

Welfare Attrition: Cases Leaving Aid

What We Know From Statewide Administrative Data

Prepared by:

California Department of Social Services
Research and Development Division
Data Analysis and Publications Branch
Special Projects Team
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Research and Development Division

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Executive Summary:

- This study examines cases leaving aid pre and post-CalWORKs.
- The rate at which cases are leaving cash aid (the attrition rate) has increased since 1996.
- In 1999, 39 percent of cases were off aid within 18 months. In 1996, by 18 months, 32 percent of cases were off aid.
- The attrition rate for one and two-parent cases has increased while zero-parent attrition remains the same as the 1996 rate.
- New cases, compared with all other cases, have substantially higher attrition rates. The rates have increased for all cases with aided adults since 1996.

Attrition and Case Dynamics

This is one in a series of reports on CalWORKs caseload characteristics and dynamics produced by the Research and Development Division of the California Department of Social Services.

The characteristics and level of the CalWORKs caseload at a point in time results from the level and composition of flow into the program, referred to as program entries, as well as flow out of the program, defined as program exits.

This study examines exits from the CalWORKs program, specifically: the rates at which cases exit aid - attrition rates. In this analysis attrition rates of zero, one and two-parent cases are compared. In addition differences in attrition between cases new to aid and cases that have been on aid for over a year.

Method and Scope:

This study selected cases on aid in 1996 and 1999 and followed them for 18 months.

For each study year cases were followed from the first observed month on aid. A case left aid when all members of the case were off.

The charts present the percentage of cases on aid in each of the months following the first observed month on aid in the study year.

New cases are those which started in the study year and were not on aid in the prior year.

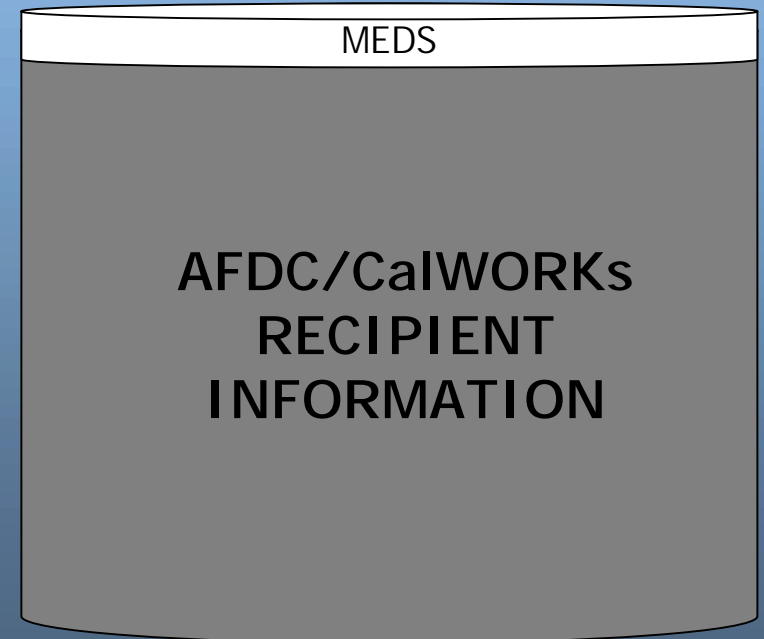
Three types of cases were examined which were defined by the actual number of adults found to be on aid in the case:

- No aided adult in the case
- One aided adult in the case
- Two aided adults in the case

Data Sources:

