

AGENDA

REGULAR MEETING

OF THE

August 23, 2023

STOKES COUNTY

3:00 p.m.

BOARD OF SOCIAL SERVICES

ETHICS AND CONFLICT OF INTEREST REMINDER:

In accordance with the State Government Ethics Act, it is the duty of every board member to avoid both conflicts of interest and appearances of conflict. Does any board member have any known conflict of interest or appearance of conflict with respect to any matters coming before board today? If so, please identify the conflict or appearance of conflict and refrain from any undue participation in the particular matter involved.

- I. Call to Order
- II. Discussion/Adjustments to the Agenda
Ethics and Conflict of Interest Reminder
- III. Consent Agenda
 - A. Minutes – Regular Meeting – July 26, 2023
- IV. Board Member Comments
- V. Public Comments (Maximum Allowance of Three Minutes Per Person)
- VI. Information and Discussion
 - A. DSS Dashboard
 - B. August 2, 2023 Child Support Review
 - C. August 8, 2023 Continuous Quality Improvement Technical Assistance Report – Work First
- VII. Closed Session
GS 143-318.11(a)(1): To prevent disclosure of information that is privileged or confidential pursuant to the law of this State or of the United States, or not considered a public record within the meaning of Chapter 132 of the General Statutes.
- VIII. Old Business
- IX. New Business
 - Next meeting – September 27, 2023 at 3:00 p.m. in the DSS conference room
- X. Adjournment

STOKES COUNTY BOARD OF SOCIAL SERVICES

MINUTES

July 26, 2023

The regular meeting of the Stokes County Board of Social Services was held on Wednesday, July 26, 2023, at the Social Services Building in Danbury, North Carolina. Board members present were Chairman Jan Spencer, Vice Chairman Darlene Bullins (via phone), Member Greg Collins, Member Sandy Smith, Member Sonya Cox (via phone). Staff present were Director Stacey Elmes, Program Manager Kimberly Childress, and Social Work Supervisor Rebecca McLemore (foster care). Chairman Spencer called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m.

Chairman Spencer read the Ethics and Conflict of Interest reminder to the Board. Board members were asked if they had a conflict with any of the items listed on the agenda. No conflicts noted.

Chairman Spencer opened the floor for any adjustments to today's agenda. Member Collins motioned to approve the agenda as presented. Vice Chairman Bullins seconded and the motion passed 5-0.

Consent Agenda

Chairman Spencer entertained a motion to approve or amend the consent agenda which included the minutes from the June 28, 2023 meeting. Vice Chairman Bullins made a motion to approve the consent agenda as presented. Member Smith seconded and the motion passed 5-0.

Board Member Comments

Chairman Spencer mentioned that she hoped all residents of the county had air conditioning or fans in their home during this heat.

Public Comments

There were no public comments.

Other items on the agenda for discussion were as follows:

DSS Dashboard

Director Elmes noted that no children were removed from their home during the month of June. Director Elmes also noted that the percentage of foster children visited in their home during the month of June was low compared to previous months. Director Elmes shared that many factors played a part in this, one being that during summer months it is harder to catch families at home. Social Workers see some children in court or at supervised visitations with parents and take advantage of these times in case another visit doesn't present itself. Current vacancies also make this difficult. Director Elmes shared the agency continues to struggle filling vacancies.

Director Elmes noted the following current vacancies:

- Income Maintenance Caseworker (Food and Nutrition Services) – two
- Social Worker in Child Protective Services (CPS) – three
- Social Worker in Foster Care – two
- Administration - one

October Road Services

Director Elmes shared a flyer about October Road who offers substance use intensive outpatient services, medication assisted therapy services, individual therapy, and medication management that just recently opened in Walnut Cove. Director Elmes noted that Mental Health/Substance Use Liaison Wanda Pearman stated that she is hearing good things about services they provide.

Child Support Shout Out

Director Elmes mentioned that while the poster mentioned Child Support Worker April Bullins, that Supervisor Jennifer Bennett's name should be mentioned as well. This case is in Mrs. Bullins' name, but as a new worker, Supervisor Bennett is doing the work while Mrs. Bullins is learning the program. In this case, the client decided to make a large payment toward their arrears.

