

AGENDA

REGULAR MEETING

OF THE

September 27, 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 – August 23, 2023
- IV. Board Member Comments
- V. Public Comments (Maximum Allowance of Three Minutes Per Person)
- VI. Information and Discussion
 - A. DSS Dashboard
 - B. Child Support Consult – letter dated August 28, 2013
 - C. Work First Consult – Technical Assistance Report dated Sept. 12, 2023
 - D. LME/MCO Dashboard
 - E. Miscellaneous
- VII. Old Business
 - A. Dear County Director Letter – August 18, 2023 – Senate Bill 20
- VIII. New Business
 - Next meeting – October 25, 2023 at 3:00 p.m. in the DSS conference room
- IX. Adjournment

STOKES COUNTY BOARD OF SOCIAL SERVICES

MINUTES

August 23, 2023

The regular meeting of the Stokes County Board of Social Services was held on Wednesday, August 23, 2023, at the Social Services Building in Danbury, North Carolina. Board members present were Chairman Jan Spencer, Member Greg Collins (via phone), and Member Sonya Cox (via phone). Vice Chairman Darlene Bullins and Member Sandy Smith were absent. Staff present was Director Stacey Elmes. 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. Member Cox seconded and the motion passed 3-0 with Vice Chairman Bullins and Member Smith absent.

Consent Agenda

Chairman Spencer entertained a motion to approve or amend the consent agenda which included the minutes from the July 26, 2023 meeting. Member Cox motioned to approve the consent agenda as presented. Member Collins seconded and the motion passed 3-0 with Vice Chairman Bullins and Member Smith absent.

Board Member Comments

None made.

Public Comments

There were no public comments.

Other items on the agenda for discussion were as follows:

DSS Dashboard

➤ Food and Nutrition Services

Director Elmes noted the report card rates for the Food and Nutrition Unit as being 84% for application timeliness and 66% for recertification timeliness with the target goal for each being 95%. Director Elmes shared that the unit has been struggling due to two vacancies, two workers having been employed for only two months, and one worker out on FMLA. The volume of work is too much even with help from other units in the agency.

➤ Foster Care

Director Elmes shared the recent challenges with staff having to stay with five foster children around the clock over the past three weeks. The agency was finally able to get the children placed so it is nice for staff to have a break from the additional work that has been required.

The agency is starting a Model Approach to Partnership in Parenting (MAPP) Class in September for families/individuals interested in becoming licensed foster parents and right now there are three families registered to attend.

➤ Agency Vacancies

Director Elmes shared the agency continues to struggle filling the following vacancies:

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

The Administrative Officer position has been filled with the new hire beginning employment on September 11, 2023. The agency is currently contracting with Van Guard Professional Services for two social workers that are helping provide monthly visits for foster care and one social worker providing intake three days a week for child protective services. Van Guard is currently looking for

one to two people who would be willing to come to the agency to complete food and nutrition services work.

Child Support Review

Director Elmes shared that the information from the July 26, 2023 review was good. While some of the percentages for goals were slightly below target, the child support representative said the agency's unit was doing a good job. The year end quality review score was 96.74%.

Continuous Quality Improvement Technical Assistance Report – Work First

Director Elmes shared that there were no concerns noted during the state's visit on August 8, 2023.

Closed Session

Director Elmes noted there was no longer a need for the closed session due to the issue already being resolved. Chairman Spencer, with consensus of Board members present, deleted the closed session from today's agenda.

Old Business

Director Elmes shared that on June 28, 2023, she reported to the Board the \$5.00 audit finding in Medicaid for Fiscal Year 2021-2022 discovered during the Single County Audit performed by Martin & Starnes Audit Firm. As required, this information was sent to the Division of Health Benefits (DHB) so they could look further into the issue to see if there were additional monies tied to the Medicaid claim. The agency must pay back \$1,111.30. The error had to do with a worker keying a denial and not checking back to see if the action took. In this case, the denial was put on hold by the NC Fast System and the client continued to be eligible for a short period of time. Corrective action has been taken and the agency is working hard to ensure this does not happen again.

New Business

Director Elmes informed the Board of a new state mandate effective November 16, 2023. Counties will be mandated to begin paying eligible kinship providers half of the standard board rate that foster homes receive. Currently kinship providers do not receive board payments.

Standard foster home board rates are as follows (effective 7/1/23):

Foster Child age 0-5: \$702/month

Foster Child age 6-12: \$742/month

Foster Child age 13 and up: \$810/month

Kinship foster care will be as follows (effective 11/16/23):

Foster Child age 0-5: \$351/month

Foster Child age 6-12: \$371/month

Foster Child age 13 and up: \$405/month

The cost of the kinship foster care payments will be split 50/50 between the state and the county.

Chairman Spencer questioned how many children the agency had in kinship placements at this time. Director Elmes stated she would get that information and provide it to the Board. Member Cox questioned if there was available money for this in the current DSS budget. Director Elmes stated she would review the current budget and projections moving forward and provide that to the Board. Member Cox noted she would go ahead and make the Board of County Commissioners aware of this new mandate.

