group sessions, engaging the CalWORKs recipients from the 93706-zip code
 - Action Step 3: Conduct monthly meetings with WTW staff to collaboratively devise and fine-tune strategies aimed at bolstering engagement
 - Action Step 4: Monitor Engagement Rate data for zip code 93706 to quantify effectiveness of targeted approach

Introduction

The Cal-OAR is a local, data-driven program management system that facilitates continuous improvement of county CalWORKs programs by collecting, analyzing, and disseminating outcomes and best practices. As required by Welfare and Institutions Code (WIC) 11523, Cal-OAR consists of three core components: performance indicators, a county CalWORKs self-assessment (Cal-CSA), and a CalWORKs system improvement plan (Cal-SIP).

The Cal-OAR continuous quality improvement (Cal-CQI) process (which includes the Cal-CSA and Cal-SIP) will take place over five-year cycles. The first Cal-OAR cycle commences on July 1, 2021, with the implementation of Cal-OAR. The Cal-SIP is the second component of the Cal-OAR CQI process. The Cal-SIP is based on the information gathered and reported from the Cal-CSA, each CWD will develop a plan for improving their CalWORKs program. The Cal-SIP will select a measure or set of measures for focused improvements and development to improve the selected performance measures while pairing each Cal-SIP goal with an equity goal and/ or strategy

1. Describe your approach to the Cal-SIP Report

The County of Fresno Department of Social Services (DSS), which will be referred to as DSS throughout this report, took a systematic approach to develop the CalWORKs System Improvement Plan (Cal-SIP) report.

The CalWORKs Outcomes and Accountability Review (Cal-OAR) Business Process Workgroup (BPW) played a central role in this endeavor, conducting weekly meetings to facilitate the planning and drafting of the Cal-SIP report. To support their efforts, the BPW utilized tools provided by the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) such as the Root Cause Analysis and Road Map for Change. These tools proved instrumental in guiding the development of strategies and action steps for the Cal-SIP's SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-based) goals.

Recognizing the importance of collaboration, DSS also held meetings with community partners during scheduled contract meetings. These meetings served multiple purposes including keeping collaborators informed about the outcomes of the CalWORKs program and collectively developing tactics and action steps to achieve the set of contract goals. This collaborative approach ensured that all stakeholders were actively engaged and aligned in improvement efforts.

Additionally, DSS conducted focus groups with participants in the WTW program. The objective of these focus groups was to gain valuable insights from program participants, enabling the development of improvement strategies specifically tailored to improve the Engagement performance measure. This participant-centric approach ensured that the Cal-SIP report's strategies and actions were rooted in the experiences and perspectives of those directly impacted by the program.

The Cal-SIP report was a collaborative effort consisting of input from the BPW members who provided review and oversight to ensure the report's coherence and consistency.

By adopting this systematic and collaborative approach, DSS ensured the Cal-SIP report was comprehensive, well-informed, and reflective of the collective efforts and insights of various stakeholders. This approach facilitated the development of effective strategies and action steps to drive meaningful improvements in the WTW program.

2. Briefly describe past and current system improvement efforts.

In the past, Fresno County attempted programmatic improvement efforts detached from the Cal-OAR initiative to enhance outcomes in the WTW program. These efforts had mixed results in increasing participant involvement and providing additional avenues for program participation.

One key strategy implemented by DSS was attempting early outreach of newly assigned participants through a business process known as the "WTW Intro Phone Call." The purpose of this introductory phone contact is to establish a connection between the participant and their WTW worker, known as "Job Specialist," within Fresno County DSS. During the call, the Job Specialist introduces themselves, welcomes the participant to the WTW program, offers child care services options, and provides an overview of its various aspects. Additionally, the participant is informed about their upcoming WTW Orientation appointment and given the option to reschedule, as appropriate.

During the COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent statewide stay-at-home orders, DSS began offering a virtual WTW Orientation option to accommodate participants. This continued after the public health emergency declaration expired as a service to participants. This virtual option ensures that participants can still engage with the program and receive the necessary information remotely. Currently, this virtual option is only available in English, and DSS is exploring options for virtual orientation in languages beyond English and allowing individuals to complete online orientation before approval of CalWORKs.

To further promote ongoing engagement, DSS has implemented the Monthly Engagement (ME) business process. Under this process, Job Specialists are required to initiate contact monthly with all participants in their caseload. DSS's expectation is 100% contact attempts every month. During these contacts, the Job Specialist discusses various case aspects including the participant's remaining time on aid and its impact on future activities, progress in their current activity, any new skills acquired, or accomplishments achieved. The Job Specialist offers or reviews CalWORKs 2.0 tools to assist with goal completion. Additionally, the Job Specialist will obtain status updates on previously identified barriers or discuss any new barriers needing to be addressed. The Job Specialist also assesses the need for supportive services and schedules future appointments. To ensure comprehensive engagement, Job Specialists are provided with a list of active participants at the beginning of each month, and it becomes the Job Specialists' responsibility to schedule participants for engagement appointments which

can take place in various locations such as the County office, the participant's home, an activity site, or via phone (for participants meeting participation requirements).

In addition to these efforts to improve participant engagement, DSS expanded activity options to cater to the diverse needs of participants. Such as:

- Cell-Ed- a distance learning platform that enables participants to build skills and access education remotely.
- JobWISE- a job readiness program designed to enhance participants' employability and provide assistance with barrier removal. The program offers sessions both in-person and virtually to meet the needs of individuals.
- Celebrating Families- a support program specifically tailored for families at risk for or dealing with substance use disorders.
- Home Visiting Program in collaboration with Fresno County's Neighborhood Resource Centers (NRCs) to serve young families in early childhood development.

These expanded activity options provide participants with a wider range of opportunities to engage in skill-building, education, barrier removal, and other supportive services programs.

DSS outcome improvement efforts demonstrate a proactive approach to increasing WTW Orientation Attendance rates and fostering ongoing engagement but still have room for improvement which is why these two measures were selected for the Cal-SIP. Through early outreach, virtual orientation options, regular monthly engagement, and diverse activity options. DSS is actively working to enhance participant involvement and support their progress in the WTW program.

3. Briefly describe the success or failure of those efforts at improving service delivery or programmatic outcomes.

DSS's efforts to improve service delivery, as outlined in the previous section, have returned both successes and presented opportunities for growth.

The implementation of the WTW Intro Phone call has proven to be effective. When the Job Specialist successfully made contact with participants through this phone call, WTW Orientation Attendance rates increased by 15% compared to unsuccessful contacts. This highlights the importance of early outreach and establishing a connection with participants to promote engagement.

