

AGENDA

REGULAR MEETING

OF THE

STOKES COUNTY

November 17, 2021

12:30 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 – October 27, 2021
- IV. Board Member Comments
- V. Public Comments (Maximum Allowance of Ten Minutes Per Person)
- VI. Discussion
 - A. DSS Dashboard
 - B. REDA (September 2021 Consultation)
 - C. Child Support Conference Call – 10/27/21
 - D. Staff Thank You
- VII. Action Items
 - A. Old Business
 - B. New Business

Next meeting is December 15, 2021 at 3:00 p.m. in the DSS conference room.
- VIII. Adjournment

STOKES COUNTY BOARD OF SOCIAL SERVICES

MINUTES

October 27, 2021

The regular meeting of the Stokes County Board of Social Services was held on Wednesday, October 27, 2021 at the Social Services building in Danbury. Chairman Greg Collins called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m. Board members present were Chairman Collins, Vice-Chair Sandy Smith, Member Ann Vance, and Member Sonya Cox by phone. Member not present was Darlene Bullins. Staff present were 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 any of the items listed on the agenda. No conflicts noted.

Chairman Collins asked if there were any Board members that needed to discuss or make adjustments to the agenda. None noted. Member Vance motioned to approve agenda as presented. Vice-Chair Smith seconded and the motion passed 4-0 with Member Bullins absent.

Chairman Collins asked for approval of the consent agenda. Vice-Chair Smith motioned to approve the consent agenda as presented. Member Vance seconded and the motion passed 4-0 with Member Bullins absent.

There were no board comments.

There were no public comments.

Director Elmes shared that the DSS Dashboard numbers are staying pretty consistent except for an increase in Food and Nutrition and Medicaid applications. Director Elmes shared that DSS has a guardianship case that the ward is appealing their incompetence. A court hearing will be soon to determine their incompetency. Director Elmes shared that the agency also has a 21-year old in guardianship that has been placed in Winston-Salem which has cost the agency approximately \$20,000 to provide care. With cooler temperatures starting, the agency will be seeing an increase in people coming in for oil and heating. LIEAP begins December 1, 2021 for the elderly, 60 and older, and January 1, 2022 for all other households. Also assistance with water will begin on December 1, 2021. Chairman Collins confirmed with Director Elmes that the agency informs clients about food banks because the agency cannot give benefits on the spot. Chairman Collins also stated that people requesting assistance at the food banks is low but is expected to pick up with cooler temperatures.

Other items on the agenda for discussion were as follows:

- REDA (Recipient Eligibility Determination Audit - September 2021). Income Maintenance Administrator Joyce informed the Board that the agency had improved in August. IMA Joyce shared the agency had one internal control error, and an eligibility error which means the agency used the incorrect household composition, and an incorrect certification period which means the agency should have given someone an extra month of benefits and did not. Staff undergoes training as soon as errors are found so that hopefully they will not occur again. For the month of September, the agency received 336 applications and only 2 errors were found.

- Child Support Conference Call
Director Elmes shared that the agency is on track to meet goals at the end of the fiscal year.
 - Dear County Director Letters
Director Elmes shared that during the month of September the agency received 26 Dear County Director letters providing information, guidance, requests for surveys, etc. in all service areas. Director Elmes shared some of the more pertinent September letters with the Board.
1. September 2, 2021. Work First.
The Division of Social Services suspended Work First cash assistance sanctions related to work requirements beginning with the benefit month of March 2020 in response to the COVID-19 public health emergency declaration. This letter provides clarity and instruction on the implementation of suspended Work First Cash Assistance Sanctions making previous letters regarding this issue obsolete.
 2. September 2, 2021. Food and Nutrition Issuance.
Effective October 1, 2021, Food and Nutrition allotment levels will increase by 25%.
 3. September 10, 2021 and September 17, 2021. Time Limited LINKS Funding.
Supplemental funding provided to young adults ages 18 through 26 that were or are in foster care. Those eligible that are ages 18-20 will receive \$2,500 and ages 21 – 26 will receive \$5,000.
Stokes was able to serve 33 youths utilizing \$125,000 with no county match required.
 4. September 14, 2021. Food and Nutrition.
Counties are required to continue to suspend the substance abuse assessments for Food and Nutrition Services applicants and recipients that have H or I controlled substance felony offenses in North Carolina by entering a future sanction date in NC Fast when processing applications, re-certifications, and changes.
 5. September 14, 2021. Adoption Promotion.
Annually, the North Carolina Division of Social Services provides baselines and program updates for the Adoption Promotion program to county child welfare agencies. Stokes County's baseline for fiscal year '21-'22 is 14 adoptions. The agency has currently completed 6 adoptions.
 6. September 16, 2021. Child Welfare.
Child welfare has the statutory requirement to ensure safety, permanency, and well-being of children. Information provided regarding the use of COVID-19 vaccines for children and youth.
 7. September 20, 2021. Food and Nutrition.
October food and nutrition allotments will continue to be the maximum allotment for families.
 8. September 21, 2021. Work First.
At re-certification, the case manager is to complete a new form regarding collateral contact information and the case head/payee is to sign the form.

