

# AGENDA

## REGULAR MEETING

### OF THE

## STOKES COUNTY

**January 27, 2021**

**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
- III. Consent Agenda
  - A. Minutes – Regular Meeting 12/16/2020
- IV. Board Member Comments
- V. Public Comments (Maximum Allowance of Ten Minutes Per Person)
- VI. Discussion
  - A. DSS Dashboard
  - B. Work First Monitoring Results Letter SFY 2020-2021
  - C. Occupational Support Team Technical Assistance Report
  - D. FNS Quality Control CAPER Case Review Findings Report
  - E. Subsidized Child Care Assistance Monitoring Report 2018-2021
- VII. Action Items
  - A. Old Business
  - B. New Business
    - a. DSS Board member to participate on the Child Protection/Child Fatality Team
- VIII. Adjournment

STOKES COUNTY BOARD OF SOCIAL SERVICES  
MINUTES  
December 16, 2020

The regular meeting of the Stokes County Board of Social Services was held on Wednesday, December 16, 2020 via the Go-To-Meeting website. Chairman Greg Collins called the meeting to order at 3:06 p.m. Board members present were Vice-Chair Sandy Smith, Member Darlene Bullins, and Member Katie Tedder. Member Jimmy Walker was absent. Staff present were DSS Director Stacey Elmes, Admin. Officer Becky East, and Income Maintenance Administrator Cindy Joyce.

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

Chairman Collins asked if there were any Board members that needed to discuss or make any adjustments to the agenda. Vice-Chair Smith motioned to approve the agenda. Member Tedder seconded and the motion carried 4-0 with Member Walker absent.

Chairman Collins asked for approval to the consent agenda. Member Bullins motioned to approve the consent agenda. Member Tedder seconded and the motion passed 4-0 with Member Walker absent.

There were no public comments made.

Director Elmes stated that the DSS Dashboard report shows consistency in the applications that agency has received. Applications have increased in Medicaid and Food and Nutrition Services as well as clients coming in for assistance with housing and electric bills. Director Elmes stated the Board of County Commissioners allotted the Department \$100,000.00 from COVID Relief Funding for client needs such as help with electric bills and rent assistance. One hundred and fourteen (114) families have been helped thus far with a total spent of \$63,000.00. These allotted dollars can be used through December 30, 2020. As far as vacancies within the agency, we have two Foster Care Social Work positions and one clerical position.

Regarding Social Services Policies, Director Elmes stated she is working on getting all policies for Social Services updated. The Computer/Confidentiality of Information Policy is one in which each employee has signed stating they understand to lock their assigned computer when they are leaving their office. In last two county audits, auditors have found a computer each time that was logged into by the employee but the computer was left unsupervised. The On-Call Services Policy was last approved by the Board in 2011. Director Elmes asked to table this policy until the next meeting as she has found other changes that need to be made. The Grievance Policy is for the Board to review and be aware of. Consensus by the Board was given for support of the Computer/Confidentiality of Information Policy and the Grievance Policy. Member Walker was absent.

Director Elmes stated that during the Fiscal Monitoring in November 2020 there were two findings by the auditor for day sheet coding by workers. Additional training is required of staff on this subject.

Director Elmes mentioned the Technical Assistance Visit Report from the Division of Child Development. This report is in reference to our day care spending. There were no findings on this report. We are monitoring our spending and we are currently not maintaining a daycare waiting list.

Director Elmes shared two surveys: NC Non-Supported Foster Care Placement Survey Results and Survey on Behavioral Health Placement Needs for Children/Youth. These surveys share information about DSS agencies in the state and having to keep children at the office or other locations until appropriate placement can be found. In the last four weeks, agency staff have stayed with a child or children in custody of DSS at the office during three of those weeks for several days each week until appropriate placement was found. Director Elmes has initiated a contract with the Children's Center in Surry County starting in January 2021 for emergency situations, if the child meets the criteria.

Chairman Collins submitted the 2021 Meeting Schedule for the Board's consideration. Meeting dates are as follows: January 27, 2021; February 24, 2021; March 24, 2021; April 28, 2021; May 26, 2021; June 23, 2021; July 28, 2021; August 25, 2021; September 22, 2021; October 27, 2021; November 17, 2021; and December 15, 2021. Meetings will be held at 3:00 p.m. in the agency conference room. Member Bullins motioned to approve as submitted. Vice-Chair Smith seconded the motion and the motion passed 4-0 with Member Walker absent.

Chairman Collins asked if there was any old business that needed to be discussed. Director Elmes mentioned the meeting she had with Cardinal Innovations representative, Nicole Six, and a couple of DSS supervisors. Ms. Six mentioned a few ideas that Cardinal had in the works to help Child Protective Services and Foster Care. The ideas that were discussed sounded great and would most likely help. It had been mentioned that Cardinal is giving monies to DSS agencies in their catchment area to help with Foster Care placement. The monies are to help DSS agencies in the state with difficult Foster Care placements. These are cases that require a high level of care. It may be as much as \$30 million dollars across the state. Director Elmes was advised by Ms. Six to contact the County Manager's office for further discussion. Director Elmes will reach out to the Stokes County Manager's office requesting a conversation on this topic.

Member Tedder spoke about COVID monies with the schools and some unfavorable press on how the monies had been spent. Member Tedder spoke of concern about any COVID monies Stokes County DSS had received and when those monies would be audited. Director Elmes stated that the monies DSS has received have been spent on the portable printers, and scanners to allow workers to work from home with their laptops. Personal Protective Equipment (masks, gowns, wipes, disinfectant sprays, etc.) and air purifiers for the DSS building have been purchased as well. Director Elmes foresees no issues with audits on the purchases that have been made using COVID monies.

There was no new business to discuss.

There being no further business, Chairman Collins requested a motion to adjourn the meeting. Member Bullins made a motion to adjourn. Vice-Chair Smith seconded and the motion passed 4-0 with Member Walker absent. Meeting adjourned at 3:40 p.m.