The online WTW virtual orientation has proven to be effective achieving a completion rate of 63%, which is 28% higher than the completion rate for Group WTW orientation (38%). This seems to indicate that providing participants with a virtual option has increased accessibility and convenience, resulting in higher engagement and completion rates.

DSS's efforts to improve service delivery, as outlined in the previous section, have returned both successes and presented opportunities for growth.

The integration of the WTW Intro Phone call has yielded favorable outcomes. Drawing from Fresno County's aggregated data encompassing the period from April 2022 to September 2022, it is evident that successful contact by the Job Specialist with participants through this phone call has led to a notable 15% surge in WTW Orientation Attendance rates (57% attendance), in contrast to instances of unsuccessful contacts, 42% attendance rate. This underscored the significance of initiating early outreach and forging a connection with participants as a catalyst for fostering engagement.

Internal data for the period from April 2022 to September 2022 reflects that the online WTW Virtual Orientation has proven to be effective achieving a completion rate of 63%, which is 28% higher than the completion rate for Group WTW orientation (38%). This seems to indicate that providing participants with a virtual option has increased accessibility and convenience, resulting in higher engagement and completion rates.

Despite the mentioned successes, DSS has identified areas for improvement. It has been observed that some of the newly added programs, such as Cell-Ed and Celebrating Families, are being under-utilized by participants. For instance, during the period from August 2022 to February 2023, the referral rate for Celebrating Families stood at 29% per internal ad-hoc reports, representing 31 referrals out of a total of 108 slots. This figure falls short of initial contract goal of 50% program utilization rate. Moreover, for the year 2022, Cell-Ed's referrals amounted to only 404 participants to the online training platform, demonstrating a lower-than-anticipated utilization rate.

Another area of opportunity relates to the unintended consequences of the Monthly Engagement/Contact process. While the process aims to encourage participant engagement and enhance the relationship between the Job Specialist and the participant, it has led to an increase in the DSS's sanction rate (34% in March 2020 per Cal-OAR Data Dashboard) as Job Specialists are held accountable for failing to make successful contact with their participants. This increased focus has led to negative consequences (i.e., non-compliance and sanctions) for the participant.

Although DSS has made efforts to improve service delivery, the County has not yet engaged in a dedicated Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) effort to address these discouraging programmatic outcomes or areas for continued improvement. However, Cal-OAR presents an opportunity for DSS to embark on its first dedicated CQI process. This initiative can serve as a platform for ongoing evaluation, continually identifying areas of improvement, and implementing targeted strategies to enhance service delivery and programmatic outcomes over and over again.

4. An overview of the CWD's organizational vision and mission (optional).

The County of Fresno DSS mission is to assist adults, children and families to achieve health, safety and self-sufficiency through a diverse range of programs and partnerships. Moreover, the vision for DSS is that the people the County serve are

healthier, stronger, and thriving because DSS staff and partners deliver excellent, quality service that lead to positive outcomes.

Section 1: Measures for Improvement and Strategies

Part 1: Measure and Goal Narrative

1. Describe the reason for selecting the measure or programmatic grouping of measures.

DSS identified the following reasons for selecting WTW Orientation Attendance and Engagement rates as key areas of improvement during initial CQI cycle.

Increasing the connection between DSS and participants was a crucial objective. By prioritizing WTW Orientation Attendance and Engagement rates, Fresno aimed to establish early contact with participants ensuring they receive the necessary information about the program and available services. This connection would facilitate a smoother transition into activities that are appropriate for participants' specific situations, ultimately leading to positive outcomes.

By focusing on these measures, DSS recognized that taking action in these areas could yield immediate improvements and swift results. The outcomes are easily measurable, allowing for ongoing monitoring and assessment of progress. This enables DSS to make timely adjustments and interventions as needed.

Furthermore, increasing WTW Orientation Attendance and Engagement rates will have direct impact on other measures within the program. For example, a higher WTW Orientation Attendance rate would likely lead to increased attendance in the first activity setting a positive precedent for participant engagement. Likewise, improving the Engagement rate would reduce the sanction rate as participants who are actively involved are less likely to face penalties due to non-participation. Ultimately, participants engaged in activities are more likely to achieve positive outcomes, such as successful completion of barrier removal activities.

The decision to prioritize initial activities based on feedback from partner and collaborator engagement sessions further reinforced the selection of these measures. These sessions highlighted the importance of ensuring participants are promptly notified of available services and programs. By focusing on WTW Orientation Attendance and Engagement rates, Fresno aims to enroll participants in activities appropriate for their needs at an earlier stage maximizing the potential for positive outcomes.

2. Do partners and collaborators agree this is a measure or programmatic grouping of measures that should be focused on at this time?

While feedback from partners and stakeholder engagement did not specify explicit performance measures to focus on for improvement strategies, a common theme emerged during the various engagement sessions which was that our participants expressed a lack of awareness about the services and programs offered by the County through WTW. This feedback highlighted the crucial role WTW Orientation has in informing participants about available services. This feedback made it evident that focusing on this measure is necessary to address the identified gap in knowledge.

There was an overwhelming response (61%) received from internal staff surveys indicating that Initial Engagement measures (specifically WTW Orientation Attendance rate) should be the primary focus of DSS at this time. This strong endorsement from Job Specialists demonstrates their firsthand experience and understanding of the importance of WTW Orientation in effectively engaging participants.

Contracted providers, who play a vital role in delivering programs and services to Fresno County WTW participants expressed a strong desire to collaborate with DSS in marketing their programs to increase participation. Their willingness to actively contribute to marketing efforts demonstrates their agreement with the focus on Engagement Rate as a crucial measure.

3. Describe any anticipated interactions with other measures.

Improving the WTW Orientation Attendance and Engagement Rates is anticipated to have significant interactions with other performance measures and within the WTW program.

An increase in WTW Orientation Attendance rate will have a ripple effect on other measures. By ensuring more participants attend the orientation, there will be an increase in the Engagement Rate. Participants who are well-informed about the available services and programs are more likely to actively engage in the activities offered. This increased participation will contribute to improved overall program outcomes.

Additionally, a higher WTW Orientation Attendance rate can lead to a reduction in the sanction rate. Failure to attend the orientation is currently the second-highest sanctioned activity. By increasing the attendance rate participants will be better equipped with the necessary information and requirements, reducing the likelihood of non-compliance and subsequent sanctions. This will create a more supportive and productive environment for participants to successfully engage in the WTW program.

Moreover, an increased WTW Orientation Attendance rate will result in more participants being aware of barrier removal activities. These activities aim to address the obstacles that hinder participants' progress towards self-sufficiency. By making participants aware of these programs during the orientation, more individuals will actively engage in barrier removal activities which will lead to better outcomes and increased chances of overcoming their specific challenges.

