

CONTRA COSTA COUNTY WORKFORCE SERVICES BUREAU'S SAFETY NET PRESENTATION
JULY 14, 2021

To: Advisory Board of Measure X

From: Raquel Santana-Pizana

Date: July 23, 2021

Subject: Welfare to Work Testimonial

Dear Advisory Board of Measure X,

My name is Raquel Santana-Pizana and I am currently a permanent employee with EHSD, Community Services Bureau. I am a Comprehensive Services Assistant Manager for the Head Start Program and I oversee two centers in Central County, George Miller and Lavonia Allen. I wanted to share my testimony on how the Welfare to Work program helped me become self-sufficient. In 2015, I was going through a very hard time in my life. I was unemployed and was caring for three daughters. Without a job, I went to the EHSD office in Richmond seeking help through the Calworks program. I was able to temporarily receive Cash Aide, Calfresh, and Medical. I then became a participant in the Welfare to Work Program, and was a participant in Job Club/Job Search Readiness Program. The Job Club and Job Search program helped me tremendously by providing me with job interview clothes, helped me prepare for my interviews through mock interviews, helped me create a resume, provided money management trainings, and helped me eliminate any barriers in my life so that I can find employment. I was given the opportunity to become a CC Works employee once I completed my Job Club/Job Search classes. I was hired at the EHSD office in Richmond in the Welfare to Work Unit helping Ms. Elizabeth Benson and the Job Club facilitators as their unit clerk. It was a great experience that helped me gain the experience and knowledge to demonstrate my potential and skills. A few months later, I was offered a position as a County Temp, and was the Greeter for the Richmond EHSD office. While employed, I was provided with transportation money and free Child Care, and was later eligible to purchase a vehicle through the Keys Program. It was such a blessing to get a car to take my daughters to school and get home and to work. At the time, I had a used car that would not go reverse and later stopped working. The resources that were provided to me through the Welfare to Work Program really helped me to put my foot in the door, and helped me maintain my job and allowed me to continue working. I was really lucky to have obtained the resources provided by the Welfare to Work Program because I wouldn't have reached self-sufficiency without them.

Thank you,

Raquel Santana-Pizana