Stacy S. Elmes  
Secretary

12/30/2020  
Date



# Stokes County DSS Dashboard 2020

	October	November	December	Total
<b>ADULT SOCIAL WORK SERVICES</b>				
Guardianship Cases	38	36	35	
New APS Reports Received	20	11	17	48
APS Reports Accepted	7	7	11	25
Investigations Initiated Timely [Goal 95%]	100%	100%	100%	
Outreach Visits	9	3	3	15
In Home Aide Programs/Family Caregiver	34	34	34	
Community Alternatives Program (CAP/DA)	79	79	79	
Representative Payee	14	14	14	
SA - In-Home	57	58	58	
Placement	0	0	0	
Adult Care Homes Monitored	3	2	6	
Total Requests for CIP	18	22	48	88
CIP Expenditures	\$ 5,895	\$ 12,917	\$15,240	\$ 34,052
Total Requests for LIEAP	0	0	371	371
LIEAP Expenditures	\$ -	\$ -	\$33,500	\$ 33,500
Unclaimed Bodies	2	0	0	2
Staff Hours Spent at Shelters	0	0	0	0
<b>CHILD CARE SUBSIDY</b>				
Children Receiving Services	201	202	247	
Expenditures	\$94,176	\$103,501	\$93,077	\$290,754
Waiting List	0	0	0	
<b>CHILD PROTECTIVE SERVICES</b>				
CPS Reports Received	56	29	31	116
CPS Reports Accepted	32	14	15	61
Children Opened	65	28	34	127
Open Reports	35	26	28	
Reports Substantiated/Services Needed	6	9	3	
Open Case Management	9	17	15	
Courtesy Requests	9	7	6	22
Substance Affected Infants Reported to DSS	3	2	1	6
Substance Affected Infants Accepted for Inv.	3	2	1	6
Reports Initiated Timely [Goal 95%]	100%	100%	100%	
Reports Completed Timely [Goal 75%]	87%	71%	25%	
Children Remaining at Home [Goal 95%]	98%	79%	82%	
<b>CHILD SUPPORT</b>				
Number of Children Served	1,160	1,150	1,151	
Total Collections	\$188,047	\$187,376	\$203,477	\$578,900
Paternities Established	0	1	2	3
New Court Orders	4	7	3	14
<b>FISHING LICENSE WAIVERS</b>				
Fishing License Waivers	5	1	0	5
<b>FOOD &amp; NUTRITION SERVICES</b>				
Total Households	2,787	2,809	2,924	
Total Individuals	5,498	5,569	5,809	
Report Card (App. Timeliness) [Goal: 95%]	99%	100%	99%	
Report Card (Recert. Timeliness) [Goal: 95%]	99%	90%	99%	
Benefits Distributed	\$ 994,349	\$ 1,034,413	\$ 1,047,246	\$3,076,008



2020	October	November	December	Total
<b>FOSTER CARE</b>				
Children Entering Care	1	6	6	13
Total Children in Care	87	89	93	
Children Discharged	7	4	2	11
Children in Care Over 1 Year	40	41	42	
% Receiving a Monthly Visit [Goal 100%]	100%	100%	100%	
% Visited in the Home [Goal > 90%]	90%	87%	96%	
Foster Care 18-21	9	8	7	
Monitoring of Children No Longer in Custody	2	3	3	
Licensed Foster Homes	25	25	24	
Sanctioned Homes	1	1	1	3
# of Individuals/Families Receiving Training	12	10	10	
Recruitment Events Held	0	0	0	0
Foster Care Costs (county/state/fed)	\$95,461	\$91,203	not available	\$186,670
Children Free For Adoption	6	6	6	
Children Open for LINKS	73	73	73	
Adoptions Completed	2	0	0	2
Adoption Assistance Cases	180	180	170	
Adoption Assistance Costs (fed & state)	\$27,715	\$16,214	\$20,672	\$64,601
<b>MEDICAID [ADULT, FAMILY &amp; CHILDREN'S]</b>				
# of Cases	9,096	9,138	9,192	
Report Card (Timeliness) [Goal: 85%]	95%	98%	100%	
Public Assistance Hearings (All Areas)	2	2	2	
<b>MEDICAID TRANSPORTATION</b>				
Clients Served	181	349	176	
Trips Provided	720	1,272	790	2,782
Monthly Cost	\$29,291.91	\$29,327.61	\$ 31,802.57	\$90,422.08
<b>PROGRAM INTEGRITY</b>				
New Claims Established	\$ 3,009.00	\$ 2,908	\$ 2,349	\$8,266
Total Collections	\$561	\$637	\$635	\$1,833
Retained in County	\$73	\$88	\$88	\$249
<b>SPECIAL ASSISTANCE</b>				
# of Special Assistance Cases	155	155	153	
Benefits Distributed	\$64,201	\$58,886	\$57,885	\$180,972
<b>SA/MH LIAISON</b>				
Number of Referrals during the Month	14	4	11	29
Open Cases at end of Month	48	48	58	
<b>VACANCIES</b>				
Social Work	3	2	2	
Clerical/Income Maintenance/Child Support	2	1	1	
<b>WORK FIRST</b>				
Total Work First Cases	58	59	57	
Number of Child Only Cases	55	56	54	
Employment Cases	3	3	3	
Referrals for Drug Testing	0	0	0	
Applicants Testing Positive	0	0	0	
Benefits Distributed	\$12,162	\$12,276	\$12,374	\$ 36,812
<b>OTHER</b>				
Voter Registrations	6	1	1	7
Walk-In Traffic	770	796	917	2,483



NC DEPARTMENT OF  
**HEALTH AND  
HUMAN SERVICES**

**ROY COOPER** • Governor

**MANDY COHEN, MD, MPH** • Secretary

**SUSAN OSBORNE** • Assistant Secretary for County Operations for  
Human Services

December 21, 2020

Stacey Elmes, Director  
Stokes County Department of Social Services  
1010 Main Street  
Danbury, NC 27016  
[selmes@co.stokes.nc.us](mailto:selmes@co.stokes.nc.us)

RE: Stokes County Work First Monitoring Results Letter SFY 2020-2021

Dear Ms. Elmes:

Work First Eligibility Monitoring was conducted November 30 for State Fiscal Year 2020-2021. Work First Family Cash Assistance and Employment Services cases was reviewed. There was no Work First Services for Low Income Families 200% services or IVD Non-Cooperation cases to be reviewed. Thank you for providing the Civil Rights Verifications for the Work First Program.

