

City and County Of San Francisco
San Francisco Human Services Agency

Assessing Client Progress in TANF: Looking Beyond WPR

National Association for Welfare Research and Statistics,
July 2019

Our Challenges

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We generate a lot of point-in-time measures to meet federal, state, and local reporting requirements:

- **Work Participation Rate**
- **Number of families receiving CalWORKs/TANF benefit in a month**
- **Number of clients enrolled in various services/activities**
- **Number of clients placed in jobs**
- **Number of clients sanctioned, exempt from work requirements**
- **Forthcoming in CA: Percentage of clients who exited CalWORKs/TANF with earnings, percentage of clients with earnings 6 & 12 months after exit.**

Needed for compliance & funding purposes, but less useful for understanding what works at the operational level.

The key question we want to know:

To what extent are we helping clients **MOVE toward self-sufficiency
(and meet WPR along the way)?**

A New Metric in SFHSA

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Client Participation Improvement Rate

The percentage of clients who made progress from one month to another

Disclaimer: NOT proposing a new national measure.

This measure can provide insights and understanding, identify areas to target for improvement, and assess effectiveness of new initiatives.

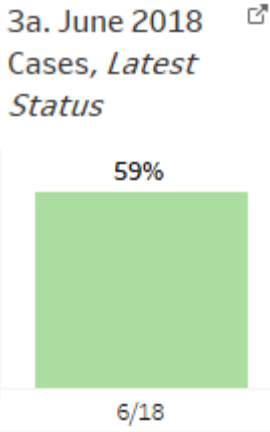
It would NOT be useful as a measure to compare organizations against or to set targets for agencies to meet.

We Can Look at Progress Over Different Time Periods

From our Monthly Dashboard

3. Client Participation Improvement (CPI) (3-Month Progress)	Dec 18	43.5%
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3-month progress: 43.5% of our work-eligible clients in December 2018 made progress in March 2019



12-month progress: 59% of work-eligible participants in June 2018 made progress in June 2019

Examples of Progress

Month 1	Later Month
Exempt, no activity	Exempt, 1 hour of counseling per month
10 hours/week in an activity	15 hours/week in an activity
30 hours/week in an activity	Incomed off CalWORKs/TANF
Sanctioned	Cured sanction
Non-compliance	Cured non-compliance



The Methodology

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We created a **hierarchy of statuses** and assigned a numeric value to each status.

<u>Value</u>	<u>Status</u>
1	Sanction
2	Noncompliance
3	Exempt
4	Exempt participating
5	Not participating (not exempt, sanctioned, or in noncompliance)
6	Partially participating
7	Met state WPR
8	Met federal WPR
9	Discontinued

- If a client moves from a lower-value status in one month to a higher-value status in another month, they **made progress**.
- In addition, if **a client increased hours between the first month and the latter, they also made progress**, regardless of their statuses.

How We Do This

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1. Each month, through a fair amount of data wrangling, we:
 - Sum up the total hours for a client in the month (easy)
 - Boil down their data and classify them into a single status (not as easy)

Combines data from our CalWIN system on employment services registration statuses, receipt of aid, sanctions, activities, attendance, etc.

2. We append monthly data files and then determine if individual clients made progress from one month to another.

Thanks to computers, steps above can be done in a few mouse clicks.

Toward Deeper Insights

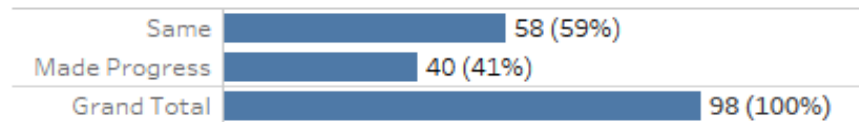
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How many of our Sanctioned families had their sanctions lifted 3 months later?

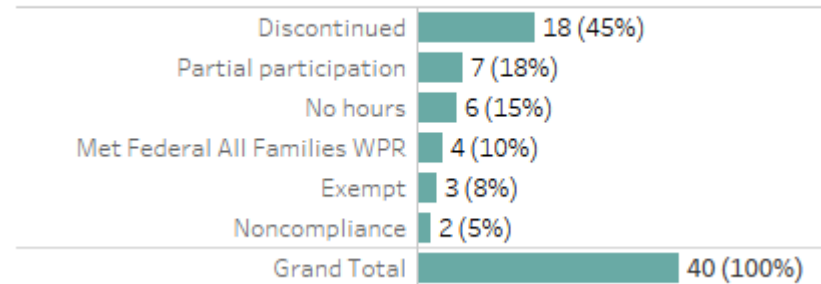
For those who had their sanction lifted, what was their situation 3 months later?