Employee Kudo's/Client Good News/Employee Exit Email

1. Email from Guardian ad Litem Supervisor Jaime Kehoe regarding the good work that Social Worker Kayla Fields did on a case and the testimony she provided in court. SW Fields has been with the agency for one year and one month.
2. Email from Social Worker Rebecca Maser regarding a former foster child that is currently in the extended foster care program expressing his good news about being sober for a year and his hopes for the future.
3. Email from MH/Substance Abuse Liaison Wanda Pearman regarding two cases that she has worked with and the positive impact that DSS involvement has had on the lives of these individuals and their desire to pursue being peer support specialists to help others.
4. Email from a Social Worker that just left employment with us on July 14, 2023. She was employed for one year, was fresh out of college, and wanted to express her appreciation for the work experience she received while working at DSS.

Chairman Spencer entertained a motion to go into closed session.

Member Cox made a motion to enter closed session for the following: GS 143-318.11(a)(1): To prevent disclosure of information that is privileged or confidential pursuant to the law of this State or of the United States, or not considered a public record within the meaning of Chapter 132 of the General Statutes. Member Smith seconded and the motion passed 5-0.

The Board entered closed session.

The Board re-entered open session. Chairman Spencer called the open session back to order.

Old Business

No old business.

New Business

Chairman Spencer noted the next meeting is August 23, 2023 at 3:00 p.m. She noted that the Board appreciates hearing from supervisors/workers about the programs and would like for that to continue.

With no further business, Chairman Spencer entertained a motion to adjourn. Vice Chairman Bullins moved to adjourn the meeting. Member Smith seconded and the motion passed 5-0. The meeting was adjourned at 3:45 p.m.

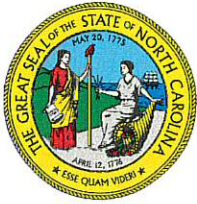

Secretary


Date

Stokes County DSS Dashboard 2023

	July	August	September	Qrt. Total	Annual Total
ADULT SOCIAL WORK SERVICES					
Guardianship Cases	33				
New APS Reports Received	23			23	23
APS Reports Accepted	11			11	11
Investigations Initiated Timely [Goal 95%]	100%				
Outreach Visits	9			9	9
In Home Aide Programs	9				
Community Alternatives Program (CAP/DA)	52				
Representative Payee	7				
SA - In-Home	51				
Placement	0				
Adult Care Homes Monitored	3				
Total Requests for CIP	38			38	38
CIP Expenditures	\$6,304			\$6,304	\$6,304
Total Requests for LIEAP & LIEWAP	0			0	0
LIEAP Expenditures	\$0			\$0	\$0
Unclaimed Bodies	1			1	1
Staff Hours Spent at Shelters	0			0	0
CHILD CARE SUBSIDY					
Children Receiving Services	151				
Expenditures	\$72,826			\$72,826	\$72,826
Waiting List	0				
CHILD PROTECTIVE SERVICES					
CPS Reports Received	42			42	42
CPS Reports Accepted	18			18	18
Children Opened	29			29	29
Open Reports	14				
Reports Substantiated/Services Needed	5				
Open Case Management	15				
Courtesy Requests	8			8	8
Substance Affected Infants Reported to DSS	1			1	1
Substance Affected Infants Accepted for Inv.	1			1	1
Reports Initiated Timely [Goal 95%]	96%				
Reports Completed Timely [Goal 75%]	75%				
Children Remaining at Home [Goal 95%]	83%				
CHILD SUPPORT					
Number of Children Served	980				
Total Collections	\$165,681			\$165,681	\$165,681
Paternities Established	3			3	3
New Court Orders	1			1	1
FISHING LICENSE WAIVERS					
Fishing License Waivers	10			10	10
FOOD & NUTRITION SERVICES					
Total Households	3,280				
Total Individuals	6,413				
Report Card (App. Timeliness) [Goal: 95%]	84%				
Report Card (Recert. Timeliness) [Goal: 95%]	66%				
Benefits Distributed	\$ 950,728			\$950,728	\$950,728