The cases reviewed met all requirements in the comprehensive monitoring. The Division of Social Services commends your Work First staff and management for this achievement. Please convey my appreciation to the staff for their contribution in the monitoring process and for the quality of work evaluated. There is no further action required of your agency and the monitoring for the State Fiscal Year 2020-2021 is finalized.

If you have any questions about the monitoring process, please feel free to contact me either by phone at 919-621-7177 or by email at [Sheila.Justice@dhhs.nc.gov](mailto:Sheila.Justice@dhhs.nc.gov).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Sheila Justice".

Work First Program Monitor

**NC DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES • DIVISION OF SOCIAL SERVICES • ECONOMIC AND FAMILY SERVICES**

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

MAILING ADDRESS: 2420 Mail Service Center, Raleigh, NC 27699-2420

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AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY / AFFIRMATIVE ACTION EMPLOYER

**Operational Support Team Technical Assistance Report**  
for Stokes County Department of Social Services/Human Services

<b>State Participants:</b>	Kim Collie, OST
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Local Agency Participants	Title	Area(s) of Responsibility
Cindy Joyce	Income Maintenance Administrator	Economic Services
Sharon Bullins	Income Maintenance Supervisor	Food & Nutrition Services (FNS), Work First (WF), Subsidized Child Care Assistance (SCCA)

**Introduction:**

On December 2, 2020, Kim Collie from the NC Division of Social Services, Operational Support Team, conducted a telephone consultation to provide technical assistances to **Stokes County Department of Social Services** Economic Services Program Staff. The OST Representative 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:
FNS County Active Error Rate	Not Applicable	Oct 2019-Feb 2020
FNS Statewide Active Error Rate	5.79%	Oct 2019-Feb 2020
FNS County Case and Procedural Error Rate	0%	Oct 2019-Feb 2020
FNS Statewide Case and Procedural Error Rate	29.29%	Oct 2019-Feb 2020
FNS Expedited Applications Timeliness Rate	100%	November 2020
FNS Normal Applications Timeliness Rate	98.95%	November 2020
FNS Recertification Timeliness Rate	98.50%	October 2020
FNS Case Data	2,747	November 2020
FNS Applications	208	November 2020
WF Applications Timeliness	100%	November 2020
WF Recertification Timeliness	100%	November 2020
WF All Family Participation Rate	0%	August 2020
WF Two-Parent Participation Rate	Not Applicable	August 2020
WF Case Data	63	November 2020
WF Applications	2	November 2020
CIP Application Timeliness With H/C Source	Not Available	October 2020
CIP Application Timeliness Without H/C Source	Not Available	October 2020

**Quality**

The OST Representative reviewed the local agency's quality in the Food & Nutrition Services (FNS) and Work First (WF) programs to include previous monitoring reports and quality control errors.

**FNS:**

The agency has had no cases pulled for the FNS Active Case Reviews between October 2019-February 2020. During this same period, they have had one (1) case reviewed for the Case and Procedural Error Rate Review and it was found to be correct.

The agency underwent their last Management Evaluation (ME) beginning July 9, 2019. The Summary Letter was issued on August 7, 2019 with findings identified in the following areas: Recertifications, Application Approvals, Application Denials, LIEAP Denials, ABAWDs, Restorations/Supplements and Data Matches. An appropriate Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) was developed. The plan was accepted on September 4, 2019. The Six-Month follow-up was held in February 2020 and the agency was released for the following items: Application Approvals, Recertifications, LIEAP Denials, ABAWD, Data Matches and Restorations and Supplements. The agency remained on a PIP for Application Denials. During the second Six-Month follow-up, the agency was released for Application Denials. The agency is not scheduled for an ME during the FY 2020-2021.

**Work First:**

The agency is not currently under a PIP. They are undergoing a compliance monitoring now. The Exit Conference is scheduled to take place this week.

**Timeliness and Work First Participation**



OST reviewed the county's timeliness rate as recommended by the Performance Requirements in House Bill 630 (HB630) Memorandum of Understanding regarding the Food & Nutrition Services (FNS), Work First (WF) and Energy Programs identified below.

#### FNS

The agency consistently exceeds the 95% Timeliness Threshold for Expedited and Normal Applications as well as for Recertifications. All applications processed between December 2019-November 2020 were processed timely. All recertifications processed between December 2019-October 2020 were completed timely. Job well done!

A review of the State Appeals and Hearing Request Report shows that the agency did not submit any hearings or appeal requests since the last consultation in August.

Month	Expedited Applications FS1 95% Threshold	Normal Applications FS2 95% Threshold	Recertifications FS3 95% Threshold
December 2019	100%	98.41%	98.62%
January 2020	100%	100%	98.22%
February 2020	98.08%	100%	99.52%
March 2020	100%	100%	98.59%
April 2020	96.67%	99.21%	100%
May 2020	100%	98.33%	Not Applicable
June 2020	96.97%	100%	100%
July 2020	97.37%	100%	100%
August 2020	100%	100%	100%
September 2020	100%	100%	100%
October 2020	100%	95.89%	98.50%
November 2020	100%	98.95%	Not Available

#### Energy

The Energy reports are NOT being reported for HB 630 compliance. The Energy Program measures must be altered to account for applications that need to be pending for verifications. Changes must be made to NC FAST and then the reports. Release date not yet determined. Counties should not be running the HB 630 Energy query at this time other than for informational purposes (if they so desire). It will still tell you when the application was received and when it was disposed, however since there is no field to account for the last verification received date, the timeliness calculations no longer adhere to the Policy.