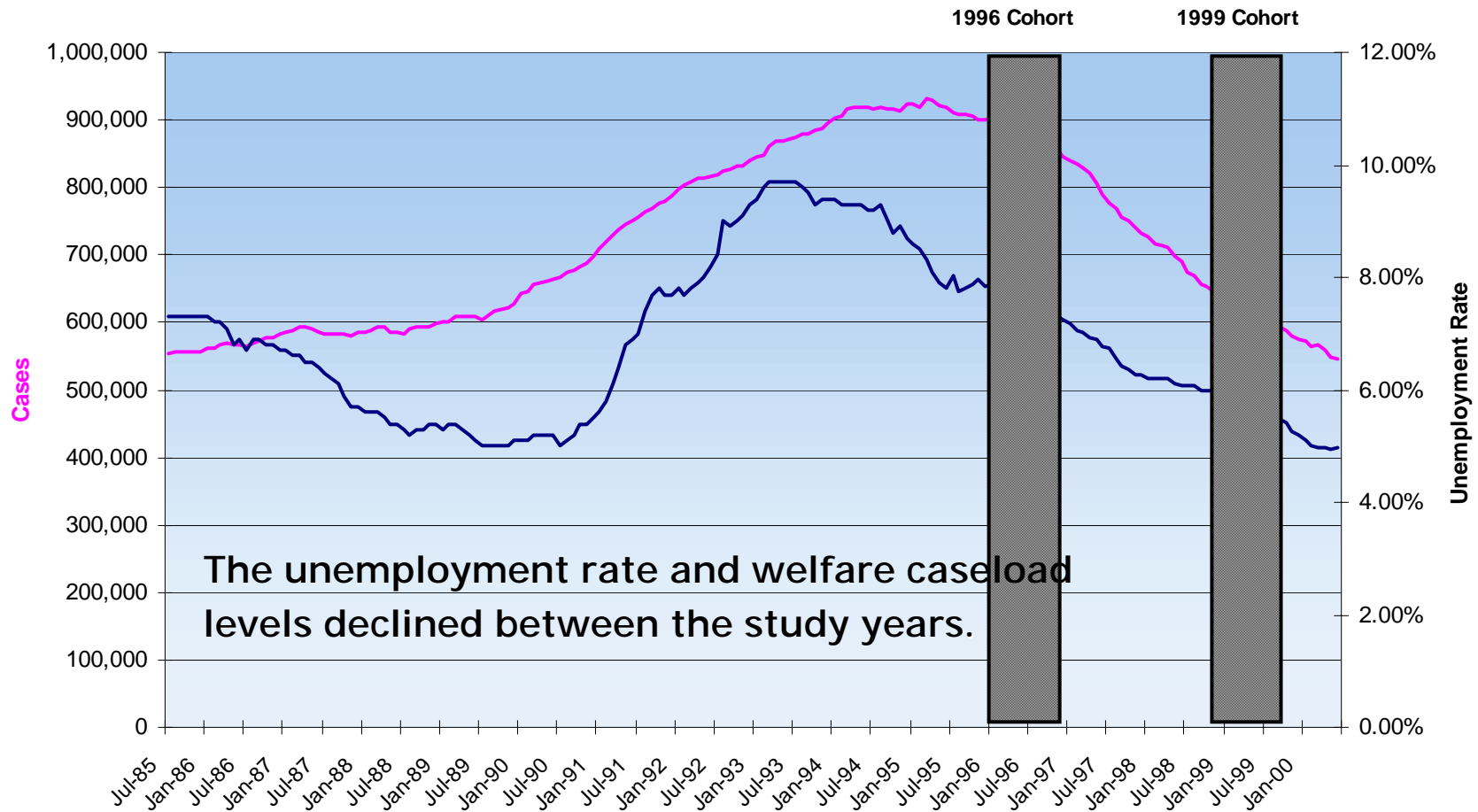
Medi-Cal Eligibility Data System (MEDS) contains virtually all CalWORKs recipients. Information is limited but includes:

- Personal Identifiers
- Address
- Race/ethnicity
- Gender
- Date of Birth
- Case Composition
- Months on AFDC/TANF/CalWORKS



The Labor Market and Caseload Levels Have Changed

Figure 1
California's Welfare Caseload and Unemployment Rate



Pre and Post-CalWORKs

Attrition Rates Compared by Case Type

Attrition Rates Compared by Case Type and Pre and Post-CalWORKs

Number of Cases

Study Year	Zero-Parent Cases	One-Parent Cases	Two-Parent Cases
1999	279,899	437,617	93,581
1996	280,563	660,469	164,071