Furthermore, focusing on increasing the overall Engagement Rate will contribute to an increase in educational attainment among participants. When participants are more engaged and committed to their educational pursuits, there is a higher likelihood of successful completion of educational programs. This, in turn, can lead to increased employment attainment and wage progression. Ultimately, these outcomes reduce the likelihood of individuals returning to CalWORKs after exiting the program promoting sustained self-sufficiency.

4. Describe how the CWD will track performance measure improvement.

DSS will devise a comprehensive approach to track performance measure improvements by utilizing both quantitative and qualitative methods. These methods

encompass various data sources and feedback mechanisms to ensure a well-rounded assessment of the system improvement plan's progress.

Quantitative tracking involves the utilization of data provided through the Cal-OAR data dashboard which serves as a primary source of information. However, in addition to the dashboard, DSS recognizes the need for more specific and tailored reports to track the WTW Orientation Attendance rate and identify trends. Ad hoc reports will be developed to provide a detailed analysis of this measure allowing for a more targeted approach to improvement strategies. These reports will highlight attendance rates over time and identify any significant changes or patterns that require attention.

Another quantitative aspect of performance measure tracking involves an outcomes study report. These reports will be used to assess the impact of improvement efforts on reducing sanctions. By analyzing the relationship between Engagement rate and the sanction rate, DSS can gain valuable insights into the effectiveness of their interventions and identify areas for further enhancement.

Complementing the quantitative methods, DSS recognizes the importance of gathering qualitative data to assess the experiences and perspectives of participants. Periodic focus groups and surveys will be conducted to obtain feedback on the services provided which will capture participants' perspectives and suggestions for improvement. The responses will provide valuable insights into the participants' engagement, satisfaction levels, and areas where services can be enhanced.

Furthermore, DSS will engage in contractor partner focus groups as part of the qualitative tracking process. These focus groups will serve as a platform for partners to share their perspectives, experiences, and recommendations for program improvement. Collaborating with partners will provide another perspective of the program's performance and enable the County to identify areas of strength and areas that require attention or refinement.

Combining data from participant and collaborator focus groups will give DSS a holistic view of program performance.

The frequency of data review will depend on the specific measure being tracked and the urgency of the improvement efforts. For quantitative data from the Cal-OAR data dashboard and Ad-hoc reports, regular monthly reviews will be conducted to monitor progress, identify trends, and make informed decisions. Qualitative data collection, such as surveys and partner focus groups, will be scheduled semi-annual to capture the evolving perspectives and experiences of participants and partners.

Part 2: Goal-level Descriptions

Goal 1: Increase Orientation Attendance Rate to 50% from 36%. Review using County Ad-hoc Reports improving by 3.5% every 6 months within 2 years (for a total of a 14.0% improvement).

Strategy 1: Increase participants utilization of Virtual WTW Orientation option

Strategy 2: Increase Face-to-Face WTW Orientation Attendance

1. Explain the reasoning or methodology which was used to determine this goal.

Determining the goal to increase the Orientation Attendance Rate from 36% to 50% involved a careful analysis of current performance data, consideration of achievable targets, and the implementation of a systematic and realistic improvement plan. The methodology utilized in setting this goal was based on the County's evaluation of the program's historical data, Statewide benchmarks, and the desire to drive meaningful progress over a defined timeframe.

To establish the initial goal of increasing the Orientation Attendance Rate to 50%, DSS reviewed historical data to assess the baseline performance and identified the gap between the current rate and the desired target. A thorough examination of the data allowed for a realistic assessment of the program's strengths and areas requiring improvement. DSS aims to make incremental improvements over time, with a specific target of a 3.5% increase in attendance rate every 6 months. The improvement target goal allows for gradual progress while still maintaining a sense of urgency. This incremental approach recognizes that significant changes in program outcomes requires sustained effort and a well-planned strategy. This approach would result in a total improvement of 14.0% by the end of the 2-year period.

2. What led the CWD to these improvement strategies?

DSS recognizes that by promoting the utilization of Virtual WTW Orientation, DSS could provide participants with a flexible and convenient option to access orientation sessions. The 52% attendance rate for Virtual WTW Orientation, indicates a higher level of engagement and participation compared to other methods. By incorporating and advertising the virtual orientation option as part of the CalWORKs Intake process, participants would be made aware of this alternative and encouraged to take advantage of it. Additionally, marketing efforts through flyers, lobby posters, mailers, email, and text messages would further promote the availability and benefits of Virtual WTW Orientation. By enabling Virtual WTW Orientation in Spanish, the second highest spoken language in Fresno County's CalWORKs program, DSS also aims to improve accessibility and inclusivity, ensuring that language would not be a barrier for participants to engage in the orientation process. Allowing participants to complete

Virtual WTW Orientation prior to the approval of CalWORKs would expedite the process and encourage timely engagement.

In parallel, DSS recognizes the importance of increasing face-to-face WTW Orientation attendance. With a current group orientation attendance rate of 27%, significant room for improvement exists. Incorporating notification of the face-to-face orientation during the CalWORKs Intake process would ensure that participants are aware of their participation requirements. By increasing successful WTW introductory phone calls, the County aims to establish a connection with participants and provide them with the necessary information and motivation to attend the face-to-face orientation. The promotion of the Virtual WTW Orientation option to participants would also extend to the face-to-face orientation, creating awareness and increasing attendance.

By focusing on these specific strategies, DSS aims to address the factors contributing to the lower attendance rates and increase overall orientation attendance. Simultaneously, efforts to improve orientation attendance acknowledges the benefits of face-to-face interactions and group dynamics in fostering engagement and motivation.³ Discuss any research or literature that supports the strategies chosen. Cite reference(s), if applicable.

3. Discuss any research or literature that support the strategies chosen. Cite reference.

To achieve the goal of increasing Orientation Attendance Rate identified above, the following essays provide support for these chosen strategies.

In the publication "Promoting Participation. How to increase involvement in Welfare-to-Work Activities: A How-To Guide" by Gayle Hamilton and Susan Scrivener, several recommendations align with Strategy 1. The authors emphasize the importance of using a variety of outreach methods, updating and "selling" the program, and taking responsibility for outreach. These strategies are relevant to increasing participants' awareness and utilization of the Virtual WTW Orientation option (Hamilton & Scrivener, n.d.).

In the research paper titled "Evaluating Two Welfare-to-Work Program Approaches: Two-Year Findings on the Labor Force Attachment and Human Capital Development Programs in Three Sites," the authors (Gayle Hamilton, Thomas Brock, Mary Farrell, Daniel Friedlander, and Kristen Harknett) highlight the significance of the messages communicated during orientation. They emphasize that the orientation provides the first clear signal to participants about the WTW program and its potential assistance in achieving self-sufficiency (Rangarajan et al., 2003).