Chairman Spencer noted the next meeting is September 27, 2023 at 3:00 p.m.

With no further business, Chairman Spencer entertained a motion to adjourn. Member Cox motioned to adjourn the meeting. Member Collins seconded and the motion passed 3-0 with Vice Chairman Bullins and Member Smith absent. The meeting was adjourned at 3:24 p.m.

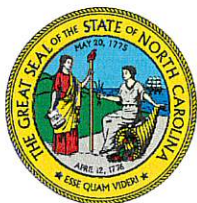
Stacy Elmer
Secretary

9/15/2023
Date

Stokes County DSS Dashboard 2023

	July	August	September	Qrt. Total	Annual Total
ADULT SOCIAL WORK SERVICES					
Guardianship Cases	33	32			
New APS Reports Received	23	16		39	39
APS Reports Accepted	11	7		18	18
Investigations Initiated Timely [Goal 95%]	100%	100%			
Outreach Visits	9	5		14	14
In Home Aide Programs	9	9			
Community Alternatives Program (CAP/DA)	52	52			
Representative Payee	7	7			
SA - In-Home	51	50			
Placement	0	0			
Adult Care Homes Monitored	3	2			
Total Requests for CIP	38	48		86	86
CIP Expenditures	\$6,304	\$7,061		\$13,365	\$13,365
Total Requests for LIEAP & LIEWAP	0	0		0	0
LIEAP Expenditures	\$0	\$0		\$0	\$0
Unclaimed Bodies	1	0		1	1
Staff Hours Spent at Shelters	0	0		0	0
CHILD CARE SUBSIDY					
Children Receiving Services <input type="checkbox"/>	151	156			
Expenditures	\$72,826	\$76,523		\$149,349	\$149,349
Waiting List	0	0			
CHILD PROTECTIVE SERVICES					
CPS Reports Received	42	27		69	69
CPS Reports Accepted	18	15		33	33
Children Opened	29	32		61	61
Open Reports	14	10			
Reports Substantiated/Services Needed	5	3			
Open Case Management	15	12			
Courtesy Requests	8	5		13	13
Substance Affected Infants Reported to DSS	1	2		3	3
Substance Affected Infants Accepted for Inv.	1	2		2	2
Reports Initiated Timely [Goal 95%]	96%	97%			
Reports Completed Timely [Goal 75%]	75%	82%			
Children Remaining at Home [Goal 95%]	83%	86%			
CHILD SUPPORT					
Number of Children Served	980	962			
Total Collections	\$165,681	\$163,413		\$329,094	\$329,094
Paternities Established	3	4		7	7
New Court Orders	1	5		6	6
FISHING LICENSE WAIVERS					
Fishing License Waivers	10	7		17	17
FOOD & NUTRITION SERVICES					
Total Households	3,280	3,163			
Total Individuals	6,413	6,185			
Report Card (App. Timeliness) [Goal: 95%]	84%	71%			
Report Card (Recert. Timeliness) [Goal: 95%]	66%	33%			
Benefits Distributed	\$ 950,728	\$ 906,986		\$1,858,714	\$1,858,714

2023	July	August	September	Qtr. Total	Annual Total
FOSTER CARE					
Children Entering Care	5	5		10	10
Total Children in Care	92	95			
Children Discharged	4	3		3	3
Children in Care Over 1 Year	56	58			
% Receiving a Monthly Visit [Goal 100%]	100%	100%			
% Visited in the Home [Goal > 90%]	90%	82%			
Foster Care 18-21	6	6			
Monitoring of Children No Longer in Custody	3	2			
Licensed Foster Homes	15	15			
Sanctioned Homes	1	1			
# of Individuals/Families Receiving Training	three	three			
Recruitment Events Held	2	4		6	6
Foster Care Costs (county/state/fed)	\$109,516	\$112,115		\$221,631	\$221,631
Children Free For Adoption	14	11			
Children Open for LINKS	93	92			
Adoptions Completed	1	3		4	4
Adoption Assistance Cases	194	196			
Adoption Assistance Costs (fed & state)	\$929	\$31,555		\$32,484	\$32,484
MEDICAID [ADULT, FAMILY & CHILDREN'S]					
# of Cases	9,160	9,242			
Report Card (Timeliness) [Goal: 85%]	100%	99%			
Public Assistance Hearings (All Areas)	1	4			
MEDICAID TRANSPORTATION					
Clients Served	142	227			
Trips Provided	1,061	1,690		2,751	2,751
Monthly Cost	\$45,629	\$53,485		\$99,114	\$99,114
PROGRAM INTEGRITY					
New Claims Established	\$ -	\$1,671		\$ 1,671	\$1,671
Total Collections	\$3,942	\$3,763		\$7,705	\$7,705
Retained in County	\$738	\$704		\$1,442	\$1,442
SPECIAL ASSISTANCE					
# of Special Assistance Cases	131	130			
Benefits Distributed	\$63,780	\$53,817		\$117,597	\$117,597
SA/MH LIAISON					
Number of Referrals during the Month	17	9		26	26
Open Cases at end of Month	50	43			
VACANCIES					
Social Work	5	5			
Clerical/Income Maintenance/Child Support	3	2			
WORK FIRST					
Total Work First Cases	44	47			
Number of Child Only Cases	44	47			
Employment Cases	0	0			
Benefits Distributed	\$9,391	\$10,170		\$19,561	\$19,561
OTHER					
Voter Registrations	7	3		10	10
Walk-In Traffic	1,121	1,062		2,183	2,183