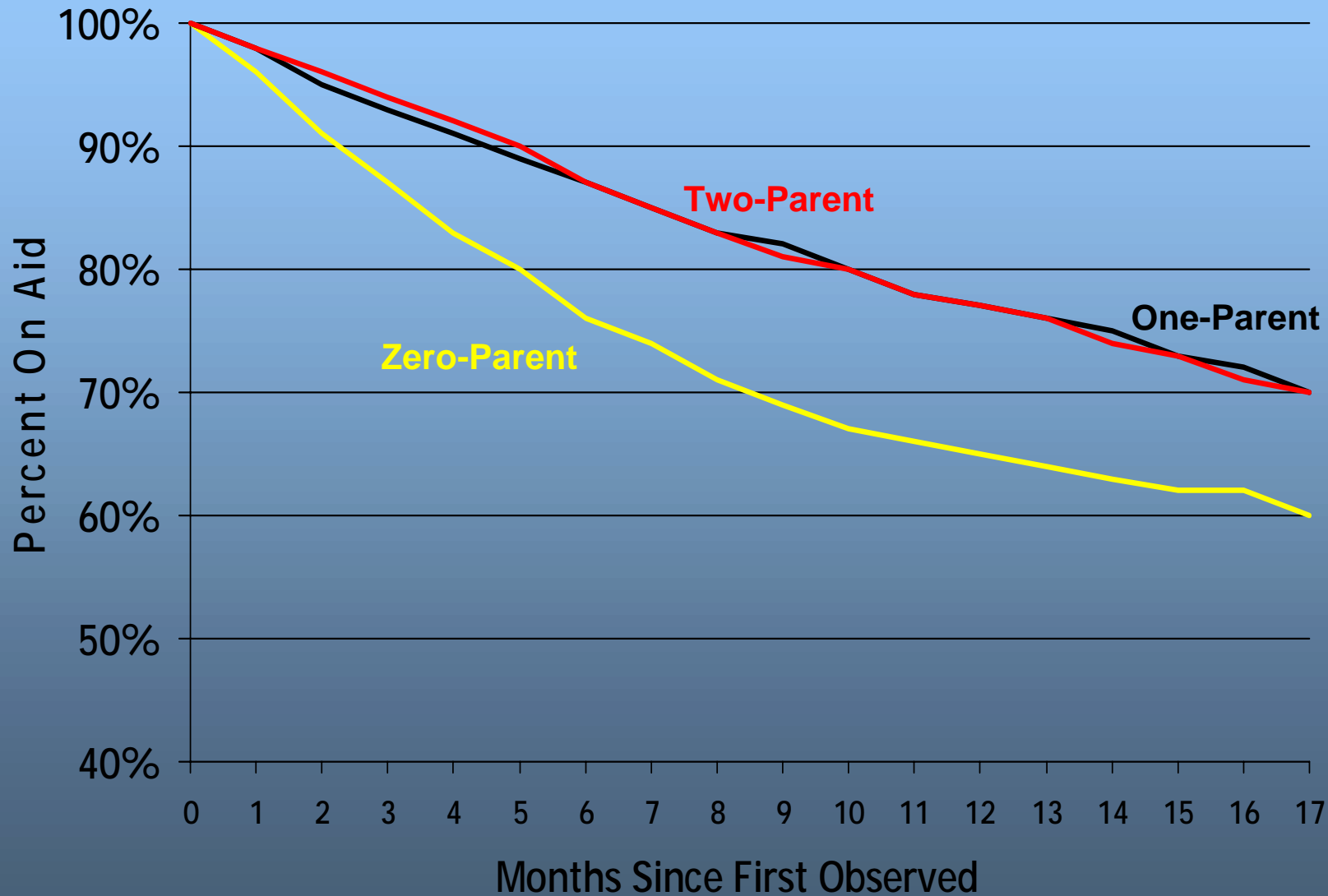
AFDC/TANF Attrition Charts

The following series of charts represent the percentage of welfare cases still on aid at each month after the first month the case was found to be on aid in the study year.

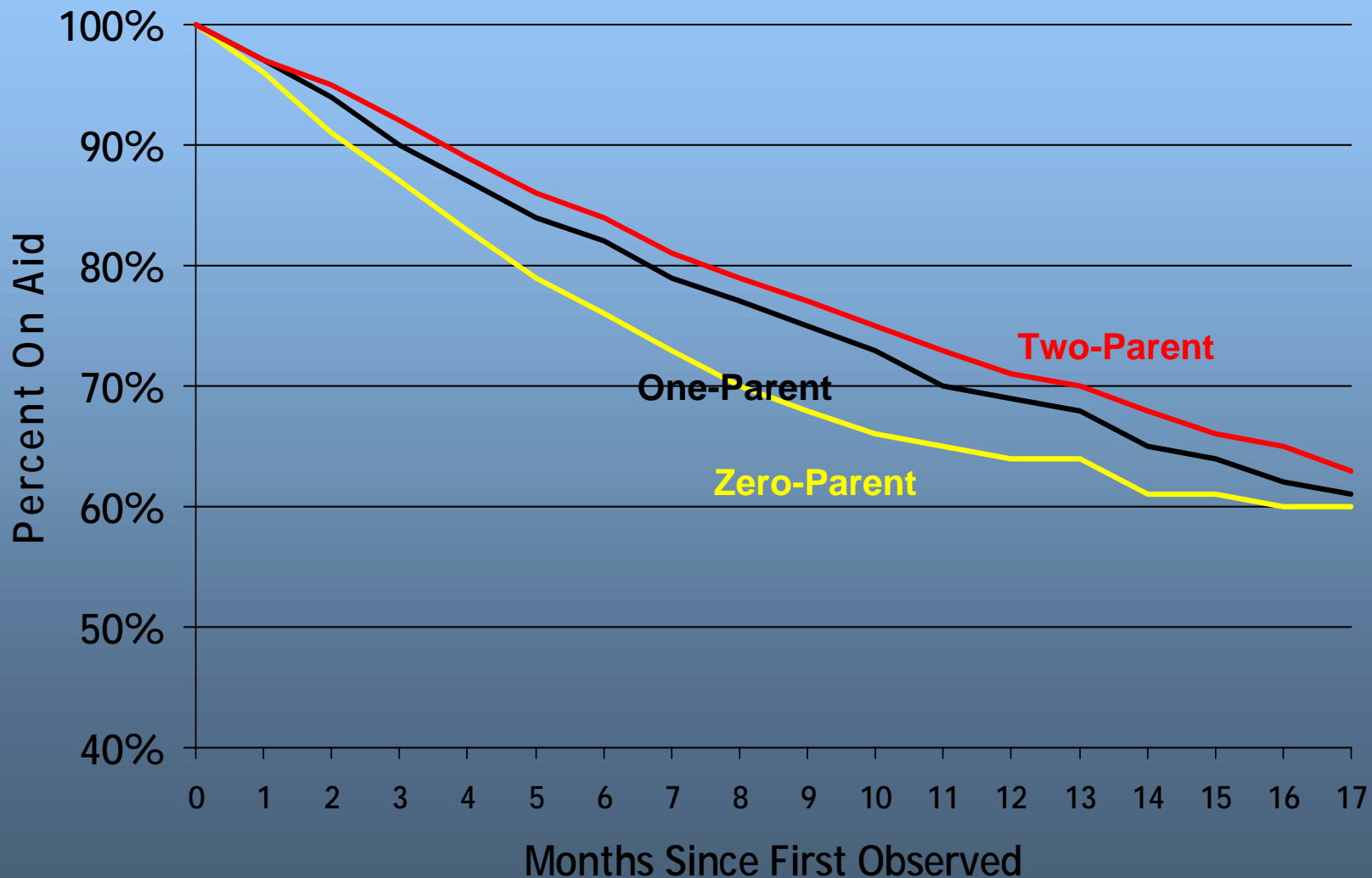
The vertical axis represents the percentage of cases on aid and the horizontal axis represents the months since the case was first observed to be on aid

For example, at first observed month, month '0', all cases (100%) were on aid. In each successive month, 1 through 17, the percent of cases on aid are represented by the percent value on the vertical axis. The right-most value in each chart represents the percent of cases still on aid after 18 months from when the cases were observed to be on aid in the study year. Lower lines represent cases with higher attrition.