2023	July	August	September	Qtr. Total	Annual Total
FOSTER CARE					
Children Entering Care	5			5	5
Total Children in Care	92				
Children Discharged	4			4	4
Children in Care Over 1 Year	56				
% Receiving a Monthly Visit [Goal 100%]	100%				
% Visited in the Home [Goal > 90%]	90%				
Foster Care 18-21	6				
Monitoring of Children No Longer in Custody	3				
Licensed Foster Homes	15				
Sanctioned Homes	1				
# of Individuals/Families Receiving Training	three				
Recruitment Events Held	2			2	2
Foster Care Costs (county/state/fed)	\$109,516			\$109,516	\$109,516
Children Free For Adoption	14				
Children Open for LINKS	93				
Adoptions Completed	1			1	1
Adoption Assistance Cases	194				
Adoption Assistance Costs (fed & state)	\$929			\$929	\$929
MEDICAID [ADULT, FAMILY & CHILDREN'S]					
# of Cases	9,160				
Report Card (Timeliness) [Goal: 85%]	100%				
Public Assistance Hearings (All Areas)	1				
MEDICAID TRANSPORTATION					
Clients Served	66				
Trips Provided	302			302	302
Monthly Cost	\$2,997			\$2,997	\$2,997
PROGRAM INTEGRITY					
New Claims Established	\$ -			\$ -	\$0
Total Collections	\$3,942			\$3,942	\$3,942
Retained in County	\$738			\$738	\$738
SPECIAL ASSISTANCE					
# of Special Assistance Cases	131				
Benefits Distributed	\$63,780			\$63,780	\$63,780
SA/MH LIAISON					
Number of Referrals during the Month	17			17	17
Open Cases at end of Month	50				
VACANCIES					
Social Work	4				
Clerical/Income Maintenance/Child Support	3				
WORK FIRST					
Total Work First Cases	44				
Number of Child Only Cases	44				
Employment Cases	0				
Benefits Distributed	\$9,391			\$9,391	\$9,391
OTHER					
Voter Registrations	7			7	7
Walk-In Traffic	1,121			1,121	1,121



NC DEPARTMENT OF
**HEALTH AND
HUMAN SERVICES**

ROY COOPER • Governor

KODY H. KINSLEY • Secretary

SUSAN G. OSBORNE • Deputy Secretary for Opportunity and Well-Being

Stacey Elmes, DSS Director
Stokes County Department of Social Services
1010 State Hwy 8
Danbury, N.C. 27016

August 2, 2023

Dear Ms. Elmes:

On July 26, 2023, Jennifer and I conduct a conference to discuss statistical information, information updates, and county concern.

Incentive statistics are available through June 2023. The unit collected 2,097,557 for the children of NC! This is wonderful work! The unit is below the State Average for Total Collections (98.38%) at 93.83%. The unit has achieved/exceeded the 2022-23 goals in the areas of Paternity (99%) at 104.02%, Cases Under Order (89.00%) at 92.56% and Current Collection (68.51%) at 68.60%. The unit was near the goal in the area of Arrears Collection (66.41%) at 63.29%. The unit was able to achieve three of the five incentive goals. I will continue to suggest reports that may increase incentive areas. Reports suggested/provided: Income Withholding, no payment, Undistributed, and % of Cases with Arrears, no payment.

Goals 2022-23					
TC	Paternity	CUO	CC	Arrears	Medical
\$2,235,502.45	99	89	68.51	66.41	
Current	06/23				
93.83<	104.02>*	92.56>*	68.60>*	63.29<	87.26>

*-Exceeding/achieving goal

NC DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES • DIVISION OF SOCIAL SERVICES • CHILD SUPPORT SERVICES

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AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY / AFFIRMATIVE ACTION EMPLOYER

Goals for SFY 2024 have been provided to the county and are listed below:

SFY 2024 CQI PERFORMANCE GOALS

COUNTY	SFY 2023 DISBURSED COLLECTIONS	SFY 2023 TOTAL DISBURSED COLLECTIONS GOAL	% OF SFY 2023 COLLECTIONS GOAL ACHIEVED	SFY 2024 TOTAL DISBURSED COLLECTIONS GOAL	SFY 2023 %PatEst	2024 PatEst Goal	SFY 2023 %CUO	2024 CUO Goal	SFY 2023 %CSup	2024 CSUP Goal	SFY 2023 %Arr	2024 Arrs Goal
STOKES	\$2,097,557.35	\$2,235,502.45	93.83%	\$2,097,557.35	104.02%	100.00%	92.56%	90.00%	68.60%	68.60%	63.19%	63.69%

Self-Assessment scores are available through June 2023. The unit ended the year in compliance with six of nine areas of Self -Assessment. The unit is out of compliance in the area of Six month Expedite at 66.16%, Interstate at 68.09% and Medical 70.48%. Compliance in these areas is 75%. These areas continue to fluctuate. Management continues to explore work process and reports to assist in these areas. All other areas have a compliance level of 77% or better. Reports suggested/provided: P/F for Enforcement, Six Month Expedite, Interstate and Medical.