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 28, 2023

Dear Ms. Elmes:

On August 10, 2023, Jennifer and I conduct a conference to discuss statistical information, information updates, and county concern.

Incentive statistics are available through July 2023. The unit is above the State Average for Total Collections (7.77%) at 7.80%. The unit has achieved/exceeded the 2023-24 goals in the areas of Cases Under Order (90%) at 92.21 % and Current Collection (68.60%) at 70.62%. This is great work! The unit is OFF track in the area of Arrears Collection (63.69%) at 24.11%. Last year at this time the unit was at 25.59% in the area of Arrears Collection. 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 2023-24					
TC	Paternity	CUO	CC	Arrears	Medical
\$2,097,557.35	100	90	68.60	63.69	
Current	07/23				
7.80>	89.31>	92.21>*	70.62>*	24.11<	85.88>

*-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

Self-Assessment scores are available through July 2023. The unit has been able to bring Medical in compliance at 93.92%. This is excellent work! The unit is out of compliance in the area of Six month Expedite at 64.91%, and Interstate at 61.54%. Compliance in these areas is 75%. Management continues to explore work process and reports to assist in these areas. All other areas have a compliance level of 76% or better. Reports suggested/provided: P/F for Enforcement, Six Month Expedite, and Interstate.

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 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	August	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.Newsoms@dhhs.nc.gov) or call me at (336)788-5857.

Sincerely,
Mrs. Kenya Newsome
Child Support Program Representative

Cc:
Jennifer Bennet
Cindy Amos

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: September

On **September 12, 2023, Tammy Mason, and Tabitha Tucker**, from the NC Division of Social Services, CQI team, conducted a virtual 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%	August 2023
WF Recertification Timeliness	100%	August 2023
WF All Family Participation Rate	Not Available	Not Available
WF Two-Parent Participation Rate	Not Available	Not Available
WF Case Data	51	August 2023
WF Applications	8	August 2023

Monitoring

Stokes County Work First Performance Compliance Monitoring for State Fiscal Year (SFY) 2023-2024 is scheduled to begin in October 2023. This will be an onsite monitoring. An appointment letter will be sent with date and time thirty days in advance.

Timeliness and Work First Participation

Application timeliness for the month of August reflected two (2) applications with due dates in the month of August and all were processed timely.

The Application Processing and Caseload Statistic report in Client Services Data Warehouse (CSDW) for the month of August reflects eight (8) applications were taken. Of the eight (8), five (5) reflect being withdrawn, one (1) reflects being approved, and two (2) are pending.

Recertification timeliness for the month of August reflected three (3) 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 weekly. The county conducts 2nd party reviews- 25% of applications, recertifications and Employment cases/MRA-B/OCF monthly according to Administrative Letter 7-2018. 2nd party all (2) parent cases and confirm that the 2-parent checklist has been completed.

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

- None

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.

- **Important Reminder:** when making ACF-199 corrections sent to you quarterly by the CQIS regarding living arrangement/subsidized housing, and education errors, please do not use “effective date of change”. To update evidence, you should end-date the evidence using the last day of the month, then add the new evidence the first day of the following month. Keep the dates in line with the certification period. For example, you are working on a review for August 2023, and you complete the review in June or July, and you need to update student evidence or living arrangement, etc....you would end-date the evidence 8/31/2023 and add the new evidence beginning 9/1/2023 keeping the dates in line with the CP. If you have already used “effective date of change”, to make the correction you will need to delete those entries, (excluding the original entry), and end-date the original with the appropriate end-date and re-enter each updated one by one as a new piece of evidence paying attention to dates as discussed above.

- 8/28/2023: EFS-WF-07-2023- Work First Program Performance Monitoring-Information Only. (Attachments: WF Program Monitoring Most Frequent Findings SFY 2022-2023 and WF Tentative Schedule SFY 2023-2024)

Terminal Messages

- 8/2/2023: Listserv Message #2023-112. WF Section 117: Ongoing Assessment and Services revised to incorporate section 101: Initial Screening and Assessment. Also incorporated are Administrative Letter AL-04-2009: Work First Assessment of Strengths and Needs (DSS-5298) and Administrative Letter AL-13-2010: Learning Needs Screening Tool.
- 8/22/2023: Listserv Message #2023-125. State Refugee Office Manual updates. (Reformatted for consistency and clarification as well as removing outdated references). <https://policies.ncdhhs.gov/divisional/social-services/refugee-assistance>

- 8/22/2023: Listserv Message #2023-124. Work First Policy 104A-Individual Criminal Violations
- 8/28/2023: Listserv Message #2023-129. Work First Program Compliance Monitoring Schedule and Summary of Findings. (Referencing DCDL EFS- WF-07-2023).

