

37 Per Cent Of People 65 And Over In Santa Cruz County Received Aid As Needy Aged During February

In Santa Cruz county, about 37 per cent, or 37 people per 100 of those aged 65 and over in the county, were receiving aid as needy aged during February, California Taxpayers' association said today.

During February, 3640 people were on the aged aid rolls of the county. The 1950 census data show 9867 people in the county 65 years of age and over.

In California, 30 people per 100 aged 65 and over are getting aid as needy aged, compared with 21 per 100 of the 65 and over age group getting such public relief throughout the nation.

California's aged aid rolls for February showed 272,481 people getting this one kind of public assistance compared to the 895,005 people in the state aged 65 and over as shown by the 1950 census.

Throughout the country, there were 2,628,648 people on the aged aid rolls during January, 1953 (latest nation-wide data available), out of the 12,759,000 aged 65 and over in the nation, estimated by the census bureau for July, 1951.

"Laxity" of California state law is the reason that California has a much higher proportion of its people 65 and over on the aid to the aged rolls than the nation-wide average, the Taxpayers' association declared.

"Two parts of our relief laws are particularly lax," the association said.

"First, we do not have a 'recovery' clause in California law under which the state and the counties can recover from the estate of deceased recipients of aid even a small portion of aid given. Now the heirs of deceased relief recipi-

ents inherit their estate intact, with no reimbursment for aid given—aid which the heirs failed to give when the relief recipient was alive and in need.

"Second, California 'responsible relatives' law is very lenient. For example, a single man or woman can earn up to \$200 a month with not one cent of responsibility for the care of his or her parent.

"These two loopholes in state law need to be tightened, so that the people will not have to pay an unnecessarily big share of aid to needy people.

"Closing loopholes in the aid to the needy laws would prevent the waste of large sums every year," the Taxpayers' association declared.