Management advises that the unit is taking advantage of the virtual training that are being offered. Reports were discussed. I continue working with management on reports and CSS information.

A quality review of child support cases was completed. Cases are reviewed for quality, data reliability, and supporting documents. The unit ended the year with a quality review score of 96.74%. The outcome of our follow-up monitoring is outlined below. The Stokes County Child Support office is currently performing overall at 100%. All the cases met the quality review criteria, and all cases were sent to the Child Support Managers for review.

Number of Cases Reviewed	Month	Monthly Quality Review Score	Notes	Date to Correct Case(s)
3	July	100%	Copy of QR sent to CS Managers	N/A

Should you have any questions about the items discussed during my visit or addressed in this email, please email (Kenya.Newsone@dhhs.nc.gov) or call me at (336)788-5857.

Sincerely,
Mrs. Kenya Newsome

Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) Team Technical Assistance Report
for Stokes County Department of Social Services

State Participants:	<i>Tammy Mason, CQI Specialist</i>	<i>Tabitha Tucker, CQI Specialist</i>
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Local Agency Participants	Title	Area(s) of Responsibility
Cindy Amos	Income Maintenance Administrator	Work First (WF), Family & Childrens Medicaid
Cindy Hodges	Income Maintenance Caseworker (IMC)	Work First (WF)

Month: August

On **August 8, 2023, Tammy Mason, and Tabitha Tucker**, from the NC Division of Social Services, CQI team, conducted a monthly onsite conference to provide technical assistance to **Stokes County Department of Social Services** Economic Services Program Staff. The CQI Specialist (CQIS) conducted a review of the following information to target the technical assistance to meet the needs of the local agency:

Stokes County Economic Services Data and Statistics:

Measurement:	Percentage/Total:	Period:
WF Applications Timeliness	100%	July 2023
WF Recertification Timeliness	100%	July 2023
WF All Family Participation Rate	None	N/A
WF Two-Parent Participation Rate	None	N/A
WF Case Data	48	July 2023
WF Applications	18	July 2023

Timeliness and Work First Participation

Application timeliness for the month of July reflected two (2) applications with a due date in the month of July and were processed timely.

The Application Processing and Caseload Statistic report in Client Services Data Warehouse (CSDW) for the month of July reflects eighteen (18) applications were taken. Of the eighteen (18), fifteen (15) reflect being withdrawn, one (1) reflects being approved, and two (2) are pending.

Recertification timeliness for the month of July reflected two (2) recertifications were processed timely.

The CQI Specialist provided update to the county regarding the WF participation reports. Due to the state submitting all cases for federal reporting the county reports have not been updated and do not have a tentative date for updating. The CQIS encouraged the county to track the number of work eligible cases manually in the interim.

Business Process Review

The CQIS followed up on the counties process for monitoring and tracking application due dates and if they had implemented any new strategies. It was recommended by CQIS to utilize the Operations and Maintenance (O&M) Reports daily.

Program Policy / Functionality Updates

The CQIS provided updates and clarifications regarding WF program policy, NC FAST System Functionality including outstanding Help Desk tickets, Weekly Communications, and DSS Terminal Messages. Those updates included discussion of the following:

Multiple Programs:

Dear County Director Letter

- 6/22/2023 – County Holiday Schedule for SFY 2024 (PM-REM-01-2023) Due 9/30/2023. County states they do not have any holidays that differ from the state holidays. County does not have any holidays that differ from the state.
- 7/18/2023 – CQIS Regional Assignments (EFS-WF-06-2023)

Work First:

Dear County Director Letters

- 6/20/2023 – Reminder: Data Correction Report for Federal Reporting (ACF-199) pull after the 25th of each month to see if any corrections need to be made regarding race, ethnicity, or marital status and make any corrections as quickly as possible. CQIS will still send corrections that need to be made for errors related to subsidized housing and education and will be sent quarterly. Refer to DCDL: EFS-WF-04-2023. The name of the query is: **Invalid Values for ACF-199 Reporting_Race, Ethnicity, and Marital Status.**