Work First Program Monitoring SFY 2022-2023 Summary of Most Frequent Findings

Cash Assistance

- Cash Assistance Application & Review Documentation Workbook, DSS 8228, incomplete/not completed in entirety
- Family Cap child included in the cash assistance budget/evidence not entered
- Family Cap evaluation incorrect tenth month
- Online Verification System (OVS) not run at application and/or recertification; OVS not run on all individuals in the household
- DSS – 8218A, Work First Substance Use Screening Notice and DSS – 8218, AUDIT/DAST-10 completed and/or provided to SSI recipients or non-parent caretakers.
- Notice of Benefits, DSS 8108 or DSS 6244, not completed

Employment Services

- Initial Outcome Plan (OCP) not generated within five days of application. No MRA-B completed.
- Outcome Plan (OCP)/Mutual Responsibility Agreement (MRA-B) not revised and updated every 12 weeks as required
- Family Assessment of Strengths and Needs not completed per policy and/or revised every 12 weeks as required
- Future dated sanction not entered for non-compliance

Work First Services for Low-Income Families (Below 200% of Poverty)

- Learning Needs Screening Waiver checked instead of initialed
- Cases not closed timely in SIS

IVD Non-Cooperation

- Failed to apply child support enforcement non-compliance suspended sanction

NC FAST Communications:

Cash Assistance/Work First Services (CA)

- **Reminder 8/7/2023:** 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 **Listsrv Message #2023-102** sent 7/25/23 can be referenced for guidance. Workers should contact their Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) Specialist at dss.policy.questions@dhhs.nc.gov with any questions or concerns.
- **Reminder 8/7/2023:** Workers should not **invalidate** cancelled payments for Cash Assistance. An invalidated payment can only be reissued by the Controller's Office. Workers should contact their Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) Specialist at dss.policy.questions@dhhs.nc.gov with any questions or concerns.
- **Reminder 8/7/2023:** Caseworkers are reminded that Pay After Performance payments should be released within three 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.

- **New 8/28/2023:** When making updates to student evidence, users are reminded not to use the effective date of change. Users should end date student evidence and create an entirely new piece of evidence to document the change. Using the effective date of change negatively impacts ACF-199 submissions. Users should contact their Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) Specialist at dss.policy.questions@dhhs.nc.gov with any questions or concerns.
- **New 8/28/2023:** When adding a new household member to a case, users may experience incorrect eligibility decisions due to adding student evidence with a start date that is not the first of the month. Currently, using a date other than the first of the month could result in the new household member being excluded when completing an eligibility check.
- **Temporary Process Change (TPC)** – When adding a household member to an existing case, users should start student evidence with the first day of the month in which the member moved into the home. *Example:* A child moved into the home on 7/5/2023. Student evidence should be added with a start date 7/1/2023 to receive the correct eligibility decision. Users should contact their Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) Specialist at dss.policy.questions@dhhs.nc.gov with any questions or concerns.
- **New 8/28/2023:** Users can now close a Cash Assistance case without cancelling on-hold payments that are less than two months old. Payments with an 'on-hold' status can be released on a closed case for up to two months. Payments in 'cancelled' status will still require the case to be reopened to allow the payment to be 'reissued.' Users should contact their Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) Specialist at dss.policy.questions@dhhs.nc.gov with any questions or concerns.
- **New 8/28/2023:** Work First Policy Section 104A – Individual Criminal Violations has been updated. **Change Notice No. CN-WF-02-23** is available online and can be viewed at [EFS-WF-CN02-2023](#). Users 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.
- Reminder: For your Two-Parent cases, you must complete the Work First Two-Parent Family Participation Checklist. The checklist must be completed the month the case is authorized for benefits and must be updated, signed, and dated at the time Federal Work Activity changes are completed.
- 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.

- The DSS-6967 – Family Violence Option Brochure has been added back to the form's library. A Spanish version is in the development process.
- Reminder: When adding Substance Use Details in evidence on the income support case be sure to put the correct testing dates.

DAST-10 Details

Date DSS-8218B was signed



Date Test Completed



Test Result



Date Retest requested



Retest Result



DAST-10 Good Cause



•

Program Staff Concerns

- None

Follow-up

The next scheduled monthly meeting will be an onsite Regional Meeting at Guilford County DSS on October 25th, 2023. Agenda will be forthcoming.

