

Program: CalWORKs

Division: Student Services

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Email your completed form to Karin Spirn and your dean by November 3.

Helpful Links:

- ★ [Tools for Writers](#) - with contacts and info for help with specific sections.
- ★ [Program Review Glossary](#) - defines key terms you can review when writing.
- ★ [Discipline Data Packets](#) – institutional research about disciplines and student services
- ★ [Course Success Rates Dashboard](#) – allows you to research your program’s success rates

Detailed information and instructions appear at the end of this form. For help, please contact Karin Spirn at kspirn@laspositacollege.edu.

1. Please describe your program's most important **achievements** in year 24-25.

- **Significant Growth in Headcount and Shifts in Student Demographics**

CalWORKs experienced a 21% increase in student headcount from 2023–2024 to 2024–2025, with an overall 119% increase since the 2019–2020 academic year. The 2024–2025 unduplicated headcount reached 46 students, continuing to reflect a female-majority population (80%) and an older age distribution compared to the campus average: 78% of our students are between 30-49 years old. The cohort remains racially diverse with Latinx, Asian, Black identified populations making up 75% of our cohort. Additionally, there is a growing share of part-time and noncredit students—many of whom are non-residents. Another interesting change was the sharp increase in incoming freshman students, those with fewer than 30 units (28% increase from prior year). An interesting finding considering the cohort is considerably serving older students.

- **Improved Academic Momentum and Persistence Outcomes**

Despite serving a larger and more complex student cohort, CalWORKs saw continued gains in academic success. Since 2019–2020, the average GPA for CalWORKs students has largely improved and course withdrawals (“W” grades) steadily declining, and at its all-time lowest for the 2024-2025 academic year.

- **High-Touch Case Management as a Core Driver of Student Success**

Much of the program’s success is attributed to the consistent, high-touch case management provided by Counselor Assistant II Maria Glidden. Her regular check-ins, on-time county attendance reporting, and early intervention strategies have been essential in keeping students

compliant with county mandates and academically on track. These personalized supports have led to measurable gains in GPA, persistence, and overall stability for CalWORKs participants.

- **Cohort-Based Model Aligned with Guided Pathways and Equity**

CalWORKs operates within a cohort-based model that aligns with Guided Pathways and equity-centered frameworks. Students enter the program through a shared application used across categorical programs and are required to meet with counselors regularly to maintain educational planning momentum. Services are individualized based on each student's life experience and needs, with wraparound referrals that extend both on- and off-campus. The majority of students in the cohort meet criteria for Pell Grants, fee waivers, and SCFF funding, reinforcing both equity and fiscal alignment.

- **Strengthened County Partnerships Driving Recruitment and Support**

Relationships with Alameda, Contra Costa, and San Joaquin counties continue to be a key factor in CalWORKs enrollment growth. Built through consistent, high-quality communication—especially through monthly documentation and advocacy efforts—these partnerships improve referral pipelines and case coordination. A standout achievement this year was the integration of CalWORKs staff into San Joaquin County's quarterly partnership meetings, deepening regional collaboration and positioning the college as a trusted partner in student success.

2. Please describe your most important **challenges** in year 24-25.

- **Staff Capacity and Case Management Load**

The CalWORKs program continues to support an increasing number of students with highly individualized needs. This year, Maria Glidden, Counselor Assistant II, provided more than 2,000 student contacts—including over 1,100 CalWORKs-specific sessions—each requiring extensive one-on-one support and documentation. Balancing CalWORKs alongside responsibilities in EOPS, CARE, and NextUp speaks to both her commitment and the program's growing visibility. As demand rises, there is an opportunity for us as a division to explore ways to strengthen infrastructure—such as streamlined workflows, shared processes, or additional support structures—to help maintain high-quality services while promoting staff sustainability.