While specific literature directly addressing increasing face-to-face WTW Orientation Attendance was not provided, the research on orientation sessions can inform this strategy as well. The literature emphasizes the importance of making orientations engaging and inspiring (Hamilton & Scrivener, 1999). By implementing interactive and captivating elements within group orientation sessions, via guest speakers, success

stories, or interactive activities, the likelihood of increased active participation can be enhanced.

4. Describe the roles of each partner and collaborator in implementing the selected strategies.

As DSS implements the strategies outlined in the Cal-SIP to increase orientation attendance, it recognizes the importance of engaging key stakeholders in the implementation process. This includes the active involvement of participants and staff who are directly impacted by the changes.

Regarding participants, DSS will continue to conduct semi-annual participant focus groups to gather their perspectives and ensure that the outcomes align with their desired needs. Immediate feedback, via paper questionnaires surveys, will be sought from participants right after attending an Orientation session to understand their thoughts and make necessary improvements. Additionally, monthly Client Satisfaction Survey outcomes will be reviewed to gain additional insights and ensure ongoing satisfaction with the orientation process.

The input and feedback from staff members will also play a crucial role in implementing the strategies. Surveys and other feedback methods will be used to gather insights from staff, enabling the county to understand their perspectives on increasing orientation attendance rates. By actively listening to staff feedback, DSS can identify approaches that are effective and those that may require adjustments, allowing for flexibility and adaptation of strategies as needed.

By involving both participants and staff in the implementation process, DSS aims to foster a collaborative environment where the insights and experiences of these stakeholders are valued. This collaborative approach will help ensure that the strategies are well-informed, effective, and responsive to the needs and perspectives of those involved.

5. Identify any staff education and training needs, and include any technical assistance needed to implement strategy and achieve goal.

To successfully implement the strategies and achieve the goal of increasing orientation attendance, staff education and training needs are crucial. By addressing these needs, DSS can equip its staff with the necessary knowledge and skills to effectively carry out their roles and support the implementation process. The following staff education and training needs have been identified:

Technical Training: Staff members need technical training to enhance their understanding of the DSS PASS (Personal Access to Social Services), the Fresno County managed website. This training will enable them to navigate the site efficiently and effectively to assist participants in accessing the information and resources they need. Clear and comprehensive user guides will be developed as a reference tool to support staff in utilizing the website's features and functionalities.

In addition to staff education and training, technical assistance may also be needed to support the implementation of the strategies. This could involve consulting with experts or external partners who can provide guidance and support in areas such as website management, marketing strategies, and case management best practices. Leveraging technical assistance can help address any specific challenges or gaps in knowledge and skills that may arise during the implementation process.

Marketing Techniques: Staff members should receive training on effective marketing techniques to increase participation in both virtual and face-to-face WTW orientations. This training will provide them with the knowledge and strategies to promote these orientation options, engage participants, and communicate the benefits and importance of attending orientation. By enhancing their marketing skills, staff can contribute to higher attendance rates and greater engagement.

Case Management: It is important to provide ongoing trainings for Job Specialists to develop and enhance effective case management skills. This training should focus on equipping them with tools and techniques to provide comprehensive support to participants, guide them through the orientation process, and assist in achieving their employment and self-sufficiency goals. Ongoing and periodic refresher training sessions should be implemented to reinforce the initial training and ensure continuous improvement in case management practices.

6. Describe how the CWD plans to mitigate and/or address both known internal and external barriers to achieve this goal.

Migration from CalWIN to CalSAWS system

Mitigation Strategies

Management support: DSS recognizes the importance of providing support to staff during the transition to CalSAWS. Management will ensure that the necessary resources, training, and guidance are provided to help staff throughout the transition.

Issue sharing and solution finding: DSS created an open and collaborative environment where staff can share their challenges and experiences related to the new application. Regular team meetings, feedback sessions, and knowledge-sharing platforms were established to facilitate the exchange of ideas and solutions.

Time allocation: DSS acknowledges the learning curve associated with the new system. While keeping a focus on the goal of increasing Orientation Attendance Rate, sufficient time has been allocated for staff to familiarize themselves with the CalSAWS system without compromising other objectives.

Resistance to Change by Job Specialists

Mitigation Strategies

Worker involvement: Recognizing the importance of worker engagement, DSS will actively involve staff in the design and implementation of changes. Staff's input and perspectives will be sought to ensure that their concerns are addressed, fostering a sense of ownership and buy-in.

Collaboration across silos: To overcome resistance to change, DSS fosters collaboration and communication across different departments and teams. Breaking down silos and promoting interdisciplinary collaboration will facilitate the sharing of knowledge, experiences, and best practices.

7. Describe how your facility will continuously evaluate each action step taken to see if improvement is being achieved. (e.g., tracking tools, meetings, monitoring, etc.) Include who will be responsible for follow up and compliance.

To effectively monitor and evaluate the implementation of improvement strategies aimed at achieving the goal of increasing the Orientation Attendance Rate, the following actions must occur:

Tracking Tools

Cal-OAR Data Dashboard: In addition to Ad-Hoc reports, previously discussed, DSS will continue to regularly review the Cal-OAR Data Dashboard, which provides comprehensive data on participant attendance and engagement. This dashboard will serve as a primary source of information to monitor progress.

Meetings and Monitoring

Quarterly Stakeholder Engagement: DSS will continue to conduct stakeholder engagement sessions, including surveys and focus groups, with staff, participants, and contracted providers on a quarterly basis. These sessions will provide valuable feedback and insights into the effectiveness of the implemented changes. Stakeholders will have the opportunity to share their experiences, suggestions, and concerns, which will inform the evaluation process.

Regular Staff Meetings: The responsible staff members and supervisors involved in the implementation of the action steps will meet during established committee and workgroup meetings (i.e., Employment Services Corrective Action Committee, Employment Services Supervisor Committee, and Cal-OAR BPW meetings) to discuss progress, review data, and address any challenges or issues that may arise. These meetings will facilitate ongoing communication, collaboration, and problem-solving.

Responsible Parties

Cal-OAR Business Process Workgroup (BPW) Members: Fresno County's Cal-OAR BPW will oversee the implementation of the action steps and be responsible for monitoring the progress and outcomes. They will ensure that the necessary tracking tools and business processes are in place and that the evaluation of performance measures is conducted effectively. Additionally, Cal-OAR BPW will facilitate the surveys, focus groups, and other engagement activities. They will compile and analyze the

feedback received from stakeholders, providing valuable qualitative insights into the effectiveness of the implemented changes.