#### Work First

The agency has processed all their Work First applications timely between December 2019 and November 2020. During this period, they also processed their recertifications timely in ten (10) of the (12) months. The supervisor monitors the daily reports and communicates frequently with the workers to ensure that the work is completed timely.

The agency has challenges with meeting the Participation Rate. They have a small number of cases for the All-Family Participation Rate. One (1) client is considered 100% disabled and has a doctor's note exempting him from all activities. He is currently trying to get disability. Another participant is working towards her GED and should be taking the test soon. The COVID Pandemic has caused Goodwill Industries to stop taking on clients for Work Experience. The agency utilized this resource frequently prior to the pandemic.

Month	Applications WF3 95% Threshold	Recertifications WF4 95% Threshold	All Family WPR WF1 50% Threshold	Two-Parent WF1 50% Threshold
December 2019	100%	100%	0%	Not Applicable
January 2020	100%	85.71%	0%	Not Applicable
February 2020	100%	100%	40%	Not Applicable
March 2020	100%	100%	20%	Not Applicable
April 2020	100%	100%	0%	Not Applicable
May 2020	100%	100%	0%	Not Applicable
June 2020	100%	100%	0%	Not Applicable
July 2020	100%	100%	0%	Not Applicable



August 2020	100%	100%	0%	Not Applicable
September 2020	Not Applicable	80%	Not Available	Not Available
October 2020	100%	100%	Not Available	Not Available
November 2020	100%	100%	Not Available	Not Available

#### **Business Process Review**

The OST Representative discussed the agency's plan for utilizing the FNS Recertification staff while cases are being automatically extended. The agency will continue with business as usual. The workers will focus on changes, tasks and applications as needed.

Energy applications will be handled by the Adult Services Social Worker as well as four (4) Economic Services workers that will assist as well.

Based on the discussion, the process in place is effective. OST made no additional recommendations.

#### **Accountability**

The OST Representative discussed the local agency's practices regarding second party reviews and staff accountability to ensure that the local agency meets federal/state goals and objectives regarding timeliness and accuracy. The supervisor continues to complete Second Party Reviews to ensure the accuracy of the work. This includes FNS and Work First. She meets the 25% requirement for Work First and utilizes the check list.

#### **Training**

The agency has an effective training plan. They discuss policy, use Learning Gateway as well as having the trainee sit with seasoned staff. A new worker began her employment about two (2) months ago and has worked through this process. The supervisor is pleased with the progress she is making.

#### **Program Policy / Functionality Updates**

The OST Representative provided updates and clarifications regarding FNS, WF and Energy Program Policy, NC FAST system functionality including Help Desk Tickets, Weekly Communications, DSS Terminal Messages and changes to Job Aids.

#### **FNS:**

##### **Dear County Director Letters**

- 9/11/2020-DSNAP (Disaster Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program) Playbook and Upcoming Training
- 10/7/2020-FNS Management Evaluation Tentative Schedule and Summary of Findings
- 10/19/2020-Administrative Disqualification Hearing (ADH) Timeliness, Suspension of Claim Collections and FNS State Fair Hearings Timeliness
- 10/23/2020-Application and Recertification Interview Waiver Extension
- 10/26/2020-FNS Online Purchasing
- 10/28/2020-ChopChop Magazine
- 10/29/2020-FNS Employment & Training Management Evaluation Tentative Schedule and Summary of Findings
- 11/2/2020-November 2020 Automated Supplements for active FNS households
- 11/2/2020-Suspended H and I Controlled Substance Felons Assessments during COVID-19 Pandemic (effective through December 31, 2020) and Extend Sanction Dates
- 11/4/2020-FNS Certification Period Extension through June 30, 2021
- 12/1/2020-December 2020 Automated Supplements for active FNS households
- 12/2/2020-2021 Cost of Living Adjustments (COLA) Mass Change in Social Security Administration (SSA), Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and Veterans Affairs (VA) Payment Amounts

##### **Administrative Letters**

- 3/27/2020-DSS Administrative Letter EFS\_FNS\_AL 3-2020-Able Bodied Adults Without Dependents (ABAWD) exempt due to COVID-19 public health emergency (Amended)
- 8/27/2020-DSS Administrative Letter EFS\_FNS\_35-2020 Telephonic Signature for FNS Applications and Recertifications (Amended)
- 9/18/2020-DSS Administrative Letter EFS\_FNS\_40-2020 Exclude Lost Wages Assistance (LWA) funded by Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)

##### **Change Notices**

- 10/1/2020-CN 2-2020 2020-2021 Cost of Living Adjustments (COLA) and Utility Analysis

- 12/1/2020-CN 3-2020 Policy Updates
- 12/1/2020-CN 4-2020 SNAP Allotment Mass Change

**Terminal Messages:**

- 12/1/2020-#3030-222 National Directory of Contacts

**Work First:**

**Dear County Director Letters**

- 9/28/2020-Telephonic Signature for the Work First Program and Services
- 11/1/2020-Social Security, Supplemental Security Income, and Veteran's Benefits Cost-of-Living Adjustment

**Change Notices**

- 10/1/2020-WF\_CN 4-2020 Update and Modify Manual Section 112 Kinship and Living with Requirements

**Energy Programs:**

**Dear County Director Letters**

- 9/25/2020-Amended Low Income Energy Assistance Program (LIEAP) Automated Payment Admin Letter
- 11/16/2020-Low Income Energy Assistance Program (LIEAP) Outreach Materials
- 11/16/2020-Energy Programs Training 2020

**Administrative Letters**

- 8/28/2020-DSS Administrative Letter EFS\_EA\_AL-5-2020 Telephonic Signature (Amended)
- 9/15/2020 DSS Administrative Letter EFS\_EA\_AL-6-2020 Low Income Energy Assistance Program (LIEAP) Automatic Payment

**Change Notices**

- 9/1/2020-EA\_CN 01-2020 Updated Federal Poverty Income Levels and Clarifications and Revisions of Manual Sections 300 and 400

**Terminal Messages:**

- 12/1/2020-#2020-223 Energy Training Webinar Material

**Miscellaneous:**

10/6/2020-North Carolina Extra Credit Grants

10/19/2020-Administrative Disqualification Hearing (ADH) Timeliness, Suspension of Claim Collections and FNS State Fair Hearings Timeliness

**Program Staff Concerns/Discussion**

The Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) regarding Performance Measures was discussed with the county. Each measure was identified and the county's performance for the months of December 2019-November 2020 were discussed. OST discussed the Dear County Director's Letter (DCDL) issued 2/17/2020 from the Secretary's Office notifying counties that they will not be required to submit a Corrective Action Plan when the measures are not met. This does not remove the expectation that counties meet the thresholds. Beginning in January 2021, counties will be held accountable for the measures outlined in the MOU.