LMEMCO/TP Dashboard

July 31, 2023

Alliance

Eastpointe

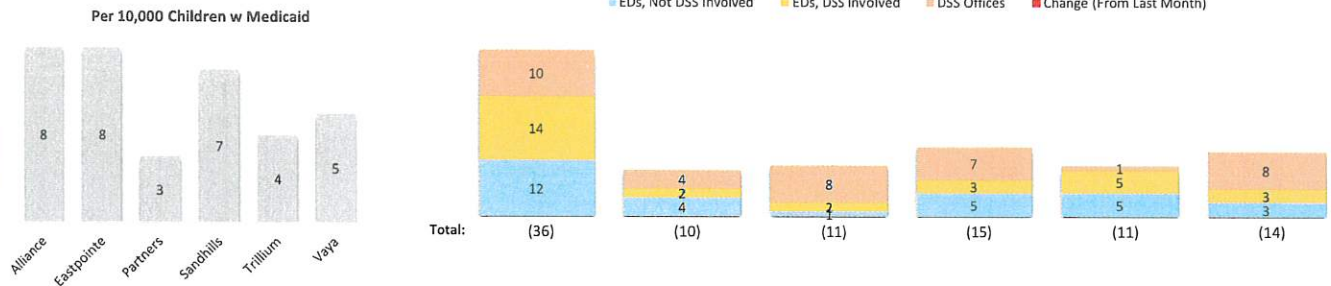
Partners

Sandhills

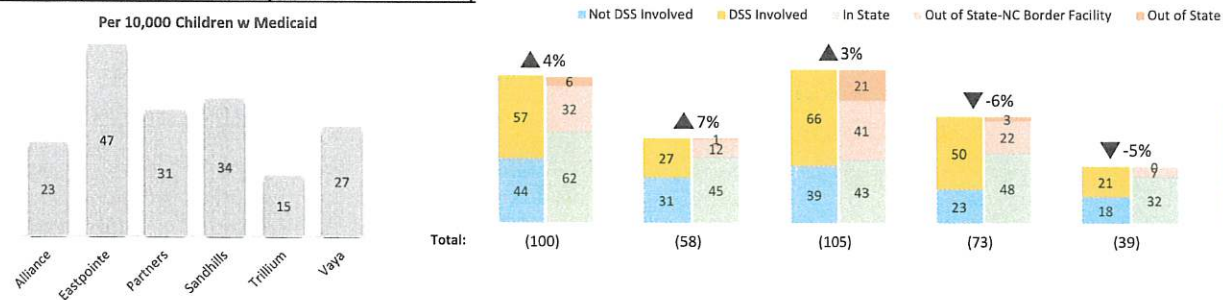
Trillium

Vaya

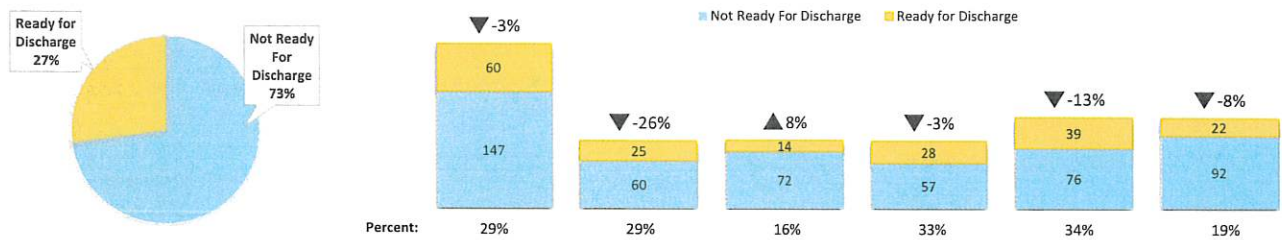
Medicaid, Children in ED & DSS Settings (April 23-June 23)



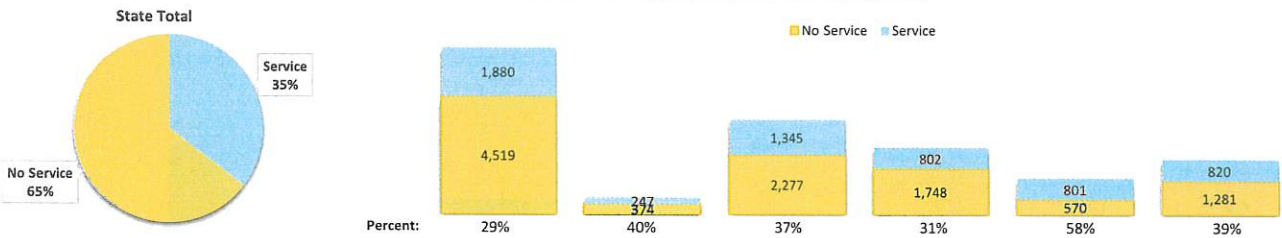
Medicaid, Children in PRTFs (Jan 2023 - Mar 2023)