9. September 24, 2021. Family Reunification Services Annual Plan.
Plan due by November 1, 2021. This plan estimates the number of children, parents, and families the agency will serve as well as projects the percentage of the type of service provided.
The agency uses family reunification funding to assist in paying for agency Community Social Services Assistant positions that provide supervised visitation for agency families. The agency plan was submitted on October 7, 2021.

10. September 27, 2021. Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP).
Income eligibility for the program remains at 130% of the Federal Poverty Level and will not be increased to 150% as previously informed and the Crisis Intervention Program (CIP) will continue with the maximum benefit allowable at \$600, not an increase to \$1,000.
This program starts December 1, 2021 for the priority group, 60 and older, then it opens to everyone beginning January 1, 2022.

➤ Staff Compliments

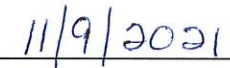
1. Social Work Supervisor Rebecca Maser received a compliment from Judge Boone.
2. Income Maintenance Caseworker Cindy Hodges received a compliment from a client that she went above and beyond to help.
3. Social Workers Kanci McKnight and Jessica Pinson received a compliment from Jaime Kehoe stating how well they did in a court case.

Under Old Business, Director Elmes reminded the Board of the training November 16th and 17th 9:30 am to 12:00 pm. Director Elmes also reminded the Board of the next board meeting on November 17, 2021 at 12:30 pm.

Under New Business there was none.

There being no further business, Chairman Collins asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Member Vance made a motion to adjourn. Vice-Chair Smith seconded and the motion passed 4-0 with Member Bullins absent. Meeting adjourned at 3:23p.m.


Secretary


Date

Stokes County DSS Dashboard 2021

	October	November	December	Qrt. Total	Annual Total
ADULT SOCIAL WORK SERVICES					
Guardianship Cases	33				
New APS Reports Received	16			16	251
APS Reports Accepted	5			5	131
Investigations Initiated Timely [Goal 95%]	100%				
Outreach Visits	8			8	93
In Home Aide Programs/Family Caregiver	31				
Community Alternatives Program (CAP/DA)	72				
Representative Payee	7				
SA - In-Home	57				
Placement	1				
Adult Care Homes Monitored	2				
Total Requests for CIP	30			30	407
CIP Expenditures	\$3,665			\$3,665	\$105,680
Total Requests for LIEAP	0			0	1226
LIEAP Expenditures	\$ -			\$0	\$120,145
Unclaimed Bodies	0			0	3
Staff Hours Spent at Shelters	0			0	0
CHILD CARE SUBSIDY					
Children Receiving Services	158				
Expenditures	\$72,840			\$72,840	\$1,588,837
Waiting List	0				
CHILD PROTECTIVE SERVICES					
CPS Reports Received	38			38	691
CPS Reports Accepted	19			19	359
Children Opened	39			39	639
Open Reports	17				
Reports Substantiated/Services Needed	5				
Open Case Management	14				
Courtesy Requests	8			8	107
Substance Affected Infants Reported to DSS	2			2	32
Substance Affected Infants Accepted for Inv.	2			2	32
Reports Initiated Timely [Goal 95%]	100%				
Reports Completed Timely [Goal 75%]	100%				
Children Remaining at Home [Goal 95%]	90%				
CHILD SUPPORT					
Number of Children Served	1,047				
Total Collections	\$175,252			\$175,252	\$3,204,146
Paternities Established	3			3	63
New Court Orders	4			4	115
FISHING LICENSE WAIVERS					
Fishing License Waivers	1			1	55
FOOD & NUTRITION SERVICES					
Total Households	3,343				
Total Individuals	6,689				
Report Card (App. Timeliness) [Goal: 95%]	99%				
Report Card (Recert. Timeliness) [Goal: 95%]	not available				
Benefits Distributed	\$ 1,609,359			\$1,609,359	\$20,423,145