The Division will no longer issue Administrative Letters. Policy and updates will be issued through Dear County Director Letters.

Discussed the importance of having a Disaster FNS plan in the event a DSNAP program is needed. The Playbook is an excellent resource. It was created to provide best practices to use along with policy. The checklist in the Disaster FNS Policy Manual is also a good resource as it discussed many aspects of operating a disaster program.

**Follow-up**

The OST Representative and local staff identified the following areas that OST will provide follow-up responses:  
No items were identified for follow-up.



**NC Division of Social Services Food and Nutrition Services**  
**Quality Control CAPER Case Review Findings Report**

QC Review # 308047

QC Review Month 08/20

Case Name	Case ID#	Stokes County Name
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       Valid                        X   Invalid

       Dropped - Reason: \_\_\_\_\_

QC Review Number	308047	QC Review Month	08/20
<b>County Case Information</b>			
Case Name		County	Stokes
Case ID Number		Type of Action	Application Denial
Reason for Action	Exceeds Income	Date of Action	08/27/20
Date of Application	08/26/20	Certification Period	N/A

**Case Summary**

This is a 4-person non-categorically eligible household consisting of (age 39), (ineligible, out of State Drug Felon, age 40), (daughter, age 18) and (daughter, age 4 months) that applied for assistance (via EPASS) on 08/26/20.

**The Household Reported:**

- receives Unemployment Insurance Benefits (UIB) of \$307 weekly
- started working at Good Will on 05/01/20 and earns \$366 weekly
- has an out of State Drug Felony conviction from the State of Washington
- receives Retirement Survivors Disability Insurance (RSDI) of \$365 monthly
- Responsible for paying rent \$780 monthly and an electric heating/cooling utility expense

**The County:**

- Determined household's income (\$2668) exceeds household expenses (\$1230); therefore, household is not entitled to expedite processing
- Completed OVS/BDX search on 08/26/19 and verified , receives RSDI of \$365 monthly
- Completed OVS/ESC search on 08/26/19 and verified receives UIB of \$307 weekly
- Calculated income as follows:  $\$307 \times 4.3 = \$1320.10$
- Documented that reported that he was convicted of a Drug Felony in the State of Washington about 5 years ago
- Documented on 08/27/20 that IMC took client's statement regarding income of \$366 weekly and calculated his income as follows:  $\$366 \times 4.3 = \$1573.80$
- Documented on 08/27/20, "Interview waived due to COVID19"
- Documented on 08/27/20, "Household of 4; but only 3 eligible; is ineligible due to an out of State Drug Felony; Household is over income."
- Included the following income and expenses in the budget:

• UIB	\$1320.10
• Wages	\$1573.80
-RSDI	<u>\$ 365.00</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$3258.90</b>

<b>Standard Deduction</b>	\$ 167.00
<b>Rent Expense</b>	\$ 780.00
<b>Standard Utility Allowance</b>	\$ 578.00

- Completed an eligibility check on 08/27/20 and NC FAST indicated household is ineligible as they have failed the Gross and Net income test
- Issued a manual DSS-8551, Notice of Eligibility, Denial or Pending status on 08/27/20 that stated, "Your application for Food and Nutrition Services was not approved because of the following reason: Your household's income exceeds the amount to receive Food Nutritional Services"

**QC Review Findings:**

- The county correctly evaluated the household for expedited services
- The application interview was waived due to COVID-19
- The action to deny for exceeding the income limit for a household size of 3 is correct
- The denial notice issued (manually) on 08/27/20 stated, "You must request a hearing no later than 10/13/20." QC finds this date should have been 11/25/20 which is the 90<sup>th</sup> day from the date of the denial notice. **(County Error)**



Validity of Action:	<b>Valid</b>	Household is over income limit for household size
Validity of Policy Procedure:	<b>Valid</b>	All procedures were followed
Validity of Notice:	<b>Invalid</b>	Notice was incorrect due to invalid hearing date ( <b>County Error</b> )

**County response time for this error expires on 12/30/20**

**QC Staff Use Only:**

**Invalid –**

### Incorrect Notice (Incorrect hearing date)

Date Emailed: 12/17/20

**MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** Stokes County Department of Social Services

**FROM:** Pat Moore, Program Administrator  
DSS Quality Assurance Unit

**RE:** Case Name \_\_\_\_\_ Program Food & Nutrition Services  
QC Review No. 308047 Case ID No. \_\_\_\_\_

**An error in the Food and Nutrition Services issuance amount (of the active case) or in the termination / denial action (of the CAPER) has been found in the above-mentioned case by Quality Control (QC). Please review the attached information.**

**Additional Instructions for Active Cases** - You must make necessary corrections (enter a claim referral or issue restoration/supplement if applicable) **within 30 days** of receipt of this information. Please notify Economic and Family Services Section of your corrections via email to [QC.Error.Response@dhhs.nc.gov](mailto:QC.Error.Response@dhhs.nc.gov).

**If you disagree with QC's findings, please indicate your findings in the space below.**

I have reviewed this case with all FNS staff in regards to the error. I have also reviewed policy section FNS 635 Notices with each worker. I have attached a sign off sheet with signatures of each worker with date policy was reviewed one on one. In addition, I have given each worker a Desk Reference for Notices to keep as a tool for when completing manual notices. Discussed the importance of reviewing all evidence on the dashboard to create a correct notice.