In 1996 AFDC/TANF Attrition Was Highest For Zero-Parent Cases.



By 1999 Attrition From CalWORKs Remains Higher For Zero-parent Cases, and Increased For One and Two-Parent Cases.



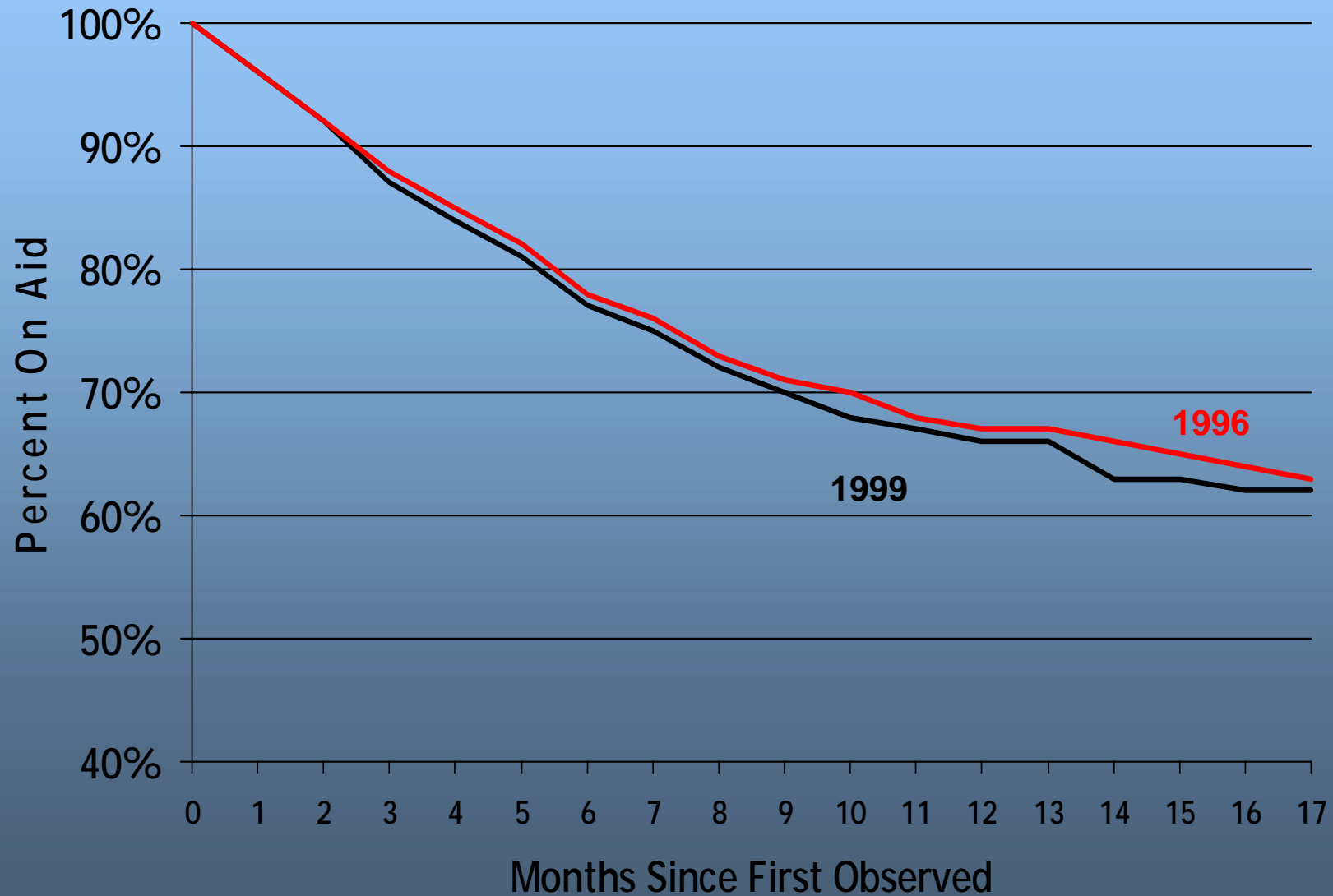
Attrition Rates Compared For New and Ongoing Cases