- **Opportunities to Strengthen Recognition of Categorical Program Contributions**

CalWORKs and other categorical programs strongly align with collegewide equity priorities and Guided Pathways principles. As our division continues to define its identity on campus, there are opportunities to more fully integrate these programs into institutional planning and resource discussions. Greater visibility would help the college leverage the demonstrated strengths of CalWORKs—particularly in areas connected to the Student-Centered Funding Formula (SCFF) and support for disproportionately impacted students. Enhancing this alignment is not a critique; it is an opportunity to strengthen collaborative planning and highlight the impact our division is already making.

- **Increasing Integration with Equity and SCFF Goals**

While CalWORKs outcomes directly support several district equity priorities and SCFF metrics, this connection is not always widely understood across the college. Strengthening communication about how CalWORKs contributes to retention, persistence, completion, and financial aid access would allow the program to be used more effectively as a collegewide equity strategy. With increased cross-departmental awareness, there is potential to expand the impact of existing practices and better integrate CalWORKs into shared planning frameworks.

- **Opportunities for More Coordinated Equity Planning**

Our campus continues to grow in its equity work, and there is an opportunity to formalize cross-functional collaboration between student services, instruction, and administration. A shared structure for ongoing equity conversations—such as coordinated forums, aligned planning processes, or regular touchpoints—could strengthen consistency, accountability, and collective ownership of equity outcomes. CalWORKs is well positioned to contribute to these conversations, given its experience serving high-need populations and navigating complex student barriers.

- **Improving Navigation of Campuswide Resources**

Students, particularly those balancing work, parenting, and basic needs challenges, continue to express difficulty navigating campus resources spread across multiple websites and departments. The ongoing development of the centralized Student Resource Guide offers a promising opportunity to streamline access and reduce confusion. As this tool evolves, there is strong potential for it to serve as a unifying model for campuswide resource communication and cross-department collaboration.

- **Growing Student Demand Without Matching Infrastructure**

CalWORKs enrollment continues to increase, with many students presenting more complex needs—such as noncredit enrollment patterns, family responsibilities, and basic needs insecurities. The program's success in meeting these needs highlights both the dedication of staff and the need to ensure appropriate infrastructure as demand rises. Opportunities exist to examine staffing patterns, automate routine tasks, and develop shared triage workflows. These improvements could help sustain individualized support while ensuring compliance requirements are consistently met.

3. What SLO(s) or SAO(s) if any did your program assess or discuss since your last program review? Please describe any findings and planned actions.

- **SAO Assessed:**

Through interaction with the CalWORKs program, students will be able to clarify their career and educational goals.

- **Assessment Summary and Findings:**

This SAO was assessed during the 2024–2025 academic year and was met with strong evidence of effectiveness. The primary indicator was the high volume of sustained, one-on-one student engagement. More than 1,100 CalWORKs-specific contacts were recorded over the

year, within a broader 2,000+ total student interactions across programs. These case management sessions provided critical opportunities for staff to assist students with educational planning, refer them to campus and county resources, and engage in long-term goal clarification.

Staff used ConexED documentation to track goal progression, identify barriers, and support students in refining their academic pathways. These notes showed that students were not only receiving logistical support but were actively engaged in reflective planning discussions. In addition, students typically followed through on county paperwork within 24–48 hours, indicating a strong link between CalWORKs interactions and actionable, goal-aligned behaviors.

Another key finding was the direct connection between county compliance and educational persistence. Students who fall out of compliance with county mandates lose their CalWORKs cash aid and must exit the program at the end of the term, which also affects enrollment numbers. Through consistent follow-up, documentation support, and early interventions, CalWORKs staff ensured that 100% of participating students remained compliant and eligible throughout the academic cycle. This level of support was particularly important given the increased headcount and the high-needs profile of the cohort.