Data Analysts Team: Business System Analysts (BSA) and representative from the Operations Research & Reporting team within DSS will be responsible for analyzing attendance data, tracking trends, and generating reports to provide insights into the effectiveness of the strategies. They will collaborate with Cal-OAR BPW and DSS' WTW Program Managers to identify areas for improvement and make data-driven recommendations.

Goal 2: Increase Engagement Rate to 50% from 30%. Review using attendance reports improving by 5.0% every 6 months within 2 years (for a total of a 20.0% improvement)

Strategy 1: *Prioritize attendance tab updating practice for all activities by Job Specialist*

Strategy 2: *Promote various activities to increase participation and engagement*

Strategy 3: *Increase Engagement Rate for 93706-Zip Code WTW Population*

1. Explain the reasoning or methodology which was used to determine this goal.

The goal of increasing the Engagement Rate from 30% to 50% was determined through a systematic approach that included the use of Root Cause Analysis. This approach involved analyzing the current performance data, identifying the underlying causes of low engagement, and developing strategies to address those root causes. By understanding the causes, DSS was able to develop targeted strategies and action steps to improve engagement and bridge the gap between the current rate and the desired target.

DSS also considered realistic targets, internal capacity and control, and the need for internal business process modifications, such as staff trainings and timely report development. These factors were considered to ensure a comprehensive and data-driven approach in setting the goal of increasing the Engagement Rate by 5% every six-months.

2. What led the CWD to these improvement strategies?

The decision to implement the improvement strategies for increasing the Engagement Rate to 50% was driven by a thorough analysis of data and the identification of specific areas that require attention. The Quality Control case review report from March 2022 to March 2023 highlighted that the failure to update activity attendance tabs correctly and timely was the highest cited error, accounting for 18% of errors. Additionally, a random review of activities in January 2023 revealed that 48% of attendance tabs were not appropriately updated. These findings indicate a significant gap in attendance tab updating practices and prompted the development of Strategy 1.

The development of strategy 2 was developed based on feedback from stakeholders and focuses on promoting various activities to increase participation and engagement. Staff surveys indicate that limited activity options hinder participant engagement. However, this contradicts feedback received from contracted providers who expressed low referral rates to their programs. On the other hand, internal liaison staff reported an increase in participant referrals after presenting information about specialized programs to the Welfare-to-Work (WTW) units. DSS recognizes the need to address these issues and believes that Strategy 2 would bridge the gap and increase referrals leading to improved participation rates.

Moreover, insights gained from an extended demographic analysis encompassing the interval between July 2022 and December 2022, which drew from a synthesis of Cal-OAR Performance Measure data and internally generated ad-hoc reports, have highlighted a notable equity concern regarding engagement. Within the context of CalWORKs recipients, those situated in the 93706-zip code—the most substantial CalWORKs population area (~12%)—exhibited a consistently lower Engagement Rate of 25%. This stands in contrast to the broader Countywide engagement rate of 30% observed during the same timeframe.

3. Discuss any research or literature that supports the strategies chosen. Cite reference(s), if applicable.

The Fresno County's chosen strategies to increase Engagement Rate in the WTW program align with recommendations and findings from relevant research and literature.

In the publication "Promoting Participation. How to increase involvement in Welfare-to-Work Activities: A How-To Guide" cited above, the authors emphasized the importance of investing in well-designed automated tracking systems and making participation monitoring a program priority. This publication supports the strategy of prioritizing updating the attendance tab for all activities as it involves implementing efficient tracking systems and emphasizing the significance of monitoring participation.

Additionally, the literature suggests maintaining frequent contact with participants and forging close linkages with service providers. These suggestions are consistent with the strategy of promoting various activities to increase participation and engagement. The aim is to establish ongoing communication and strong collaborations as mentioned in the article "Making 'Welfare to Work' Really Work" from the American Psychological Association.

Furthermore, the literature highlights the positive impact of receiving mental health assistance on participants' likelihood of becoming self-sufficient as mentioned in Adrian Garcia's article "Effectiveness of Welfare-to-Work Programs." This reinforces the importance of offering comprehensive support services which includes mental health assistance as part of the activities promoted to increase engagement.

4. Describe the roles of each partner and collaborator in implementing the selected strategies.

The implementation of the strategies to increase engagement involves collaboration with various partners and stakeholders to ensure a comprehensive and effective approach which is crucial for successful strategy implementation.

One important collaboration is with contracted providers who will conduct periodic in-service trainings to educate staff about the available programs and their associated benefits. These trainings will enhance staff knowledge and understanding of the programs enabling them to effectively promote engagement among participants. By working closely with contracted providers, DSS can leverage their expertise and resources to deliver high-quality trainings that align with participant needs and interests.

Additionally, the active participation of participants and contracted providers in surveys and focus groups plays a vital role in strategy implementation. Their input and feedback provide valuable insights that help shape decision-making and guide the improvement process. By involving stakeholders in surveys and focus groups, DSS ensures that decisions are based on objective information and takes into account the perspectives of those directly involved in the engagement process. This collaborative approach promotes transparency, fosters engagement, and allows for continuous improvement as results can be measured and compared over time.

DSS's partnership with State Center Community College District, particularly the recently launched Training Institute, further underlines their commitment to collaboration. This partnership holds the potential to expand opportunities through career-oriented technical training, which can lead to employment and professional growth. Such collaborations strengthen the overall strategy execution by enriching the array of offerings available to participants, specify to individuals within underserved communities, thereby enhancing their engagement prospects.

5. Identify any staff education and training needs, and include any technical assistance needed to implement strategy and achieve goal.

Training on the CalSAWS System

One crucial staff education and training need is related to the transition from the CalWIN to the CalSAWS system in September 2023. The implementation of the new system requires staff members to learn new processes, functionalities, and workflows. To ensure a smooth transition and minimize disruptions, it is essential to provide comprehensive training on the CalSAWS system. This training should cover topics such as navigating the system, entering data accurately, and accessing relevant reports and information. By addressing this training need, staff members will be better equipped to utilize the CalSAWS system effectively and efficiently in their daily work, contributing to improved engagement outcomes.

Refresher Training on Case Maintenance and Attendance Tab Updating

Another staff education and training need is a refresher on the importance of case maintenance, specifically focusing on the timely and accurate updating of the attendance tab. As stated earlier, the Quality Control case review report highlighted that failing to update the attendance tab correctly and timely accounted for a significant percentage of errors. To address this issue, it is critical to provide staff members with a refresher training that emphasizes the significance of maintaining up-to-date and accurate attendance records. This training should cover proper procedures for updating the attendance tab, the impact of accurate data on Engagement Rates, and strategies for overcoming challenges in maintaining accurate records. By addressing this training need, staff members will be better equipped to ensure the integrity of attendance data and support accurate reporting and analysis.