Attrition Rates Compared For New and Ongoing Cases

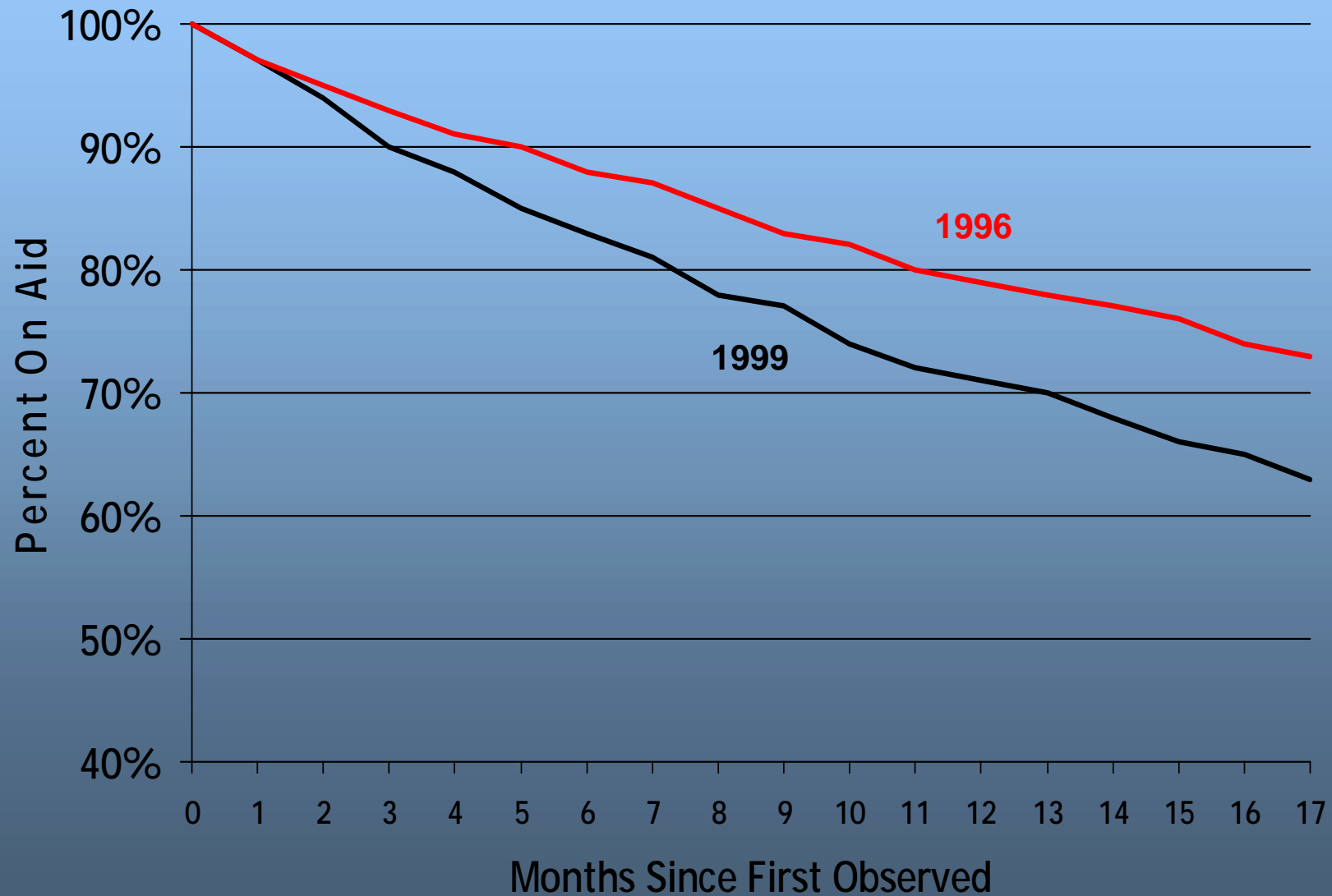
Number of Cases

Study Year		Zero-Parent Cases	One-Parent Cases	Two-Parent Cases
1999	New Cases	40,654	49,370	10,577
	Ongoing	239,245	388,247	83,004
1996	New Cases	42,863	70,681	18,932
	Ongoing	237,700	589,788	145,139