Please advise me if there is any other appropriate action I need to take in regards to this case.

DATE

NAME

Phone # or Email Address

If this is not received by the Quality Control Section by 12/30/20, the QC findings will stand.

Email to: [Pat.moore@dhhs.nc.gov](mailto:Pat.moore@dhhs.nc.gov) OR Fax to: (919) 334-1266



Division of Child Development and Early Education  
Subsidized Child Care Assistance Monitoring Report for Stokes County  
Program Monitoring Cycle 2018-2021

**A. SCOPE AND CONTENT**

**1. Introductions**

The Division of Child Development and Early Education (DCDEE) is required by Omni Circular and NCGS 143C.6.23 to conduct monitoring for all agencies that receive state and federal funds to administer the Subsidized Child Care Assistance (SCCA) program. The monitoring process is a two-part process. It begins with pre-monitoring activities that include a review of the Local Purchasing Agency's (LPA) Monitoring Worksheet, Subsidized Child Care Sub-Recipient Risk Level Assessment, fiscal information and record review in North Carolina Families Accessing Services through Technology (NC FAST). The second part is an on-site review of the LPA's programmatic procedures, agency staffing, and client records.

DCDEE staff completed on-site monitoring of Stokes County's SCCA program on September 3, 2019 for the service month of July 2019, to determine compliance with the DCDEE's SCCA policies. During the visit, DCDEE staff reviewed the agency's SCCA program operations and management.

DCDEE selected records representing 17 children funded with SCCA funds. Primary reviews occurred in NC FAST. When verifications used to make eligibility determinations were not available in NC FAST, the LPA staff made the verifications available to the reviewer(s) during the visit.

The following staff from Stokes County Department of Social Services participated in the monitoring review of the agency:

- Cindy Joyce, Income Maintenance Administrator
- Sharon Bullins, Supervisor
- Cindy Hodges, Income Maintenance Caseworker

The staff of Stokes County Department of Social Services who are involved with the administration of the program are as follows:

- One (1) Supervisor who is responsible for supervision.
- One (1) Income Maintenance Caseworker who is responsible for intake, case management and provider visits.

**2. Overview**

Of the 193 points possible for the on-site monitoring review, 177 were accurate and 16 were in error. This resulted in an initial compliance score of 92% for accuracy and 8% for errors. To comply, the LPA must receive a final compliance score of at least 95%. DCDEE finds that Stokes County Subsidized Child Care Assistance program is not in compliance with the terms, conditions, and requirements specified in state and federal policies and regulations.

Accuracy scores for each individual section are as follows:

- Eligibility Determination: 96%
- Verification: 86%
- Evidence: 88%
- Child Care Voucher/Action Notice: 94%

Each error requiring corrections is specifically addressed in this report and is noted on the Monitoring Checklist. A copy of the checklist is included with this report. Clarification is included in the narrative section of the checklist for each finding.

Please note that all references cited in the report are taken from the October 2002 Subsidized Child Care Services Manual including the subsequent Administrative Letters (Manual) and the August 2013 Department of Health and Human Services North

Carolina Integrated Eligibility Manual (IEM). The Subsidized Child Care Services Manual is available online at <https://policies.ncdhhs.gov/divisional/child-development/child-care-subsidy-services>  
The IEM is available online at <https://economicbenefits.nc.gov>. NC FAST Job Aids are available online at <https://ncfasthelp.nc.gov/>

Generally, two types of corrections will be required for records cited in error. These are financial corrections and documentation corrections. In most instances, financial corrections will be accompanied by documentation corrections.

LPA staff must complete retroactive evidence management and process resulting over and under payment cases through NC FAST. When necessary, a Child Care Action Notice (DCD-0450) is required to reflect the correction. Document all changes following the SCCA Narratives in NC FAST Job Aid.

### 3. Case Management Review

- **Risk Assessment:** This evaluation considered key areas including staffing, history of meeting requirements, funding characteristics, and internal controls. Stokes County Subsidy Services Program was rated to be "low" risk.
- **Single Audit Findings:** The North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Controller did not provide any notification to DCDEE that Stokes County received audit findings this past fiscal year.
- **Statistical Review:** A review of the most recent Child Care Subsidy Fact Sheet, (SFY 2017-2018), revealed that Stokes County was serving 15.35% of the potentially eligible population. Stokes County had 1,603 children potentially eligible for child care subsidy services and was serving 246 children.
- **Programmatic Review:** Local Purchasing Agency Monitoring Worksheet was reviewed, and the following information was provided.
  - Caseload size/child care staff: Average 141:1.
  - Number of appeals for sanctions/overpayments in prior 12-month period: 0
  - Number of provider visits completed in prior 12-month period: 0
- **Performance Measure Review:**
  - Percentage of case determinations processed within 30 days of receipt of application: 100%

### B. FINDINGS

Below DCDEE staff documented the findings from each section of the monitoring checklist, corrective action required due to findings, related policies and requirements and the corresponding sample number(s) as identified on the checklist. To review inaccuracies for each sample in error, refer to the checklist Child Care Case Narrative while reviewing this report.

#### 1. Eligibility Determination

- a. One (1) record reviewed was cited for not having a signed application/recertification on file for the current certification period.