It is located in CDSW in the TANF – Work First Case Management Folder (Full path: Public Folders/DHHS Main Documents/NC FAST/TANF- Work First/Case Management) The report will prompt a user to enter the desired benefit month and county they wish to query. Note that the query cannot be run for a specific benefit month until the TANF Participants table has been loaded for that month. This table is usually loaded by the 25th of the month for the previous month. There are 4 tabs in the report: The first tab gives general information about the report. The second tab returns individuals with invalid race data. The third tab returns individuals with invalid ethnicity data. The fourth tab returns individuals with invalid marital status data. If no data is returned for one or more tabs, that means that either: There are no individuals with invalid demographic data or the TANF Participants table has not loaded yet for the given benefit month.

- 7/11/2023 – Work First Participant Outreach.

Change Notices:

01-2023 (EFS-WF-CN01-2023) Policy Updates. Work First Manual Section 117: Ongoing Assessment and Services. The policies contained in Manual Section 101: Initial Screening and Assessment are incorporated into Manual Section 117. Administrative Letter AL-04-2009: Work First Assessment of Strengths and Needs (DSS-5298) and Administrative Letter AL-13-2010: Learning Needs Screening Tool (DSS-5327) have also been incorporated into Policy Section 117.

Terminal Messages

- 2023-102 – Pay After Performance Payments County staff will manually release July benefit checks in August for all Work First Benefit cases.
- 2023-112 – Revision of Work First Policy Section 117: Ongoing Assessment and Services

NC FAST Communications:

- 7/3/2023 – Cash Assistance – Outcome Plan tab has been added to the Person page; Reminded to utilize the WF Cash Assistance Common Errors identified by the ACF-199 Reporting Work Group Fact Sheet.
- 7/10/2023 – Multiple Programs – Communications folder displays current and archived communications; Cash Assistance – Cash Specific Termination report for June 2023 completed. Cash Assistance Automatic Payment Release for Benefit month June completed, Cash Assistance Extension Report for June 2023 completed; DSS-6244 displaying incorrect withdrawal reason when customer withdraws through ePASS.
- 7/17/2023 – Cash Assistance – temporary process change for ePASS applications where the applicant withdraws applications. Process is to cancel the incorrect DSS-6244 and manually issue the DSS 8109 with correct withdrawal reason.
- 7/24/2023 – Cash Assistance – CA and RCA now have separate tabs from Special Assistance O&M reports.

- 7/31/2023: The last automatic issuance of Pay After Performance payments occurred in July 2023 for the June 2023 benefit month. Caseworkers must manually release Pay After Performance payments for all Work First cases in August 2023 for July 2023 benefits. The DSS terminal Listserv Message #2023-102 sent 7/25/23 can be referenced for guidance.
- 7/31/2023: Workers should not invalidate cancelled payments for Cash Assistance. An invalidated payment can only be reissued by the Controller's Office.
- 7/31/2023: Caseworkers are reminded that Pay After Performance payments should be released within three (3) business days of receipt of adequate documentation. All completed hours should be recorded within the participation tab on the Outcome Plan monthly. It is recommended that caseworkers have hours keyed by the 15th of the month to ensure that the 20th keying deadline is met. For additional guidance on keying hours for participation, case managers can review FAST Help job aid, "Entering Participation Hours" and NC FAST Learning Gateway training, "NC FAST and the Outcome Plan...So How Does This Work?" Workers should contact their Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) Specialist at dss.policy.questions@dhhs.nc.gov with any questions or concerns.

General Discussion:

- Discussed the resuming of the MOU regarding timeliness thresholds is anticipated to resume January 2024. Additional information will be forthcoming when available.
- There have been no updated Work Participation Rate reports published since September 2022.
- Discussed the county staff are working with their employment services cases as expected. Documentation of completed hours/activities should be submitted by work eligible participants no later than the fifth business day of the following month. July benefits will be the first month that the worker must issue the payments for WFB cases. This must occur no later than 3 days following receipt of verification of completed hours/compliance. Good cause should only be applied in instances where good cause meets policy requirements in Section 119 of the Work First manual.

Program Staff Concerns

- None at this time

Follow-up

The next scheduled monthly meeting will be via MS Teams on Thursday, September 12, 2023, at 10:00 am