Education on Activities and Benefits for Participants

Additionally, staff members need to be continuously educated about the various activities available within the WTW program and the benefits they provide to participants. Training materials, which will include information on different types of activities, their objectives, and how they contribute to participant engagement and success. By providing staff members with a comprehensive understanding of available activities and their associated benefits, they can effectively promote and encourage participant participation. This training can be facilitated through collaboration with contract providers and internal liaison staff who can share their expertise and provide insights into the available programs. By addressing this training need, staff members will be better prepared to guide participants towards suitable activities resulting in increased Engagement Rates.

6. Describe how the CWD plans to mitigate and/or address both known internal and external barriers to achieve this goal.

Migration to CalSAWS System

For mitigation strategies, please refer to the six (6) questions outlined in the Goal 1 section above.

Staff Engagement and Apathy

To address staff apathy and enhance engagement, DSS recognizes the importance of fostering a positive work environment. DSS seeks to promote open communication channels, encourage staff to provide input and feedback, and to recognize and reward staff members for their contributions. Regular and productive staff meetings, meaningfully workshops, and continuous training sessions should be conducted to keep staff members informed and motivated. Furthermore, management will continue to support and encourage the efforts of the “Morale Committee,” a DSS’ inter-office social committee which holds diverse team building events. By prioritizing staff engagement and addressing any concerns or issues, DSS aims to create a supportive work environment that fosters staff commitment and dedication to achieving the goal of increasing Engagement Rates.

Limited Funding/Resources for Activities

To address the challenge of limited funding and resources for activities beyond the contracted scope, DSS will collaborate with contracted providers to identify innovative solutions. This collaboration will involve exploring additional funding opportunities, seeking grants, and leveraging community partnerships to expand the range of available activities. By actively seeking external resources and partnerships, DSS aims to increase the variety and quality of activities offered to participants, thereby enhancing Engagement Rates.

Staffing Shortages

The challenge of staffing shortages has resulted in increased caseload sizes, thereby significantly limiting the abilities of Job Specialists to build rapport, trust, and meaningful

connection with all participants. Currently, DSS is in the process of adjusting the minimum qualifications for the Job Specialists classification to increase the pool of talent available for recruitment. Additionally, DSS is exploring strategies to optimize resource allocation and workload management. This includes conducting workload assessments to identify areas of high demand and reallocating staff resources accordingly.

Participant Non-Participation

To address the challenge of participants who do not adhere to the WTW program requirements, DSS will employ a proactive case management approach. This will involve conducting additional outreach and engagement activities, such as increased home and site visits. DSS will also conduct participant surveys and focus groups to gather feedback and identify barriers to participation. Based on the feedback received from the previous participant focus groups, it has been identified that targeted programs and enhanced supportive services can be further developed to address the specific needs and concerns of participants.

7. Describe how your facility will continuously evaluate each action step taken to see if improvement is being achieved. (e.g., tracking tools, meetings, monitoring, etc.) Include who will be responsible for follow up and compliance

To continuously evaluate the progress and effectiveness of each action step taken to achieve the goal of increasing the Engagement Rate to 50%, DSS will implement various tracking and monitoring mechanisms. The responsible parties for follow-up and compliance are as follows:

Strategy 1: Prioritize attendance tab updating practice for all activities by Job Specialist

Action Step 1: Development of Attendance Tab Report

Responsibility: Cal-OAR Business Process Workgroup (BPW) with assistance from Business System Analyst (BSA) and the Operational Research and Reporting (ORR) team.

To effectively monitor the updating of attendance tabs, a dedicated Attendance Tab Report will be developed. This report will enable staff to take necessary action, while supervisors will review it to ensure that activities are promptly and effectively addressed.

Action Step 2: Implementation of Regular Reminders

The Cal-OAR BPW will play a crucial role in implementing regular reminders to emphasize the importance of updating the attendance tab. These reminders will be communicated through weekly newsletter posts and discussions during committee meetings which will ensure that staff remain aware and vigilant about this important task.

Action Step 3: Provision Trainings

Staff Development will provide trainings via in-person and the eLearning system to reinforce proper attendance tab updating procedures. These trainings will address any

challenges or questions that staff may have which will ensure their competency in this area. Moreover, the trainings will incorporate specific processes related to the CalSAWS system to ensure staff's familiarity and effectiveness in updating an activity status in the new system.

Action Step 4: Identification and Elimination of Unnecessary Procedures

DSS Program with Cal-OAR BPW will identify and eliminate or reduce unnecessary tasks or procedures that may hinder the efficient updating of the attendance tab. By streamlining processes and removing barriers, staff will have more time and resources to focus on accurate and timely attendance tab updates (or CalSAWS equivalent).

Action Step 5: Conducting Targeted Case Reviews

WTW Supervisors will conduct targeted case reviews with a focus on the attendance tab to identify and issues or gaps. Through this evaluation process, supervisors will ensure compliance and monitor the effectiveness of the strategies implemented.

Strategy 2: Promote various activities to increase participation and engagement.

Action Step 1: Development of Impactful Activity Report

Responsibility: Cal-OAR BPW with BSAs and the Operational Research and Reporting (ORR) team

To evaluate the success of activities and their impact on participants, an Impactful Activity Report will be developed. This report will highlight the most successful activities with positive outcomes showcasing their benefits to all impacted stakeholders.

Action Step 2: Collaboration with Contract Providers

DSS Program Analyst will collaborate, during regular contractor meetings, with community partners and providers to identify and develop activities that align with participant needs and interests. This collaborative effort will ensure a diverse range of options for increased engagement and participation.

Action Step 3: In-Service Trainings

Contracted providers and liaison staff will arrange periodic in-service trainings that will educate and excite staff about the available programs and their benefits aiming to promote engagement.

Strategy 3: Increase Targeted Engagement for 93706-zip code WTW population.

Action Step 1: Collaborate with Providers

The responsibility for continuous evaluation rests upon the DSS and Program Analysts, contracted providers, and Community Based Organizations (CBOs). This collaborative effort will extend further to include community outreach events within the targeted area. DSS will closely engage with local contract providers, CBOs, and the community to create and implement programs that are carefully attuned to the unique requirements of the 93706-zip code region and its neighboring areas.

Action Step 2: Organize Focus Group Sessions

To ensure the strategy's effectiveness, Fresno County DSS will orchestrate semi-annual focus group sessions involving CalWORKs recipients from the 93706-zip code. This engagement serves as a pivotal tool for evaluation. By gathering direct input from participants, DSS gains insights into the strategy's impact, areas of improvement, and potential barriers. This feedback-driven approach guarantees that adjustments can be made promptly based on the real-time experiences and perceptions of the targeted population.