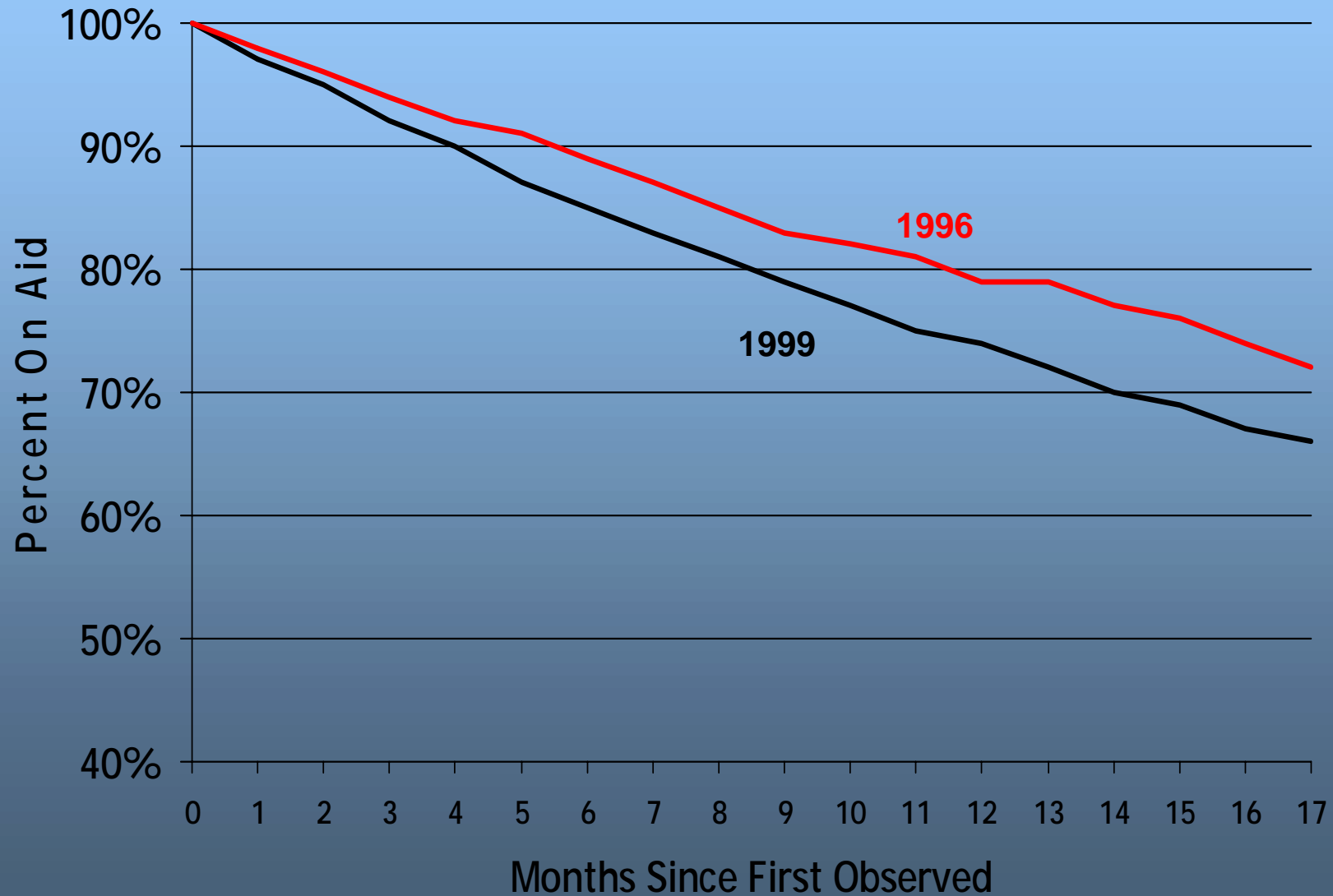
Post CalWORKs Attrition For Ongoing Zero-Parent Cases Has Changed Little



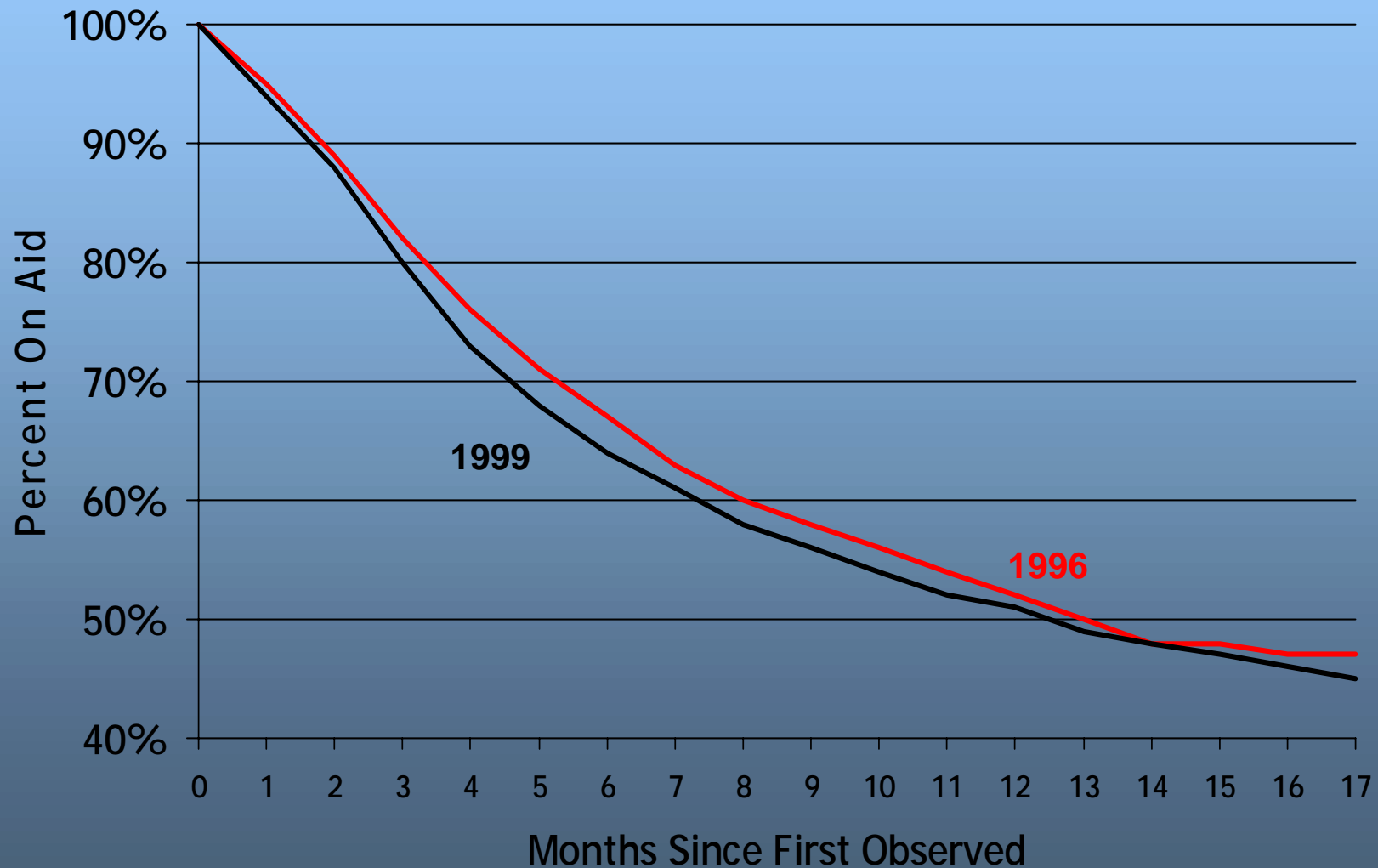
Post CalWORKs Attrition For Ongoing One-Parent Cases is Increased