2021	October	November	December	Qtr. Total	Annual Total
FOSTER CARE					
Children Entering Care	4			4	65
Total Children in Care	91				
Children Discharged	3			3	57
Children in Care Over 1 Year	49				
% Receiving a Monthly Visit [Goal 100%]	100%				
% Visited in the Home [Goal > 90%]	95%				
Foster Care 18-21	6				
Monitoring of Children No Longer in Custody	1				
Licensed Foster Homes	26				
Sanctioned Homes	0				
# of Individuals/Families Receiving Training	six/three				
Recruitment Events Held	0			0	0
Foster Care Costs (county/state/fed)	not available				\$1,519,323
Children Free For Adoption	4				
Children Open for LINKS	55				
Adoptions Completed	1			1	7
Adoption Assistance Cases	163				
Adoption Assistance Costs (fed & state)	\$17,461			\$17,461	\$284,482
MEDICAID [ADULT, FAMILY & CHILDREN'S]					
# of Cases	8,073				
Report Card (Timeliness) [Goal: 85%]	99%				
Public Assistance Hearings (All Areas)	2				
MEDICAID TRANSPORTATION					
Clients Served	154				
Trips Provided	422			422	8,022
Monthly Cost	\$34,365			\$34,365	\$566,120
PROGRAM INTEGRITY					
New Claims Established	\$0			\$0	\$124,946
Total Collections	\$1,199			\$1,199	\$19,118
Retained in County	\$257			\$257	\$5,524
SPECIAL ASSISTANCE					
# of Special Assistance Cases	145				
Benefits Distributed	\$56,128			\$56,128	\$846,216
SA/MH LIAISON					
Number of Referrals during the Month	14			14	195
Open Cases at end of Month	65				
VACANCIES					
Social Work	1				
Clerical/Income Maintenance/Child Support	1				
WORK FIRST					
Total Work First Cases	41				
Number of Child Only Cases	40				
Employment Cases	1				
Referrals for Drug Testing	0				
Applicants Testing Positive	0				
Benefits Distributed	\$8,663			\$8,663	\$168,426
OTHER					
Voter Registrations	3			3	52
Walk-In Traffic	547			547	10,651

Quality Assurance County Director Consultation

County	Stokes	Date	11/04/21	Type	REDA Cycle 3 Conference Call
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Quality Assurance Analyst:	L Watson-EI
OST Representative:	Christine Coffey, Courtney Wyke (effective 11/01/21)
Agency Participants:	
<i>Name</i>	<i>Title</i>
Cindy Joyce	IM Administrator
Cindy Amos	FC Supervisor
Rhonda Martin	Adult Supervisor

Purpose of Contact:
Review performance results for the REDA audit for the September 2021 Sample Month and Quarter 2 Statistics. Discuss Accuracy Rates, Error Trends, and Recommendations.

Audit Process/Process Improvement Efforts
09/2021 SAMPLE MONTH:
<p><u>Accuracy Rates:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Active Eligibility Accuracy Rate: 90% → Goal: 96.8% Negative Eligibility Accuracy Rate: 100% → Goal: 96.8% → GOAL MET!! GREAT JOB!! Combined Active & Negative Internal Control Accuracy Rate: 95% → Goal: 90% → GOAL MET!! <p><u>Error Rates:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Active Eligibility Error Rate: 10% (10 active cases reviewed with 1 eligibility error) Negative Eligibility Error Rate: 0% (10 negative cases reviewed with no eligibility error) Combined Active/Negative Internal Control Error Rate: 10% (20 cases reviewed with 2 internal control errors) <p><u>Error Trends:</u></p> <p>Active Sample</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Application – Absence of appropriate verification and/or documentation of resources (did not result in an eligibility error) Application - County failed to verify HH composition, certification period incorrect, resulted in eligibility error. Income computation incorrect, reasonable compatibility was not followed, resulted in internal control error. <p>Negative Sample</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No eligibility errors or internal control errors cited in negative sample.