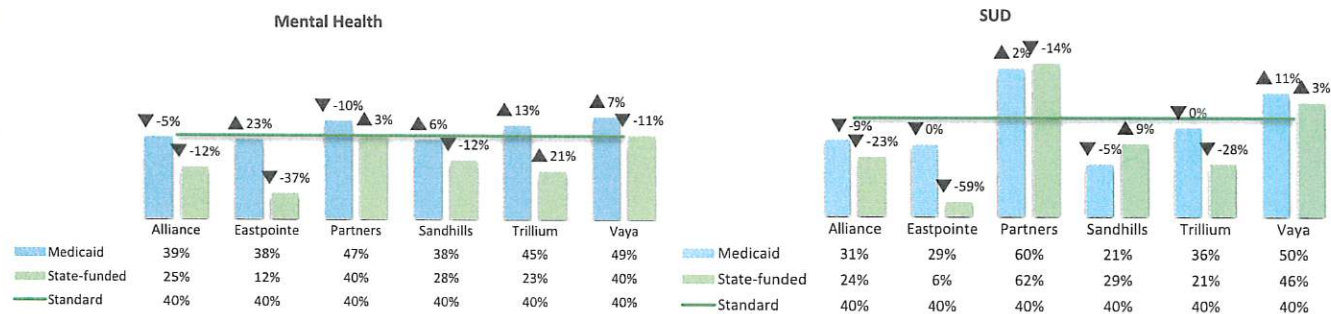
Consumers in State Psych Hospitals Ready for Discharge (Feb 2023 - April 2023)



People on Innovations Waitlist Receiving Any Medicaid or State BH/IDD Service (Jan 2023 - Mar 2023)



Follow-up Within 7 Days After Inpatient Discharge (SFY23 Q2)



Metrics

*Arrow indicators compare this month's data to last month's data. If on top, applies to whole bar. If within a section, applies to that section.

Medicaid, Children in Inappropriate Crisis Settings: 12 week rolling average (LMEMCO self report for ED data; DSS office report for DSS office boarding data, started in February 2023); Directional arrow down shows improvement

Medicaid, Children in PRTFs: 3 month rolling avg (NC Tracks encounters pulled by NC Medicaid); Directional arrow down shows improvement

Consumers in State Psych Hospitals Ready for Discharge: 3 month rolling avg of consumers deemed ready for discharge by medical personnel (DSOHF data); Directional arrow down shows improvement

People on Innovations Waitlist Receiving Any Service: 3 month rolling avg (LMEMCO self report); Directional arrow up shows improvement

Follow-up Within 7 Days After Inpatient Discharge: Quarterly average with 40% benchmark (NC Tracks paid encounters/claims pulled by NC Medicaid/DMHDDSAS data); Directional arrow up shows improvement

From a foster teen to one of our social workers (September 6, 2023):

"I wrote a journal about you in English.

Kinda.

It is about heroes in today's society.

In today's society we need heroes. Heroes today can be seen as police, firefighters, and military. To me I feel like social workers and child protective services personnel are big heroes in today's society. Many children today do not get to grow up in good stable homes. Social Workers for child protective services can get children out of awful circumstances and help them restabilize in a new home. Some people may think taking a child from their parents is wrong but ultimately getting the child out of abusive circumstances can change how the adults think and help the children have better futures to then help more people."

Stacey S. Elmes

From: Moose, Lindsay W. <lindsay.w.moose@nccourts.org>
Sent: Thursday, September 7, 2023 12:21 PM
To: Stacey S. Elmes; Kimberly Childress

Judge Langan has repeatedly thanked and acknowledged the SWs hard work today.

No one ever tells you all the good stuff so, I wanted to pass it along.



Lindsay W Moose
17B-Surry & Stokes Counties
Court Assistant-District Court

Surry County Courthouse
201 E. Kapp St.
PO Box 456
Dobson, NC 27017
North Carolina Judicial Branch
O 336-386-3712
F 336-386-3713

Stokes County Courthouse
1012 State Highway 8
Danbury, NC 27016
North Carolina Judicial Branch
O 336-593-4461

Justice for all
www.NCcourts.gov



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NC DEPARTMENT OF
**HEALTH AND
HUMAN SERVICES**

ROY COOPER • Governor

KODY H. KINSLEY • Secretary

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

August 18, 2023

DEAR COUNTY DIRECTORS OF SOCIAL SERVICES

**ATTENTION: DIRECTORS, CHILD WELFARE PROGRAM ADMINISTRATORS, MANAGERS,
SUPERVISORS, SOCIAL WORKERS, AND FISCAL STAFF**

SUBJECT: REIMBURSEMENT RATES FOR UNLICENSED KINSHIP PROVIDERS, SENATE BILL 20

REQUIRED ACTION: ☐ Information Only ☒ **Time Sensitive** ☐ Immediate

The General Assembly, during the 2023 legislative session with [Senate Bill 20](#), established a reimbursement fund to assist in supporting unlicensed kinship care providers who are related by blood, marriage, or adoption and are providing foster care as defined under G.S. 131D-10.2(9).