##### i. Corrective Action:

- Contact the family and complete a new application.
- End date the Plan of Care evidence the last day of the last month of the previous certification period.
- Reassess the Product Delivery Case to ensure the correct over or under payment case(s) and Child Care Action Notices are generated in NC FAST.
- Process the over or under payment case(s).
- Complete documentation corrections.

ii. Policy Requirement:

A formal request for subsidized child care services must be initiated by completing an application. The parent or responsible adult or designated staff person must sign the application at the time of the initial determination of eligibility and during routine redetermination of eligibility.

iii. Sample Number:

Child # 15

iv. Reference:

Subsidized Child Care Services Manual, Chapter 4, III., B. Application Process, page 6.

b. One (1) record reviewed was cited for an incorrect income calculation. This error was due to failing to verify a change in reported decrease in income.

i. Corrective Action:

- Obtain income from the date the change was reported.
- Recalculate the income and the parental fee as appropriate.
- Enter retroactive income evidence in NC FAST with a start date beginning the month the error occurred, if the verified income is less than previously established income.
- Reassess the Product Delivery Case to ensure the correct over or under payment case(s) and Child Care Action Notices are generated in NC FAST.
- Process the over or under payment case(s).
- Complete documentation corrections.

ii. Policy Requirement:

If a parent/responsible adult voluntarily reports a change, the information should be verified and recalculated by the caseworker. If the reported change results in a decrease in the parental fee, the income evidence must be updated in NC FAST. If the reported change results in an increased parental fee, this information must be documented in the case record.

iii. Sample Number:

Child # 12

iv. Reference:

Subsidized Child Care Services Manual, Administrative Letter #06-18

c. One (1) record reviewed was cited for incorrect income calculation. This error was due to failing to deduct child support paid by the parent/responsible adult.

i. Corrective Action:

- Request from the parent proof of child support paid out during the months in the correct base period.
- Recalculate the income and the parental fee as appropriate.
- Enter retroactive income evidence in NC FAST with a start date beginning the month the error occurred.
- Reassess the Product Delivery Case to ensure the correct over or under payment case(s) and Child Care Action Notices are generated in NC FAST.
- Process the over or under payment case(s).
- Complete documentation corrections.

ii. Policy Requirement:



When a parent whose income is used in determining eligibility for child care services pays child support, that amount is deducted from their countable monthly income.

iii. Sample Number:  
Child # 15

iv. Reference:  
IEM, 4080.5, Child Support Paid Expenses.

d. One (1) record reviewed was cited for incorrect calculation of income, which may have caused errors with the parental fees.

i. Corrective Action:

- Recalculate the income and the parental fees as appropriate.
- Enter retroactive income evidence in NC FAST with a start date beginning the month the error(s) occurred.
- Reassess the Product Delivery Case(s) to ensure the correct over or underpayment case(s) and Child Care Action Notices are generated in NC FAST.
- Process the over or underpayment case(s).
- Complete documentation corrections.

ii. Policy:

The computation of gross monthly income is made based on an assessment of the family income that is anticipated during the twelve-month period following the date of application. The parental fee calculation must be shown on the application, in the case narrative or an attached calculator tape.

iii. Sample Number:  
Child #5

iv. References:

Subsidized Child Care Services Manual, Chapter 7, IV. Assessing Monthly Income for Determining Eligibility, page 4. IEM, 4010 General Guidelines. IEM, 4030.1 Countable Earned Income. IEM, 4070.1 General Guidelines.

2. Verification

a. One (1) record reviewed was cited for an incorrect Need for Care in NC FAST.

i. Corrective Action:

- Correct the Program Referral evidence from the date the error occurred.
- Reassess Product Delivery Case to ensure the correct over or under payment case(s) and Child Care Action Notices are generated in NC FAST.

ii. Policy:

Provide child care services to support Child Protective Services (CPS) in order to remain in their own homes; or to support child welfare services (CWS) to prevent or remedy problems that may result in the neglect or abuse.

iii. Sample Number:  
Child #6

iv. Reference:

Subsidized Child Care Services Manual, Chapter 5, II. Mandatory Child Care Services, page 1.

b. One (1) record reviewed was cited because there was no need for care at the time of application.

i. Corrective Action:

- Contact the parent/responsible adult to verify if there is a current need for care.
- If there is a current need for care, obtain verification.
- If there is not a current need for care, send a Subsidized Child Care Action Notice to terminate the SCCA case.
- End date the Plan of Care evidence from the date the application was signed.
- If there is a current need for care, begin a new Plan of Care evidence beginning the date a need for care was established.
- Reassess Product Delivery Case to ensure the correct over or under payment case(s) and Child Care Action Notices are generated in NC FAST.
- Process the over or underpayment case(s).
- Complete documentation corrections.

ii. Policy:

When a family identifies the specific reason that child care service is needed, the child care worker must determine if the family qualifies. The specific reasons are to maintain or seek employment, care to support child protective service, to attend school or job training activities, to meet the development needs of child and to support child welfare services.

iii. Sample Number:

Child # 17

iv. Reference:

Subsidized Child Care Services Manual, Chapter 5, II. Mandatory Child Care Services, page 1.

c. Three (3) records reviewed were cited for lack of appropriate income verification.

v. Corrective Action:

- Obtain all income from the correct base period available to the families.
- Recalculate the income and the parental fees as appropriate.
- Enter retroactive income evidence in NC FAST with a start date beginning the month the errors occurred.
- Reassess Product Delivery Cases to ensure the correct over or under payment case(s) and Child Care Action Notices are generated in NC FAST.
- Process the over or under payment case(s).
- Complete documentation corrections.

i. Policy:

When income is a condition of eligibility, the amount of income must be verified and documented. The source and amount of gross family income is verified and documented in the case narrative.

ii. Sample Numbers:

Child # 8      Child # 12      Child # 14

iii. References:

Subsidized Child Care Services Manual, Chapter 4, V. Documentation, page 8. Chapter 7, IV. Assessing Monthly Income for Determining Eligibility, page 4.

3. Evidence

a. Two (2) records reviewed were cited due to an inaccurate level of care.

i. Corrective Action:

- Correct the Plan of Care Evidence from the date the errors occurred.
- Reassess Product Delivery Cases to ensure the correct over or under payment case(s) and Child Care Action Notices are generated in NC FAST.
- Process the over or underpayment case(s).
- Complete documentation corrections.

ii. Policy Requirement:

In determining the hours of child care needed, several factors must be considered, including the actual hours at the job and travel time. If a child is enrolled 1 – 17 hours a week, the appropriate 50% rate for half-time care is paid to the provider. If a child is enrolled 18 – 31 hours a week, the appropriate 75% rate for three-fourths care is paid to the provider. If a child is enrolled 32 – 55 hours per week, the appropriate monthly 100% rate for full-time care is paid to the provider.