Quality Assurance County Director Consultation

QA Recommended Proactive Measures to Eliminate Errors:

- Refresher training regarding appropriate verification at application.
- Review of FC – reasonable compatibility policy
- Reminder of MPW continuous eligibility policy.
- Review all errors identified with Medicaid staff and provide training on error trends.

Proactive Measures taken by County:

- FC have implemented pre/posttests when providing training.
- FC have created flashcards for workers to post in their office
- Adult has created a resource page to mail to LIS applicants
- Adult has created electronic flashcards for desktops
- Adult has lead worker checking cases daily (effective 10/21) – the number depends on volume of work but typically 1-2 cases per worker.

Recommended Training(s):

- Continue to reach out to OST regarding any training needs
- Continue to conduct one-on-one training with individual staff, as deemed appropriate, if error trends are determined to be localized.

Quarterly Stat's

STOKES				
Cycle 3 - Calendar Year 2021				
Cycle 3 - Sample Month	21-Jun	21-Jul	21-Aug	
Cases Audited	20	20	20	60
Active Accuracy Rate	90%	100%	90%	
Active Errors	1	0	1	2
Negative Accuracy Rate	100%	90%	100%	
Negative Errors	0	1	0	1
Internal Control Accuracy Rate	90%	95%	100%	
Internal Control Errors	2	1	0	3

Quality Assurance County Director Consultation

Wrap Up Discussion:

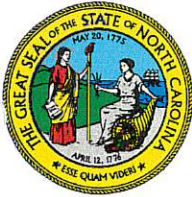
- At the County's request, OST provided documentation templates for FC and Adult applications/recertification/Inquiry/Newborn. OST suggests county management team review and agree on the expectations for completion. Auditor suggests once documentations templates are introduced to staff, county specify use of template is mandatory.
- County requests they follow-up with telephone call when emails requesting assistance/clarification is received from Auditor. Auditor invites county to contact via teams or cell phone.
- Auditor suggests targeted review of cases after training to ensure training is effective.
- OST suggests reinstituting peer reviews, this will ensure different perspectives, more eyes and sharing of skills.

Additional Information:

Thank you for your participation in the Consultation Meeting and for your assistance during the monthly audit! Please don't hesitate to reach out to me should you have any additional questions or concerns.

Summary prepared by: L Watson-El

Date Submitted to County: 11/04/21



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

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

Dear Ms. Elmes:

On October 27, 2021, Lynn, and I conducted a conference call to discuss information regarding the COVID-19 status, statistical information, information updates, and county concerns.

Incentive statistics are available through September 2021. September marks the end of 1st quarter. The Total Collections goal benchmark for September is 25%. The unit is just below State Average for Total Collections (24.15%) at 23.06%. The unit has been able to achieve/exceed the 2021-22 goal for Cases Under Order (89.00%) at 91.72%, and Current Collection (66.25%) at 66.97%. The unit is OFF Track in the areas of Paternity (96.83%) at 91.85% and Arrears Collection (62.48%) at 42.10%. The unit is only minimally OFF track in the area of Paternity. In the area of Arrears Collection, last year at this time the unit was at 43.58%. I will continue to suggest reports that may increase incentive areas. Reports suggested/provided: Paternity reports, % of Cases with Arrears, no payment, and Undistributed Report.

Goals 2020-21					
TC	Paternity	CUO	CC	Arrears	Medical
\$2,461,257.58	96.83	89	66.72	62.48	
Current	09/21				
23.06<	91.85>	91.72>*	66.97<*	42.10<	85.94>

*-Exceeding/achieving goal

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

MAILING ADDRESS: P.O. Box 20800, Raleigh, NC 27619
www.ncdhhs.gov • TEL: 919-855-4755 • FAX: 919-715-8174

AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY / AFFIRMATIVE ACTION EMPLOYER

Self-Assessment scores are available through September 2021. The unit is currently in compliance with eight of nine areas of Self -Assessment. The unit is out of compliance in the area of Interstate at 73.33%. Compliance in these areas is 75%. This area continues to see increase. All other areas have a compliance level of 80% or better. Reports suggested/provided during this call: P/F for Interstate.

At the end of first quarter a Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) plan was created for the county in which a plan for improvement is created for Incentive Areas that are not ON Track. In the areas of Self-Assessment, the States continues to be granted a waiver on compliance. Only those areas that are below 25% compliance are required to create a CQI plan. Areas that are below pre-pandemic compliance levels will be discussed and a plan will be suggested but are not required.