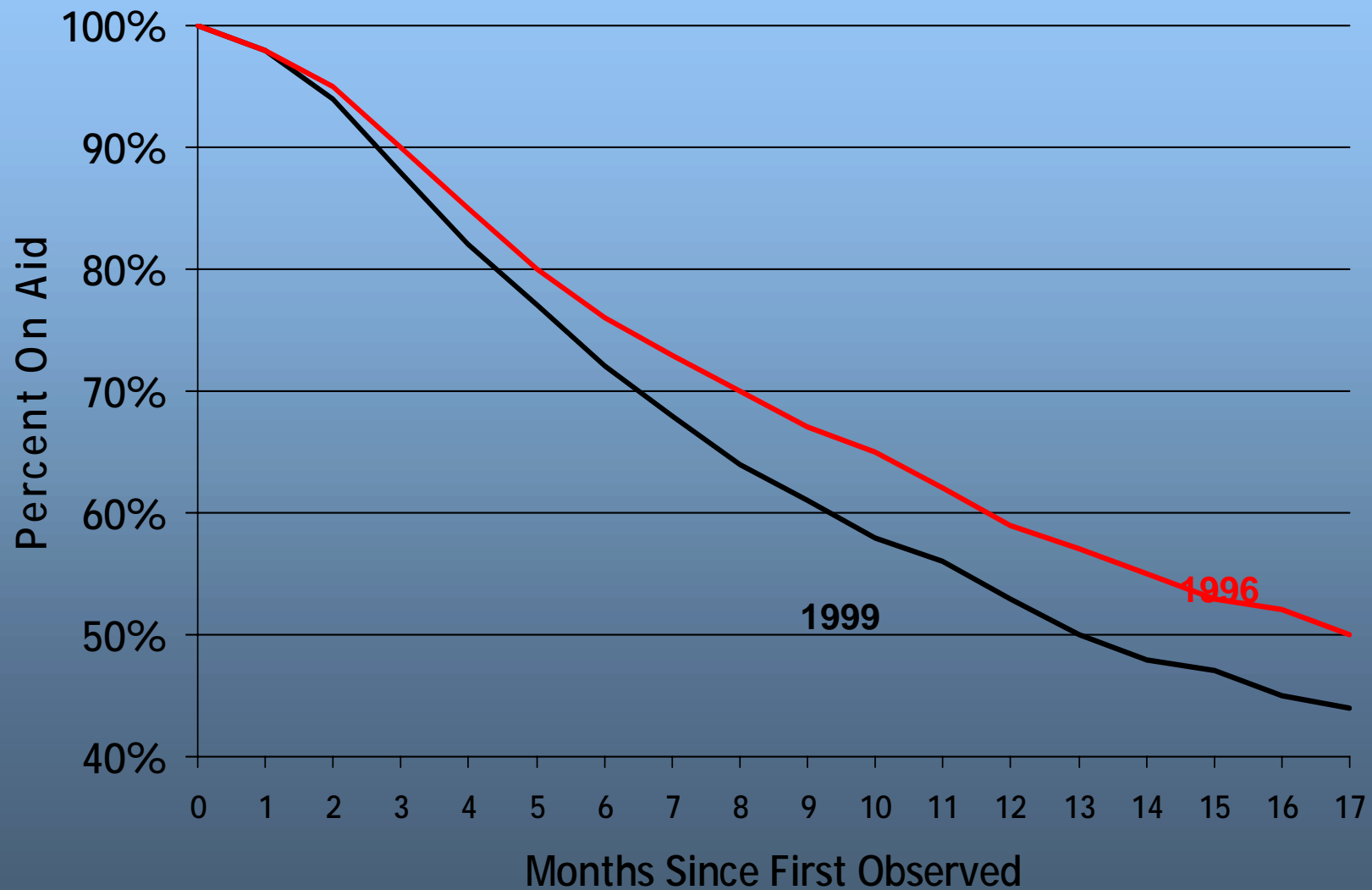
Post CalWORKs Attrition For Ongoing Two-Parent Cases Has Increased