The definition of relative according to North Carolina General Statute § 7B-101 (18a) is "An individual directly related to the juvenile by blood, marriage, or adoption, including, but not limited to, a grandparent, sibling, aunt, or uncle." Relative by marriage can occur even if the marriage has been dissolved by death or divorce. The preceding definition of relative includes relation within the fifth degree of kinship to the child. This includes, but is not limited to, a parent, grandparent, sibling, great grandparent, uncle or aunt, nephew or niece, great-great grandparent, great-uncle or aunt, first cousin, great-great-great grandparent, great-great uncle or aunt, or a first cousin once removed. Also included is any relationship above preceded by step or half."

With the new legislation in Senate Bill 20, it was determined that more specific kinship information was needed to implement the parameters of the law. To gather this specified level of kinship information, the North Carolina Division of Social Services (NCDSS) has partnered with Public Knowledge (PK) to survey counties regarding their kinship efforts.

To complete this survey, counties may need to consult with different personnel for important information. However, your support is essential in the completion of the survey as it will contribute to the development of policy regarding these payments. Please follow the link to complete the survey:
<https://forms.office.com/r/mz8nz6UsqB>. **Survey responses are due by August 28, 2023.**

Another important component of the Senate Bill 20 legislation are the reimbursement rates set for unlicensed kinship providers. The law is not intended to make the participation in this program optional; therefore, all counties are expected to participate in the unlicensed reimbursement payment program in partnership with the State in the following manner:

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

LOCATION: 820 S. Boylan Avenue, McBryde Building, Raleigh, NC 27603

MAILING ADDRESS: 2401 Mail Service Center, Raleigh, NC 27699-2401

www.ncdhhs.gov • TEL: 919-855-6335 • FAX: 919-334-1018

AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY / AFFIRMATIVE ACTION EMPLOYER

1. Use of the current Foster Care and Adoption Assistance board rates.
2. Take one quarter (1/4) of the board rate for county participation rate.
3. The State would participate at the rate of one quarter (1/4) of the board rate.

The chart below illustrates the newly increased Foster Care and Adoption Assistance Rates as of July 1, 2023. It is important to have the current board rates, as Senate Bill 20 provides that unlicensed kinship providers are reimbursed at half the board rate.

Effective July 1, 2023, the Standard Board Rate:

Child Age Group	Standard Board Rate
0-5	\$702 / month
6-12	\$742 / month
13 and up	\$810 / month

Effective November 16, 2023, the approximate half board reimbursement rates for unlicensed kinship foster care by State and county participation are displayed below:

Child Age Group	Standard Board Rate	State Participation	County Participation
0-5	\$351 / month	175.50	175.50
6-12	\$371 / month	185	185
13 and up	\$405 / month	202.50	202.50

The full development of the unlicensed kinship policy and program implementation is underway with more detailed information forthcoming. This communication is to share the statutory mandates and their effective dates of implementation.

For any questions, please contact the Adoption Manager Mary Mackins at Mary.Mackins@dhhs.nc.gov.

Sincerely,



Adrian Daye, MSW
Deputy Director for Child Welfare Practice
Division of Social Services, Child Welfare
North Carolina Department of Health and
Human Services

Cc: Lisa Tucker Cauley, Senior Director of Child, Family and Adult Services
Katie Swanson, Deputy Director for County Operations
Kathy Stone, Section Chief for Safety and Prevention Services
Kimaree Sanders, Section Chief for Regulatory and Licensing
Peter West, Section Chief for County Operations
Carla McNeill, Section Chief for Permanency Planning

CWS-56-2023

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AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY / AFFIRMATIVE ACTION EMPLOYER

The Division of Nonpublic Education, Department of Administration, shall also ensure that information is available to these schools so that they can provide information on the manner in which a parent may lawfully abandon a newborn baby with a responsible person, in accordance with G.S. 7B-500-Article 5A of Chapter 7B of the General Statutes."

SECTION 6.2.(k) G.S. 115C-556 reads as rewritten:

"§ 115C-556. Attendance; health and safety regulations.

...

The Division of Nonpublic Education, Department of Administration, shall also ensure that information is available to each qualified nonpublic school so that the school can provide information on the manner in which a parent may lawfully abandon a newborn baby with a responsible person, in accordance with G.S. 7B-500-Article 5A of Chapter 7B of the General Statutes."

SECTION 6.2.(l) G.S. 115C-565 reads as rewritten:

"§ 115C-565. Requirements exclusive.

...

The Division of Nonpublic Education, Department of Administration, shall also provide to home schools information on the manner in which a parent may lawfully abandon a newborn baby with a responsible person, in accordance with G.S. 7B-500-Article 5A of Chapter 7B of the General Statutes. This information may be provided electronically or on the Division's Web page."

SECTION 6.2.(m) This section becomes effective October 1, 2023, and applies to infants safely surrendered on or after that date.

SECTION 6.3.(a) The Legislative Research Commission shall study streamlining the laws surrounding adoption and foster care and report its findings and any legislative proposals to the 2024 Regular Session of the 2023 General Assembly upon its convening.