The unit has a CQI for the Incentive areas of Total Collections, Paternity, and Arrears Collection. I CQI was also suggested for the Self-Assessment area of Interstate. I have attached the CQI to the email for review. Reports and strategies have been suggested for all areas.

Management advises that the unit is taking advantage of the virtual trainings that are being offered.

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	October	100%	Copy of QR sent to CS Managers	N/A

Due to the continued restriction of travel by Child Support Program Representatives and the fact that staff in many Child Support Offices are teleworking, making access to their hard files difficult, the quality review process will be modified for the duration of the restrictive period. Elements on the quality review will be scored based on what is available in the automated system, ACTS.

If the reviewer is unable to determine for certain how to score the above items from documentation in ACTS, the item is to be scored in error and a note will be entered in the

comments section that supporting documentation is required for that line item. The county may then check for the documentation, communicate to the reviewer that it is in place, and the score will be updated.

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

Sincerely,
Mrs. Kenya Newsome
Child Support Program Representative

Cc:
Lynn Whitaker
Cindy Joyce

IMPROVEMENT STRATEGY PLAN	
AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT	
INCENTIVE MEASURES	
Pat Est %	
ON TRACK?	NO
Agents will work various Data Warehouse reports created especially for Paternity Rate and work those reports each month, i.e., 'BOW-N with a PEST event'; 'BOW and PAI - Y'; 'BOW-N and PAI-Y'; 'Caseload Listing - PAT status'; 'Cases in DELQ or COLL processing status with BOW and PAT AT ISSUE coded Y'.	
CUO %	
ON TRACK?	YES
CSUP %	
ON TRACK?	YES
ARREARS %	
ON TRACK?	NO
Agents will work all RWR - Delinquency & RWRD worklist items received each month by COB on the last working day of the month. Agents will work various Data Warehouse and Ad Hoc reports provided to them by the Supervisor to aid in increasing collections, i.e. 'Contact for Collections', 'Undistributed Receipts Report', 'Cases with Order and Current Employer with no Income Withholding Worksheet', 'Unworkable Open Cases - Enforcement', 'Percent of Cases with Arrears, No Payment.	
TOTAL COLLECTIONS	
ON TRACK?	NO
Agents will work all RWR - Delinquency & RWRD worklist items received each month by COB on the last working day of the month. Agents will work various Data Warehouse and Ad Hoc reports provided to them by the Supervisor to aid in increasing collections, i.e. 'Contact for Collections', 'Undistributed Receipts Report', 'Cases with Order and Current Employer with no Income Withholding Worksheet', 'Unworkable Open Cases - Enforcement'.	

SELF-ASSESSMENT	
Case Closure	
ON TRACK?	
YES	
Enforcement	
ON TRACK?	
YES	
Establishment	
ON TRACK?	
YES	
12 Month Expedited	
ON TRACK?	
YES	
6 Month Expedited	
ON TRACK?	
YES	
Interstate	
ON TRACK?	
NO	
Agents will work the 'Interstate Self-Assessment Pass/Fail' report will be worked monthly to aid in the timely processing of cases. Agents will work 'Interstate Open Cases with no Court Order on 12.10' report will be worked periodically to allow CSENet's to process easier and quicker, creating less CNER workload items. Agents will work all incoming CNET, CNER and IRCS workload items timely	

Medical
ON TRACK?
YES
Review & Adjustment Inclusive
ON TRACK?
YES
Review & Adjustment Needed
ON TRACK?
YES

10-25-2025
DEAR PATTY,

WE JUST WANTED TO DROP YOU A NOTE TO LET YOU KNOW HOW MUCH WE APPRECIATE ALL THE WORK AND THE SPEEDINESS OF COMPLETING OUR MOTHER'S MEDICAID APPLICATION. SO OFTEN THE EFFORT WE PUT INTO THINGS IS OVERLOOKED. I HOPE WE DIDN'T BOTHER YOU TOO MUCH, LOL. SHE IS DOING AS WELL AS CAN BE EXPECTED AT VILLAGE CARE FOR HER CONDITION. THE STAFF THERE SEEM TO BE GOOD. THANKS AGAIN FOR EVERYTHING AND I HOPE YOU AND YOUR FAMILY ARE DOING WELL!

to say you're thought of.

SINCERELY,



dropping
you a
NOTE