For those who didn't have their sanctions lifted 3 months later, how many had their sanction lifted 6 months later?

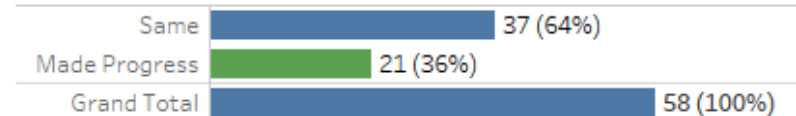
Sanctioned Households in December 2018 & their Progress Category 3 Months Later 



Details of Households that Made Progress

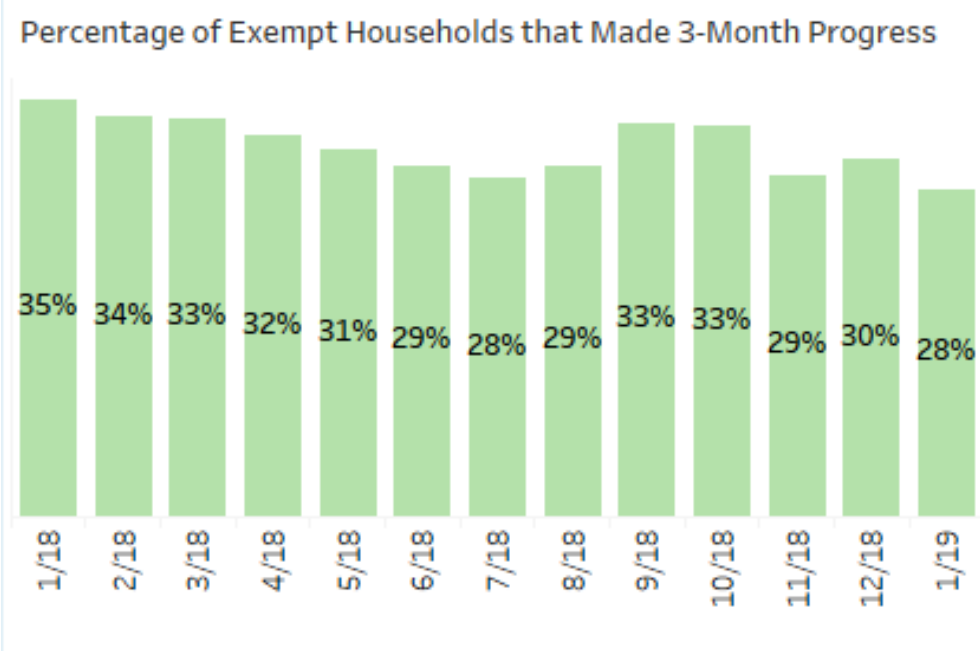


Sanctioned Households in December 2018 who Still were Sanctioned 3 Month Later & their Progress Category 6 Months Later



Examining Trends

Suppose we are considering efforts to increase engagement among exempt families. Examining trends in the Client Progress Improvement measure can help us see if our efforts are successful.



Flexibility

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Adjust the Values & Statuses, and use this methodology to examine client progress in anything.

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Other Uses: Examining Client Progress through Tiers of Subsidized Employment

In San Francisco, we have several tiers of subsidized employment, with higher-tiered employment for more job-ready clients, and lower-tiered for those less job ready.

Value	Jobs Now Tier
1	Job Match
2	Community Jobs Program (CJP)
3	Public Service Trainee (PST)
4	Individualized Training Internship Program On-the-Job Training
5	Wage Subsidy
6	Unsubsidized Employment

Clients are considered to have **progressed** if their last activity had a higher value than their first activity.

Clients are considered to have made **steady progress** if their next activity was always at a higher value than their preceding activity.

83% of SFHSA CalWORKs/TANF clients who did subsidized employment had steady progress or only had 1 placement.

Examining client progression across services/activities

How many of our clients in behavioral health services move to training, work experience, or higher-level activities in 6 months? In one year?

- and for training, work experience, English language immersion activities?

So we can gain some insights into:

- Are we providing services to clients at the right time for them?
- What patterns of client services have the most successful outcomes?

Using the dataset compiled for this work for other longitudinal analysis

What proportion of our current caseload has been sanctioned at some point in their time in CalWORKs/TANF?

Are there changes in the client engagement pattern as children in the family get older?

Contact

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