Action Step 3: Conduct Monthly Meetings with WTW Staff

DSS will hold monthly meetings involving the WTW staff. These gatherings aim to collaboratively develop and refine strategies dedicated to enhancing engagement within the 93706-zip code. The active participation of staff members ensures a holistic and informed approach. This continuous interaction not only allows for the exchange of ideas but also enables the identification of potential challenges and the swift implementation of solutions.

Section 3: Peer Review

Peer county/ counties selected for collaboration and consultation:

Sacramento County

1. Discuss how the Peer Review process impacted Cal-SIP development.

Observations and Best Practices from Sacramento County

During the peer review process, Fresno County observed several best practices employed by Sacramento County that contributed to their success in increasing WTW Orientation Attendance and Engagement Rates.

Rescheduling Appointments

Sacramento County witnessed a notable increase in their WTW Orientation Attendance rate rising from a baseline of 45% to an impressive 53%. This improvement was attributed to a proactive approach of automatically rescheduling participants for follow-up appointments if they missed the initial WTW Orientation demonstrating a commitment to participant engagement.

Reports

Sacramento County developed an early engagement flow tracker report. This tracker enabled Sacramento County to monitor the progression of participants through the WTW program from orientation to appraisal and the next activity. By actively tracking and managing participant engagement, the county ensured that cases were being worked on and appropriate actions were taken in a timely manner.

Increased Training with Staff and Supervisors

Sacramento County prioritized consistent Cal-OAR training and communication with staff and supervisors. They developed a comprehensive Cal-OAR Data entry desk guide which provides clear instructions and guidelines for accurate data entry. This emphasis on training and standardized processes improved data accuracy and streamlined operations within the county.

Targeted Case Reviews

Targeted Cal-OAR case reviews were conducted by Sacramento County to ensure timely and accurate updates to participant cases. These reviews allowed the county to measure improvements in Cal-OAR measures, assess the effectiveness of strategies, and identify areas for further enhancement. By actively monitoring cases, Sacramento County maintained a high level of accountability and quality in their service delivery.

Action Items for Fresno County

Based on the observations and best practices from Sacramento County, several action items are recommended for Fresno County to enhance their WTW Orientation Attendance and Engagement Rates.

Increased Communication

DSS should prioritize increasing communication with staff members. This can be achieved through timely and continuous trainings, updated desk guides, scripts/talking points, and clear workflows. By providing staff with the necessary tools and resources, DSS can empower them to effectively engage participants and provide accurate information because improving communication with management and supervisors is essential.

Timely Data

DSS should ensure that supervisors and management receive consistent and accurate reports reflecting real-time data. This will enable them to identify gaps in services and make proactive decisions to address any issues that arise.

Tracking Mechanism

DSS should implement a real-time tracking report to monitor participant progress and identify any bottlenecks or areas that require attention. With this information at hand, Fresno County can intervene promptly and measure improvements in Cal-OAR measures.

Targeted Case Reviews

DSS should conduct targeted Cal-OAR case reviews to ensure that tasks and actions related to participant cases are executed correctly. By regularly reviewing cases, DSS can assess the effectiveness of their strategies, measure improvements, and identify areas for further enhancement.

2. Discuss steps taken to conduct peer review.

The decision to partner with Sacramento County was based on several factors as mentioned above in Section II: 1.

Once the peer review selections were approved via both County's management teams, virtual weekly meetings were scheduled starting April 5th through May 17th; however, the option for future in-person reviews remains available and can be considered if deemed necessary.

During each weekly session, one county would play the role of the "host county" and discuss their current business processes related to WTW Orientation and Engagement rates, and the other county would then share best practices for the specific measures and provide feedback on potential strategies to improve outcomes. This collaborative exchange allowed for the sharing of insights, knowledge, and feedback to enhance the effectiveness of the respective programs.

3. Briefly summarize observations and action items from Peer Review process.

Spoken to in Section 3. Question 1 above.

Section 4: Target Measure Summary

Goal 1: Increase Orientation Attendance Rate to 50% from 36%. Review using County Ad-hoc Reports improving by 3.5% every 6 months within 2 years (for a total of a 14.0% improvement).

Performance Measure: Orientation Attendance Rate

Baseline Result: 36%

**Cal-SIP Start
Time:** 12/1/2023

Progress Report #1: 12/6/2024

Progress Report #2: 1/9/2026

Cycle End Date: 6/30/2026

Strategies and Actions:

1. Increase utilization of Virtual WTW Orientation option
 - i. Action Step 1: Incorporate and advertise virtual orientation options as an integral part of the CalWORKs Intake process, ensuring that participants are aware of this alternative.
 - ii. Action Step 2: Market the Virtual WTW Orientation option specifically to Job Specialists, highlighting its benefits and convenience.
 - iii. Action Step 3: Promote the Virtual WTW Orientation option to participants through various channels such as flyers, lobby posters, mailers, email, and text messages, emphasizing its accessibility and flexibility.
 - iv. Action Step 4: Enable the Virtual WTW Orientation option to be conducted in Spanish, catering to participants who prefer or require Spanish-language materials and monitor online Orientation Attendance Rate of Spanish-speaking population
 - v. Action Step 5: Allow participants to complete the Virtual WTW Orientation prior to the approval of their WTW case, streamlining the process and reducing barriers to attendance.

2. Increase Group WTW Orientation Attendance Rate
 - i. Action Step 1: Incorporate notification of the Group Orientation during the CalWORKs Intake process, ensuring that participants are informed about this option and its importance.
 - ii. Action Step 2: Enhance the effectiveness of WTW Introductory Phone Calls, ensuring that Job Specialists are skilled in making successful initial contacts with participants, building rapport, and emphasizing the importance of attending the Group Orientation.
 - iii. Action Step 3: Quarterly stakeholder engagement, including surveys conducted with staff and participant focus groups, will be conducted to assess and evaluate the effectiveness of the implemented changes.

Tracking Improvement:

To effectively monitor and evaluate the implementation of improvement strategies aimed at achieving the goal of increasing the Orientation Attendance Rate, the following actions must occur:

Tracking Tools

Cal-OAR Data Dashboard: In addition to Ad-Hoc reports, previously discussed, DSS will continue to regularly review the Cal-OAR Data Dashboard, which provides comprehensive data on participant attendance and engagement. This dashboard will serve as a primary source of information to monitor progress.

Meetings and Monitoring

Quarterly Stakeholder Engagement: DSS will continue to conduct stakeholder engagement sessions, including surveys and focus groups, with staff, participants, and contracted providers on a quarterly basis. These sessions will provide valuable feedback and insights into the effectiveness of the implemented changes. Stakeholders will have the opportunity to share their experiences, suggestions, and concerns, which will inform the evaluation process.