DSS/LPA's are no longer allowed to automatically decrease the level of care to adjust to a decrease in work or education hours. Once a child meets all eligibility requirements on the date of the most recent eligibility determination or re-determination, the child shall be considered eligible and will receive services at least at the same level during the certification period, unless the parent/responsible adult requests a decrease in the level of care. The request must be clearly documented in the case record by the caseworker.

Sample Numbers:

Child # 7      Child # 12

iii. Reference:

Subsidized Child Care Services Manual, Chapter 5, III. Establishing a Plan of Care, page 6. Chapter 20, II. Payment Based on Enrollment, page 2. Administrative Letter #06-18.

b. Four (4) records reviewed were cited due to incomplete case narratives.

i. Corrective Action:

- Update the case narrative for each record cited.

ii. Policy Requirement:

Documentation in the family's case record must provide adequate information regarding eligibility and the plan of care. The narrative tells the story of what is happening with the client at the initial office visit, initial application, changes and redeterminations. The caseworker should document circumstances to justify the need for child care services and the plan of care. The caseworker should also explain through documentation, the rationale for the method of averaging income.

iii. Sample Numbers:

Child # 3      Child # 8      Child # 14      Child # 17

iv. Reference:

Subsidized Child Care Services Manual, Chapter 4, V. Documentation, page 8.

4. Child Care Voucher/Action Notice



a. Two (2) records reviewed were cited for missing signed vouchers.

i. Corrective Action:

- If the children were receiving subsidy prior to NC FAST, prior month corrections will be required to be completed in the Subsidized Child Care Reimbursement System (SCCRS).
- End date the Plan of Care Evidence from the date the errors occurred.
- Reassess Product Delivery Cases to ensure the correct over or under payment case(s) and Child Care Action Notices are generated in NC FAST.
- Process the over or underpayment case(s).
- Complete documentation corrections.

ii. Policy Requirement:

The LPA initiates the voucher upon determining that a family is eligible to receive child care services and the family has chosen a provider. The parent is required to sign the Child Care Voucher before it is given to the provider. A copy of the signed voucher must be maintained by the LPA.

v. Sample Numbers:

Child # 7      Child # 9

iii. Reference:

Subsidized Child Care Services Manual, Chapter 9, C. Issuing the Child Care Voucher, pages 6-7.

C. OBSERVATIONS

DCDEE staff noted that overall the LPA's documentation lacked adequate details in providing answers to key questions necessary for determining initial and ongoing eligibility and an accurate plan of care. Documentation in the family's case record must provide adequate information regarding eligibility and the plan of care. For example, explanations are necessary for changes to the case such as income and work hours.

D. FOLLOW-UP PROCEDURES

Regardless of the type of error, documentation or financial error, the agency must write statements to describe the actions taken to prevent the findings noted above from reoccurring. Include statements such as changes to agency policies and procedures within the 45-day response letter that must be submitted to the Program Compliance Consultant. Once improvement activities identified by the LPA are completed, the LPA must submit supporting documentation of completion. Some examples of improvement activities are staff meeting minutes, signed training roster, evidence of second party reviews or staff coaching. The Consultant uses this documentation to verify implementation of the LPA's specified program compliance improvement activities, to collect information for the DCDEE monitoring file to ensure audit compliance and to finalize the monitoring visit.

If the agency's compliance score is under 95%, detailed program compliance improvement activities may be necessary. Activities could involve working with a Subsidy Technical Assistance Consultant, additional training or other appropriate measures.

LPA staff are responsible for accurate administration of the SCCA program policies. In accordance with 10A NCAC 10 .0310 (c), "Upon review of agency records of administration of the state's subsidized child care program, if it is found that child care services funding was not spent in accordance with applicable state or federal regulations, DCDEE shall require the agency to pay back funds improperly spent." LPA's are required to send payment for the amount of the overpayment corrections to DCDEE. NC FAST Help includes Job Aids to assist child care staff with under and overpayment corrections. You may also contact the NC FAST Help Desk at 919-813-5400 for assistance with NC FAST functionality.

Prepared by:

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910-303-0057

[Belinda.Brewer@dhhs.nc.gov](mailto:Belinda.Brewer@dhhs.nc.gov)

Date completed: September 26, 2019

Approved by:

Kim Miller, Senior Subsidy Compliance Manager  
919-814-6389

[Kim.Miller@dhhs.nc.gov](mailto:Kim.Miller@dhhs.nc.gov)

Date Reviewed: October 8, 2019



**Stokes County**  
**Department of Social Services**

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[www.co.stokes.nc.us/dss](http://www.co.stokes.nc.us/dss)

Stacey S. Elmes  
Director

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Child Welfare Fax - (336) 593-2431  
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## Stokes County Performance Improvement Plan

The Stokes County Performance Improvement Plan is in response to the findings from the Subsidized Child Care Assistance audit conducted on 9-03-19. The plan is effective 12-17-20 and will continue for six months, 6-17-21.

**Area(s) for Improvement:** The recertification must be completed annually and should be scanned in the NC Fast system in a folder marked for child care cases with the date listed.

**Goal:** All subsidized child-care assistance cases must be reviewed per the Division of Child Development and Early Education policy and scanned into a document folder 100% of the time.

**Root Cause:** It has been determined that the root cause of the caseworker's failure to document and scan the redetermination document in NC Fast is a lack of self-checking her work to ensure the redetermination was completed and scanned into the appropriate folder in the NC Fast system.

**Responsible Parties:** Income Maintenance Caseworker III Cindy Hodges will complete redeterminations and will scan the documentation in to the NC Fast system. She will complete self-checks by reviewing her scanned documents folder to ensure the information is in the system before shredding the paper copy.

IM Supervisor Sharon Bullins will complete checks on all recertifications to ensure the recertification is completed and that the information is scanned into the NC Fast system.

**Follow up Evaluation:** Supervisor Sharon Bullins will monitor the caseworker to ensure necessary documentation is located in NC Fast. If any issues or problems arise, she will bring to the attention of the IM Administrator.

*Stacey S. Elmes*  
Director

Date: 12/18/2020