SECTION 6.3.(b) This section is effective when it becomes law.

SECTION 6.4.(a) G.S. 14-322.3 reads as rewritten:

"§ 14-322.3. Abandonment of an infant ~~under seven~~ not more than 30 days of age.

When a parent abandons an infant ~~less not more than seven~~ 30 days of age by voluntarily delivering the infant as provided in G.S. 7B-500(b) or G.S. 7B-500(d) Article 5A of Chapter 7B of the General Statutes and does not express an intent to return for the infant, that parent shall not be prosecuted under G.S. 14-322, 14-322.1, or 14-43.14."

SECTION 6.4.(b) This section becomes effective December 1, 2023, and applies to offenses committed on or after that date.

SECTION 6.5.(a) G.S. 48-3-203 reads as rewritten:

"§ 48-3-203. Agency placement adoption.

...

(a1) No agency shall deny or delay (i) the opportunity to become an adoptive parent or (ii) the placement of a child for adoption on the basis of race, color, or national origin of the person or the child involved.

...."

SECTION 6.5.(b) G.S. 131D-10.1 is amended by adding a new subsection to read:

"(a1) No agency or other State entity shall deny or delay (i) the opportunity to become a foster parent or (ii) the placement of a child in foster care on the basis of race, color, or national origin of the person or the child involved."

SECTION 6.5.(c) This section is effective when it becomes law.

SECTION 6.6.(a) Effective six months after this bill becomes law, and notwithstanding any other provision of law or rule to the contrary, the Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Social Services (Division), shall develop and implement a policy that allows an individual who is related by blood, marriage, or adoption to a child and providing foster care, as defined under G.S. 131D-10.2(9), to a child in a family foster home to be

Eff.
Nov. 16, 2023

reimbursed for the provision of care without having to meet the requirements for licensure under G.S. 131D-10.3 pursuant to rates set forth in subsection (b) of this section. For purposes of this section, "family foster home" means the private residence of one or more individuals who permanently reside as members of the household and who provide continuing full-time foster care for a child or children who are related to the adult members of the household by blood, marriage, or adoption.

1/2 the amt.
that licensed
homes get

SECTION 6.6.(b) The maximum rates for State participation in reimbursement for unlicensed kinship foster care are established on a graduated scale as follows:

- (1) \$351.00 per child per month for children from birth through 5 years of age.
- (2) \$371.00 per child per month for children 6 through 12 years of age.
- (3) \$405.00 per child per month for children at least 13 but less than 18 years of age.

SECTION 6.6.(c) The State and a county participating in unlicensed kinship care shall each contribute fifty percent (50%) of the nonfederal share of the cost of care for a child placed by a county department of social services or child-placing agency in a family foster home.

SECTION 6.6.(d) There is appropriated from the General Fund to the Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Social Services, the sum of five million seven hundred sixty-six thousand three hundred ninety dollars (\$5,766,390) in recurring funds for each year of the 2023-2025 fiscal biennium to provide funds for the State portion of unlicensed kinship care reimbursement rates set forth in subsection (b) of this section.

SECTION 6.7.(a) G.S. 108A-49.1 reads as rewritten:

"§ 108A-49.1. Foster care and adoption assistance payment rates.

(a) The maximum rates for State participation in the foster care assistance program are established on a graduated scale as follows:

- (1) ~~\$514.00~~ \$702.00 per child per month for children from birth through five years of age.
- (2) ~~\$654.00~~ \$742.00 per child per month for children six through 12 years of age.
- (3) ~~\$698.00~~ \$810.00 per child per month for children at least 13 but less than 21 years of age.

(b) The maximum rates for the State adoption assistance program are established consistent with the foster care rates as follows:

- (1) ~~\$514.00~~ \$702.00 per child per month for children from birth through five years of age.
- (2) ~~\$654.00~~ \$742.00 per child per month for children six through 12 years of age.
- (3) ~~\$698.00~~ \$810.00 per child per month for children at least 13 but less than 21 years of age.

...."

SECTION 6.7.(b) There is appropriated from the General Fund to the Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Social Services, the sum of ten million ninety-four thousand three hundred sixty-four dollars (\$10,094,364) in recurring funds for each year of the 2023-2025 fiscal biennium to implement the foster care and adoption assistance rate increases set forth in subsection (a) of this section.

SECTION 6.8. There is appropriated from the General Fund to the Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Social Services, the sum of one million seven hundred twenty-five thousand five hundred thirty-one dollars (\$1,725,531) in recurring funds for each year of the 2023-2025 fiscal biennium to provide the State portion of the total cost of care to implement, with the associated county and federal shares, an increase to the administrative rate for foster care and adoption assistance.

SECTION 6.9. There is appropriated from the General Fund to the Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Social Services, the sum of eleven million eight hundred thousand dollars (\$11,800,000) in nonrecurring funds for the 2023-2024 fiscal year to provide