4. What are your upcoming plans? Please note any ways that these support student achievement and equity.

Upcoming Plans Specific to CalWORKs & Their Equity Impact

- **Enhance Case Management Tools to Improve Timeliness and Resource Tracking**
CalWORKs will build on its existing infrastructure by testing and refining case management features—like the resource log and student case tracking system—to better monitor student progress from issue to resolution. These tools will help staff identify which services students use most often, streamline documentation, and plan more effectively for future supply and funding needs. Improved tracking also supports a more equity-aligned approach by helping staff intervene earlier when challenges arise.
- **Sustain High-Touch, Holistic Support Amid Staffing and Budget Constraints**
With limited capacity to expand programming this year due to anticipated staffing and funding reductions, CalWORKs will prioritize maintaining its high-touch service model that centers parenting students and those with multiple barriers. CalWORKs' framework intentionally integrates trauma-informed and culturally responsive practices into its core service design—supporting students both academically and in their lived realities as caregivers and county aid recipients.
- **Deepen Partnerships with Alameda, Contra Costa, and San Joaquin Counties**
Strengthening CalWORKs relationships with local county agencies remains a top priority for sustaining enrollment and improving interagency coordination. We aim to formalize collaborations across the three counties we serve, Alameda, Contra Cost, and San Joaquin.

Program Review Update 2025

These efforts improve visibility, speed up referrals and paperwork processing, and ensure students receive more seamless support across both campus and county systems.

- **Launch Student Feedback Surveys to Guide Program and County Collaboration**

In 2025–2026, CalWORKs will implement two feedback tools: one to identify gaps in internal program support, and one to gather insights on students' experiences navigating county services. These surveys will inform improvements to our own processes and help us better advocate for changes or collaboration at the county level. The goal is not only to enhance service delivery but to co-create more fluid, student-centered pathways across systems.

CTE REPORT (CTE DISCIPLINES ONLY)

1. Does this program continue to meet a labor market demand?

- Yes or No:
- Explanation/evidence:

2. Are there similar programs in the area? If yes, list the programs and their institutions.

- Yes or No:
- Explanation/evidence:

3. Has the program demonstrated effectiveness as measured by the employment and completion success of its students? Provide employment and completion success based on Perkins Core Indicator Report.

- Yes or No:
- Explanation/evidence:

4. Does the program provide opportunities for review and comments by local private industries? Attach most recent Advisory Committee meeting minutes.

- Yes or No:
- Explanation/evidence:

Detailed Instructions and Information

Instructions:

1. Please answer each question with enough detail to present your information, but it doesn't have to be long.
2. If the requested information does not apply to your program, write "Not Applicable."
3. Optional/suggested: Communicate with your dean while completing this document.
4. Send an electronic copy of this completed form to Program Review chair Karin Spirn and your Dean by November 3.
5. Even if you don't have much to report, we want to hear from you, so your voice is part of the college planning process.

Audience: Deans, Vice Presidents of Student Services and Academic Services, All Planning and Allocation Committees. This document will be available to the public.

Uses: This Program Review will inform the audience about your program. It is also used in creating division summaries, determining college planning priorities, and determining the allocation of resources. The final use is to document the fulfillment of accreditation requirements.

Please note: Program Review is NOT a vehicle for making requests. All requests should be made through appropriate processes (e.g., Instructional Equipment Request Process) or directed to your dean or supervisor.

Time Frame: This Program Review should reflect your program status during the 24-25 academic year. It should describe plans starting now and continuing through 2025-26. It is okay to include information outside of these time windows as needed.

Program Review Process: Comprehensive Program Reviews will be completed every three years, in alignment with the SLO/SAO cycle. On the other years, programs will complete an update.

SLO/SAO Process: SLOs and SAOs should be assessed according to a three-year plan, with comprehensive reporting on the third year. For more information, contact SLO chair John Rosen: jrosen@laspositascollege.edu

Equity is a guiding principle. Here is the LPC definition:

Las Positas College will achieve equity by changing the impacts of structural racism, ableism, homophobia, and systematic poverty on student success and access to higher education, achieved through continuous evaluation and improvement of all services. We believe in a high-quality education focused on learning and an inclusive, culturally relevant environment that meets the diverse needs of all our students.

LPC Equity Definition: Equity is parity in student educational outcomes. It places student success and belonging for students of color and disproportionately impacted students at the center of focus.