Regular Staff Meetings: The responsible staff members and supervisors involved in the implementation of the action steps will meet during established committee and workgroup meetings (i.e., Employment Services Corrective Action Committee, Employment Services Supervisor Committee, and Cal-OAR BPW meetings) to discuss progress, review data, and address any challenges or issues that may arise. These meetings will facilitate ongoing communication, collaboration, and problem-solving.

Responsible Parties

Cal-OAR Business Process Workgroup (BPW) Members: Fresno County's Cal-OAR BPW will oversee the implementation of the action steps and be responsible for monitoring the progress and outcomes. They will ensure that the necessary tracking tools and business processes are in place and that the evaluation of performance measures is conducted effectively. Additionally, Cal-OAR BPW will facilitate the surveys, focus groups, and other engagement activities. They will compile and analyze the feedback received from stakeholders, providing valuable qualitative insights into the effectiveness of the implemented changes.

Data Analysts Team: Business System Analysts (BSA) and representative from the Operations Research & Reporting team within DSS will be responsible for analyzing attendance data, tracking trends, and generating reports to provide insights into the effectiveness of the strategies. They will collaborate with Cal-OAR BPW and DSS' WTW Program Managers to identify areas for improvement and make data-driven recommendations.

Goal 2: Increase Engagement Rate to 50% from 30%. Review using attendance reports improving by 5.0% every 6 months within 2 years (for a total of a 20.0% improvement)

Performance Measure: Engagement Rate

Baseline Result: 30%

Cal-SIP Start Time: 12/1/2023

Progress Report #1: 12/6/2024

Progress Report #2: 1/9/2026

Cycle End Date: 6/30/2026

Strategies, Action Steps, and Tracking Improvement:

To continuously evaluate the progress and effectiveness of each action step taken to achieve the goal of increasing the Engagement Rate to 50%, DSS will implement various tracking and monitoring mechanisms. The responsible parties for follow-up and compliance are as follows:

Strategy 1: Prioritize attendance tab updating practice for all activities by Job Specialist

Action Step 1: Development of Attendance Tab Report

Responsibility: Cal-OAR Business Process Workgroup (BPW) with assistance from Business System Analyst (BSA) and the Operational Research and Reporting (ORR) team.

To effectively monitor the updating of attendance tabs, a dedicated Attendance Tab Report will be developed. This report will enable staff to take necessary action, while supervisors will review it to ensure that activities are promptly and effectively addressed.

Action Step 2: Implementation of Regular Reminders

The Cal-OAR BPW will play a crucial role in implementing regular reminders to emphasize the importance of updating the attendance tab. These reminders will be communicated through weekly newsletter posts and discussions during committee meetings which will ensure that staff remain aware and vigilant about this important task.

Action Step 3: Provision Trainings

Staff Development will provide trainings via in-person and the eLearning system to reinforce proper attendance tab updating procedures. These trainings will address any challenges or questions that staff may have which will ensure their competency in this area. Moreover, the trainings will incorporate specific processes related to the CalSAWS system to ensure staff's familiarity and effectiveness in updating an activity status in the new system.

Action Step 4: Identification and Elimination of Unnecessary Procedures

DSS Program with Cal-OAR BPW will identify and eliminate or reduce unnecessary tasks or procedures that may hinder the efficient updating of the attendance tab. By

streamlining processes and removing barriers, staff will have more time and resources to focus on accurate and timely attendance tab updates (or CalSAWS equivalent).

Action Step 5: Conducting Targeted Case Reviews

WTW Supervisors will conduct targeted case reviews with a focus on the attendance tab to identify and issues or gaps. Through this evaluation process, supervisors will ensure compliance and monitor the effectiveness of the strategies implemented.

Strategy 2: Promote various activities to increase participation and engagement.

Action Step 1: Development of Impactful Activity Report

Responsibility: Cal-OAR BPW with BSAs and the Operational Research and Reporting (ORR) team

To evaluate the success of activities and their impact on participants, an Impactful Activity Report will be developed. This report will highlight the most successful activities with positive outcomes showcasing their benefits to all impacted stakeholders.

Action Step 2: Collaboration with Contract Providers

DSS Program Analyst will collaborate, during regular contractor meetings, with community partners and providers to identify and develop activities that align with participant needs and interests. This collaborative effort will ensure a diverse range of options for increased engagement and participation.

Action Step 3: In-Service Trainings

Contracted providers and liaison staff will arrange periodic in-service trainings that will educate and excite staff about the available programs and their benefits aiming to promote engagement.

Strategy 3: Increase Targeted Engagement for 93706-zip code WTW population.

Action Step 1: Collaborate with Providers

The responsibility for continuous evaluation rests upon the DSS and Program Analysts, contracted providers, and Community Based Organizations (CBOs). This collaborative effort will extend further to include community outreach events within the targeted area. DSS will closely engage with local contract providers, CBOs, and the community to create and implement programs that are carefully attuned to the unique requirements of the 93706-zip code region and its neighboring areas.

Action Step 2: Organize Focus Group Sessions

To ensure the strategy's effectiveness, Fresno County DSS will orchestrate semi-annual focus group sessions involving CalWORKs recipients from the 93706-zip code. This engagement serves as a pivotal tool for evaluation. By gathering direct input from participants, DSS gains insights into the strategy's impact, areas of improvement, and potential barriers. This feedback-driven approach guarantees that adjustments can be

made promptly based on the real-time experiences and perceptions of the targeted population.

Action Step 3: Conduct Monthly Meetings with WTW Staff

DSS will hold monthly meetings involving the WTW staff. These gatherings aim to collaboratively develop and refine strategies dedicated to enhancing engagement within the 93706-zip code. The active participation of staff members ensures a holistic and informed approach. This continuous interaction not only allows for the exchange of ideas but also enables the identification of potential challenges and the swift implementation of solutions.

Action Step 4: Monitor Engagement Rate data for zip code 93706 to quantify effectiveness of targeted approach

DSS will assess the Engagement Rate data for a representative sample of clients, comprising approximately 12%, who reside within the 93706-zip code area. This evaluation aims to gauge whether the focused approach is yielding the desired outcomes.

Appendix

Appendix is intended to include additional information not already captured within the Cal-SIP Report.

Appendix A: Cal-OAR Signature Sheet: The Cal-SIP must be approved by the CWDs County Board of Supervisors in public session, or as applicable by the chief elected official.

Appendix B: Cal-OAR Team and Partner & Collaborators. Details the Cal-OAR team and partners engaged in the Cal-SIP process.

Appendix C: Supporting Information. Includes charts, graphics, and other material that is referenced throughout the Cal-SIP.