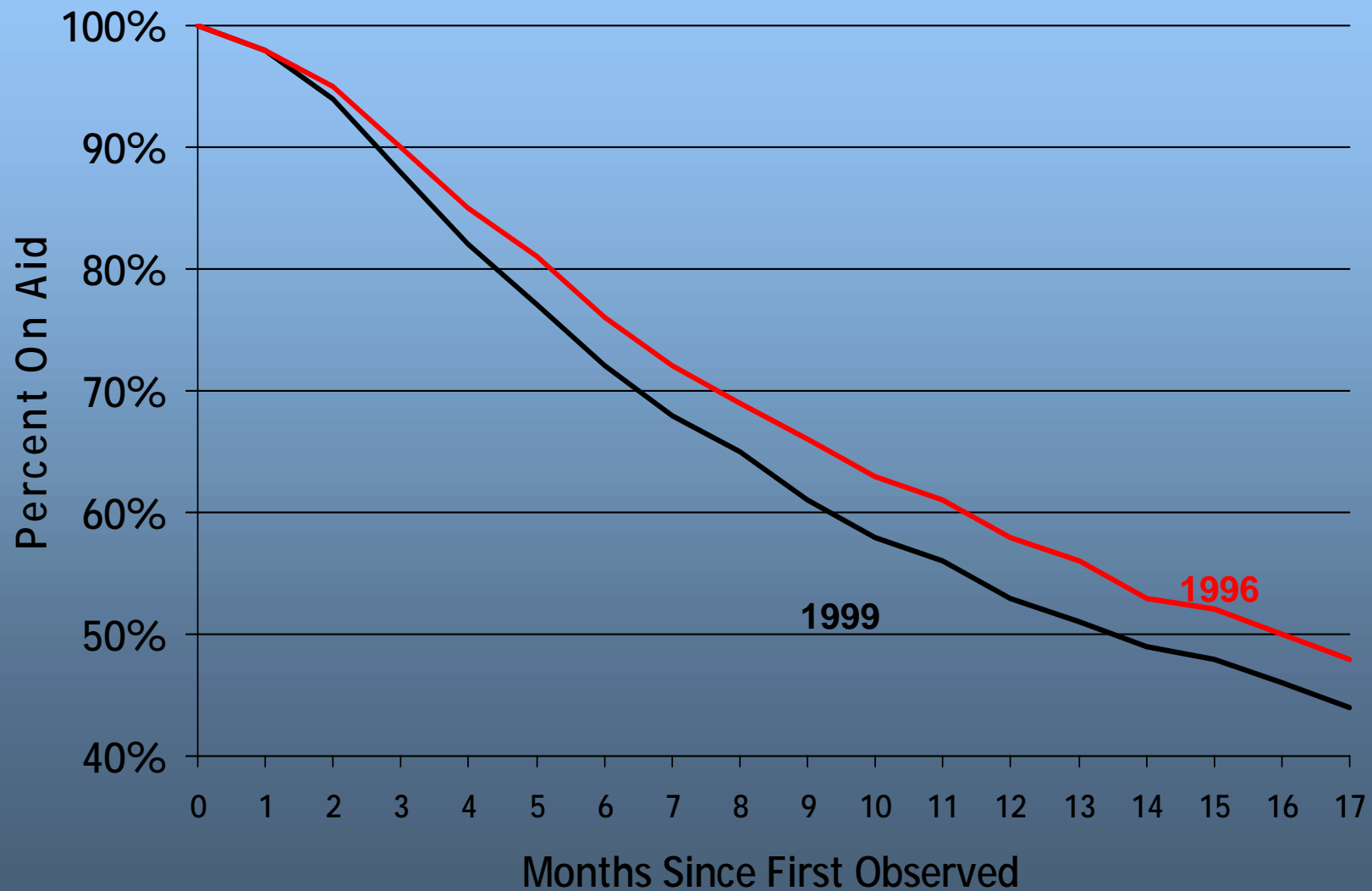
Post CalWORKs Attrition For New Zero-Parent Cases Has Changed Little



Post CalWORKs Attrition For New One-Parent Cases Has Changed Little



Post CalWORKs Attrition For New Two-Parent Cases Has Changed Little



Summary:

- The rate at which cases are leaving cash aid (the attrition rate) has increased since 1996.
- In 1999, 39 percent of cases were off aid within 18 months. In 1996, by 18 months, 32 percent of cases were off aid.
- The attrition rate for one and two-parent cases has increased while zero-parent attrition remains the same as the 1996 rate.
- New cases have substantially higher attrition rates than ongoing cases. In 1999 more than 50% of new cases were off within 18 months.
- Post-CalWORKs attrition rates for all types of new cases have increased.

Questions regarding the contents of this publication should be addressed to:

Paul Smilanick, *Research Program Specialist II*
Data Analysis and Publication Branch
(916) 657-1789
psmilani@dss.ca.gov

or

Mary Tran, *Chief*
Data Analysis and Publication Branch
(916) 657-2519
mary.tran@dss.ca.gov



State of California

Gray Davis, Governor

Health and Human Services Agency

Grantland Johnson, Secretary

Department of Social Services

Rita Saenz, Director

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